

The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act

Organized retail crime has escalated in both scale and sophistication, posing increasing risks to the retail sector and national supply chain. These crimes increasingly target freight systems like rail, leading to shipment delays, rising costs, and serious safety concerns.

The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA), H.R. 2853 and S. 1404, is a bipartisan effort in Congress aimed at giving law enforcement the tools, coordination, and authority needed to fight back against this growing and organized criminal activity.

Background

Every year, America's freight system—including trains, trucks, and barges—delivers nearly 59 tons of goods for every American. Intermodal rail containers haul everything from clothing and toys to electronics and appliances.

But these high-value shipments have become prime targets. In just one year, thefts from railroads jumped 40%, with over 65,000 incidents reported in 2024 alone. CargoNet data shows a 27% increase in cargo theft across all freight modes in 2024, with average losses topping \$200,000 per incident.

This isn't petty crime—it's coordinated, tech-savvy, and often transnational in scope. One major railroad reported arresting the same individual five times in a single day. Another saw one suspect arrested 17 times. Meanwhile, only about 1 in 10 theft attempts result in an arrest.

Why It Matters

Freight railroads are the backbone of the U.S. economy, moving 40% of long-distance freight and investing more than \$23 billion annually to maintain a resilient, sustainable network. When organized crime strikes the supply chain, it slows down deliveries, drives up prices, and puts vital infrastructure at risk.

CORCA directly addresses these challenges by improving cross-agency coordination, expanding data sharing, and strengthening legal authority across jurisdictions. It would give law enforcement more tools to combat sophisticated, multi-state theft rings—and help protect the freight system we all rely on.

In Brief

The *Combating Organized Retail Crime Act* (CORCA) is a vital, bipartisan bill that would modernize the federal response to organized cargo and retail theft. Congress should pass CORCA to safeguard economic and supply chain security.

