



RETAIL INDUSTRY LEADERS ASSOCIATION

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December 9, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell and Leader McCarthy:

Leading retailers are concerned about the growing impact organized retail crime is having on the communities we proudly serve, which is why we strongly support the bipartisan and bicameral Integrity, Notification and Fairness in Online Retail Marketplaces (INFORM) for Consumers Act. This important legislation will modernize our consumer protection laws to safeguard families and communities from the sale of illicit products and we urge its quick passage.

As millions of Americans have undoubtedly seen on the news in recent weeks and months, retail establishments of all kinds have seen a significant uptick in organized crime in communities across the nation. While we constantly invest in people, policies, and innovative technology to deter theft, criminals are capitalizing on the anonymity of the Internet and the failure of certain marketplaces to verify their sellers. This trend has made retail businesses a target for increasing theft, hurt legitimate businesses who are forced to compete against unscrupulous sellers, and has greatly increased consumer exposure to unsafe and dangerous counterfeit products.

There is no simple answer to stopping organized retail crime or the sale of counterfeits—but key to stemming the tide of these growing problems is transparency. If a customer buys a product from a local retail storefront or ecommerce site and it is broken or otherwise defective, the consumer knows exactly who to contact. There is accountability. In the current environment, criminal networks and unscrupulous businesses have exploited a system that protects their anonymity to sell unsafe, stolen, or counterfeit products with little legal recourse. This lack of transparency on particular third-party marketplaces has allowed criminal activity to fester.

The INFORM Consumers Act is a simple, bipartisan measure that will increase transparency online for all marketplaces, making it easier for consumers to identify exactly who they are buying from, and make it harder for criminal elements to hide behind fake screennames and false business information to fence illicit products while evading law enforcement. The legislation has unified retailers, consumer groups, manufacturers, law enforcement, and all those serious about stopping the sale of counterfeit and stolen goods sold online.

It is time for Congress to modernize our consumer safety laws so consumers, retail employees, and businesses are not targets of organized retail crime and dangerous counterfeit products. Implementing basic transparency and verification protocols is essential and will finally expose criminals who are selling consumers stolen, fake, and dangerous products. We appreciate your support and timely action on this needed legislation. We look forward to working with you and your staff to help protect communities, families, and consumers.

Sincerely,

Ken Hicks
Academy Sports + Outdoors

Corie Barry
Best Buy Co., Inc.

Lauren Hobart
DICK'S Sporting Goods, Inc.

Richard Johnson
Foot Locker, Inc.

W. Rodney McMullen
The Kroger Co.

Richard Keyes
Meijer, Inc.

Erik B. Nordstrom
Nordstrom, Inc.

Heyward Donigan
Rite Aid Corporation

Brian C. Cornell
Target Corporation

Steve Rendle
VF Corporation

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Retail Industry Leaders Association

William Rhodes
AutoZone, Inc.

Neela Montgomery
CVS Health

Todd J. Vasos
Dollar General Corporation

Craig Menear
The Home Depot, Inc.

Chip Bergh
Levi Strauss & Co.

Geoffroy van Raemdonck
Neiman Marcus, Inc.

Ron Coughlin
Petco Animal Supplies, Inc.

Anthony T. Hucker
Southeastern Grocers

David Kimbell
Ulta Beauty, Inc.

John Standley
Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc.