



July 28, 2025

The Honorable Jerry Nadler
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: The Recent Rise of Retail and Cargo Theft by Organized Crime Groups; Targeting Both Rail and Trucking Freight

Dear Representative Nadler,

The Business Council of New York State, Inc., is the leading business organization in New York State, representing the interests of large and small firms throughout the state. Our membership is made up of more than 3,200 member companies, local chambers of commerce and professional and trade associations.

Though 76 percent of our members are small businesses, we also represent some of the largest and most important corporations in the world. Several of which have been impacted by the recent rise of retail theft and cargo theft with organized groups specifically preying on goods transported by rail. Retail crime has escalated in both scale and sophistication, posing increasing risks to the retail sector and national supply chain. These crimes are increasingly targeting freight systems like rail and truck, leading to shipment delays, rising costs and serious safety concerns.

Cargo theft in New York, as elsewhere, is a significant problem with substantial financial and logistical consequences. New York, being a retail mecca, is particularly at risk for these types of crimes of high value goods. Major rail lines and distribution centers could be vulnerable to theft, as seen in other states.

I've been made aware that H.R.2853, the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA) was introduced to give law enforcement the tools, coordination, and authority needed to fight back against this growing and organized criminal activity. By improving cross-agency coordination, expanding data sharing, and strengthening legal authority across jurisdictions. It would give law enforcement more ability to combat sophisticated, multi-state theft rings, and help protect the freight system we all rely on.

Last year when I visited Capitol Hill, I told the story of a beer theft operation in the Bronx where product was being removed from railroad cars. In 2024 alone, train thefts surged by approximately 40%, with over \$100 million in losses nationally and more than 64,000 incidents affecting Class I railroads.

These thefts do more than just disrupt cargo, they pose serious public safety hazards, particularly when railcars carrying hazardous materials are tampered with or derailed intentionally. That risk is unacceptable to communities, first responders, and the broader supply chain.

I hope you will consider co-sponsoring this legislation as it would be beneficial to our businesses and the consumers of New York. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph Alston
Director of Government Affairs