

SUBJECT:	Revising conditions for an offense that qualified as organized retail theft
COMMITTEE:	Criminal Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment
VOTE:	9 ayes — Moody, Cook, Bhojani, Bowers, Darby, Harrison, Leach, C. Morales, Schatzline 0 nays
WITNESSES:	<p>For — Michael Braun; Jeremy Rosenthal (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i>: James Parnell, Dallas Police Association; David Batton, Harris County Deputies Organization FOP 39; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; Shea Place, Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association; Desiree Castro, Texas Food and Fuel Association; John Wilkerson, Texas Municipal Police Association; AJ Louderback, Texas Sheriff's Regional Alliance; Idona Griffith; John Kroll)</p> <p>Against — (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i>: John McCord, Texas Retailers Association; Roxy D Hall Williamson)</p>
BACKGROUND:	Concerns have been raised that overlap in statute between two types of theft may result in some defendants being charged with organized retail theft when property theft may be more appropriate.
DIGEST:	<p>HB 4779 would revise conditions under which an offense qualified as organized retail theft. For an offense to qualify as organized retail theft, a person would have to commit the offense with the intent to support, facilitate, or engage in the acquisition of stolen retail merchandise and the redistribution of that merchandise into the supply chain. The value of merchandise involved in the offense would need to be at least \$2,500.</p> <p>The bill would repeal provisions establishing penalties for offenses of organized retail theft involving merchandise valued at less than \$2,500.</p> <p>The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.</p>