



May 22, 2024

The Honorable Nathan Manning
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Ground Floor, Rm. 039
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Support for Senate Bill 223 – Fight Organized Retail Crime and Empower Law Enforcement Act

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony for Senate Bill 223, the Fight Organized Retail Crime and Empower Law Enforcement (FORCE) Act.

Walmart proudly employs over 55,000 associates at our 169 retail stores and 8 fulfillment centers across Ohio. Ensuring the safety of our associates and customers at each of these facilities is a top priority. Accordingly, Walmart supports SB 223 as a critical measure to keeping Ohio communities and shopping centers safe.

Since 2021, more than 10 states have statutorily established state or regional task forces focused on combatting the persistent and increased dangers of organized retail crime. Such efforts have proven successful in increasing coordination among law enforcement, retailers, and other community organizations, and by providing law enforcement with tools narrowly tailored to address the unique and evolving challenges associated with organized retail crime. Walmart supports the robust framework outlined in SB 223, specifically establishing a task force devoted to investigating organized retail crime activity, refining the definition of organized retail theft, providing for cross-jurisdictional law enforcement coordination, ensuring effective information sharing between law enforcement and retailers, and enhancing penalties for violations. Several other states have found such measures critical to fighting organized retail crime, and we believe these will go a long way in helping protect Ohio communities from the harms of organized retail crime.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony today. We respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of Senate Bill 223.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rachael Carl".

Rachael Carl

Director, Public & Government Affairs
Walmart, Inc.