

Town of Bladensburg

Council Members

Ward I

Trina Brown

Kalisha Dixon



Mayor

Takisha James

Council Members

Ward I

Marilyn Blount

Carrol McBryde

January 30, 2024

Re: **Senate Bill 100 - Criminal Law - Organized Retail Theft – Support**

Dear Chairman William C. Smith Jr, and Members of the Judiciary Proceedings Committee,

My name is Takisha James, and I serve as Mayor of Bladensburg, Maryland. I want to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of **Senate Bill 100- Criminal Law - Organized Retail Theft**. I am writing today on behalf of the Town Council and our nearly 10,000 residents to request your support of this important matter.

The Town of Bladensburg has a vibrant commercial corridor, and some of our local retailers have felt the sting of organized retail theft. After meeting with the County and our Police Department, we have implemented enhanced enforcement areas and protocols to address this issue, causing us to use limited resources to address these rashes of theft.

Organized retail theft has become a significant problem, impacting businesses and consumers who may ultimately bear the financial burden through increased prices and reduced shopping options. The brazen nature of these crimes threatens public safety and the livelihoods of hardworking individuals who depend on the success of our local businesses.

I applaud your commitment to addressing this issue through legislation, and I believe that the proposed Bill will create a safer and more secure environment for both businesses and consumers by providing law enforcement with the necessary tools and resources to combat organized retail theft, which is lacking in the current Maryland Criminal Statutes.

Additionally, the Town is supportive of the opportunities for collaboration. I urge you to continue your efforts in championing this legislation, and I thank you for your dedication to addressing this critical issue. I look forward to seeing the positive impact that this legislation will have on our community.

The Town of Bladensburg supports SB 100, and we value the opportunity to support these efforts. Thank you for taking public input on this topic.

Sincerely,

Takisha D. James

Mayor, Town of Bladensburg