



## PRESS RELEASE

North Carolina Retail Merchants Association (NCRMA)  
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### RETAIL CRIME ALLIANCE HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**Raleigh, NC** (October 15, 2018) – Law enforcement officers and retail loss prevention professionals from across North and South Carolina came together at the Sheraton Imperial in Durham, NC on Thursday, October 4 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Carolinas Organized Retail Crime Alliance (CORCA).

Nearly 150 participants were welcomed to the event by Sergeant Scott Womack of the Raleigh Police Department and the 2018-19 CORCA president. Retail attendees represented all types of stores from chains to one-store operations and included grocery, apparel, pharmacy, beauty, home improvement and general merchandise. Law enforcement officers from police and sheriff’s departments in both states were active participants as well.

The 2018 “CORCA Champion” award was presented to Representative Sarah Stevens (R-Surry) for her tireless efforts during the 2018 legislative session to ensure passage of legislation important to both the law enforcement and retail loss prevention communities.

Expert speakers covered a wide scope of topics including: conflict resolution, handling an active shooter, and return fraud. Featured speakers included Dave Young with Vistelar, Dr. Adi Raz with Appriss Retail, Terry Hairston with Defend and Protect, Inc., and Kimberly Overton with the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys.

Attendees also heard from loss prevention officers employed by both national and local retail chains who shared their first-hand knowledge of current ORC trends and the methods learned to deter further loss, as well as valuable information shared to prepare businesses for future natural disasters.

During breaks from the educational sessions, attendees visited exhibits by vendors. Vendor company representatives explained and demonstrated some of the newest product innovations, services, and educational resources to assist retailers and law enforcement in preventing organized retail crime as well as apprehending offenders.

Organized Retail Crime (ORC) is more than just shoplifting. It is a concerted effort by a group of skilled, well-organized professionals who use theft and fraud, to convert illegally obtained merchandise into cash for financial gain. This usually involves the theft of large quantities of similar products from multiple stores, in numerous jurisdictions or states. ORC is often a gateway crime that leads law enforcement to major crime rings that use the illicit proceeds to fund other crimes-such as organized crime activities, illegal drugs, health care fraud, money laundering, and potentially even terrorism. The National Retail Federation estimates that ORC costs retailers and consumers \$46.8 billion in 2017 alone.

***About CORCA:***

Officially launched in February 2016, CORCA is a partnership between law enforcement and retail loss prevention officers to combat organized retail crime in the Carolinas. It is a division of the Retail Consumer Alliance Foundation, within the North and South Carolina State Retail Associations and is supported by the retail associations along with the Carolinas Food Industry Council. CORCA was created to bridge communication between retailers and law enforcement - helping identify offenders and resolve organized retail crime cases in the Carolinas. For more information, visit <http://www.corca.org/>.