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Frank Patercity

Director of Corporate Security, Investigations & ORC
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November 8, 2021

The Honorable Senator Steve Wilson

Ohio Senate Building
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Wilson,

On behalf of the Kroger Co., I applaud your leadership in considering SB 184 and support passage of this measure as it modernizes Ohio's consumer protection laws to safeguard consumers from the sale of illicit and counterfeit products. As one of Ohio's largest retailers, we know firsthand the impact of organized retail crime in our stores. Kroger's corporate headquarters is in Cincinnati and we operate 211 retail stores across Ohio employing 35,000 associates.

As the Director of Corporate Security, Investigations & Organized Retail Crime at Kroger, I lead a team of seasoned and highly trained professional investigators. We are positioned across the United States with one common goal – to mitigate and counteract highly-organized crime rings, who make it their mission to steal and resell stolen and counterfeit merchandise online. Loss prevention is a source of significant concern for our store teams to deliver on Our Promise to our customers. Significant loss of revenue due to theft challenges our ability to compete on price for our customers and impacts the availability of products they want to purchase.

Organized retail crime is a multi-billion-dollar criminal enterprise involving well-connected, sophisticated groups committing crimes across municipalities, states, and countries. State Bill 184 provides marketplace transparency, which protects consumers and legitimate businesses alike by requiring simple authentication of third-party sellers operating through online marketplaces. State Bill 184 achieves balance between protecting legitimate small sellers' privacy and truly enhancing consumer protections. It is time to stop these highly sophisticated organized crime rings and counterfeit criminals from deceiving Ohio consumers with stolen and counterfeit goods.

Kroger supports SB 184 and hopes for a swift passage of the bill that will help to validate third-party sellers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Patercity".

Frank Patercity
Director of Corporate Security, Investigations & Organized Retail Crime