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February 1, 2024

Testimony in **Support** of

SB 100 – Organized Retail Theft

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to show my strong support for Senate Bill (SB) 100. I am the State's Attorney's for Prince George's County.

The Special Prosecutions Unit (SPU) for our Office prosecutes, among other offenses, organized financial and economic crimes. These crimes usually involve predatory activities such as identity theft, computer fraud, and so-called Ponzi schemes. The recent spate of events involving systematic looting of our region's retail outlets by identifiable, organized crews, often wielding firearms, and other deadly weapons, presents an additional insidious challenge to our efforts to enforce the law.

The provisions proposed under SB 100 would provide a powerful tool for prosecutors to use in confronting this emerging challenge by allowing individual instance of retail theft committed in furtherance of an organized criminal scheme to be joined in one prosecution, even if the perpetrator committed such crimes in multiple Maryland jurisdictions. Otherwise, perpetrators are able to hide behind the legal fiction that each of their retail looting crimes somehow stand alone, without connection to the organized criminal enterprise of which each of these crimes is the essence.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report, and ultimately passage, on SB 100.

Sincerely,

/s/

Aisha N. Braveboy
State's Attorney's for Prince George's County