



MEMO

TO: House Law and Justice Committee members

FROM: Michigan Retailers Association

SUBJECT: Support SB 44, H-2

DATE: October 31, 2017

Michigan Retailers Association is the voice of Michigan's retail industry and represents more than 15,000 storefronts across the state. MRA supports the H-2 version of SB 44 because it will give law enforcement additional incentive and resources to address the ongoing problem of retail fraud and organized retail crime.

BACKGROUND

- Nearly every retailer has been a victim of retail fraud and/or organized retail crime.
- Examples of retail fraud include stealing merchandise – done both by employees and by members of the public – as well as attempts to alter the price of an item in order to pay less.
- Individuals who steal high-value items with the intent to resell those items for financial gain, not personal gain, are committing organized retail crime.
- Individuals committing Organized Retail Crime (ORC) are often doing so to fuel a drug addiction.

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- All retailers rely on support from law enforcement to keep patrons in their store safe and to protect the retailer from theft and vandalism.
- Unfortunately, law enforcement is often spread thin. There are numerous crimes and public safety concerns law enforcement officers must address every day.
- Allowing the courts the opportunity to pursue reimbursement for expenses incurred by the state or a local unit of government in relation to retail fraud will help provide more assistance to officers responding to crimes committed in a retail setting.
- SB 44 includes flexibility, giving the judge and court system the final say in whether or not to include cost-recovery as part of the penalty.
- With passage of SB 44, some local units may be able to add shifts or hire additional staff, putting more officers on the street and creating a safer environment for the entire community.

MRA would like to thank the bill sponsor and the committee chairman for their work on this issue. We believe the H-2 substitute includes all of the key components of good legislation.

The H-2 substitute for SB 44 will increase public safety, reduce response times when a crime does occur, and further discourage retail fraud and ORC. We urge House Law and Justice Committee members to support SB 44.

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