



SUPPORT Memorandum

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ON SENATE LABOR AGENDA 5/13/2024 PREVENT VIOLENCE IN RETAIL

S8358B Ramos

The New York State AFL-CIO, representing 2.5 million union members, retirees, and their families support the above-referenced legislation.

This bill amends the Labor Law to require retail employers to develop workplace violence prevention plans. This bill is necessary to address the proliferation of organized thefts of goods in retail stores across the state. These thefts have been orchestrated by criminal rings that plan out illegal activities, including shoplifting, "smash and grab," and various other methods of theft, often with armed participants and sometimes with physical violence.

When attacks of this nature are initiated, the workers at these retail locations, the customers and the public are at risk of theft and violence. Strong preventive actions and deterrents are needed to help prevent violence during these incidents.

This bill will enact safety requirements that protect workers by requiring a thorough analysis of worksites for areas that are vulnerable to organized theft rings and corrective action as needed. The bill will also require training of workers, on appropriate safety measures that can be implemented, self-defense, effective communication and interaction with law enforcement and emergency personnel, and best practices for de-escalation and violence deterrence techniques.

The safety processes and practices that this bill will put in place will help deter and prevent violence; and in the event that violence does occur, it will help workers respond in a manner that reduces harm. This is a comprehensive yet common-sense approach to this ongoing problem.

Therefore, this Federation urges this bill be passed.

For further information contact the Legislative Department at 518-436-8516.