



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 17, 2011

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Northwest Ohio Small Business Owners Travel To Washington, D.C. In Support Of Bipartisan E-fairness Legislation

Marketplace Fairness Act Would Level The Playing Field For Local Businesses

Washington, DC – A group of Northwest Ohio small business owners and representatives traveled to Washington, DC this week to meet with members of the Ohio Congressional delegation and join Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee for a press conference showcasing the recently introduced Marketplace Fairness Act in the U.S. Senate.

The Marketplace Fairness Act levels the playing field between online-only retailers and small businesses on Main Street. Currently, online-only retailers enjoy a loophole that prevents them from collecting and remitting sales tax like their brick-and-mortar counterparts. This loophole is causing Main Street businesses to shutdown, which results in lost jobs in our local communities. Senator Alexander's legislation will give states the right to ensure that online-only retailers collect and remit sales tax and ensures the government isn't in the business of picking winners and losers.

Last month, Representatives Steve Womack (R-AR) and Jackie Speier (D-CA) introduced bipartisan legislation in the House of Representatives that gives states the authority to ensure that online-only retailers collect and remit sales taxes at the point of purchase.

"I am glad to see that the Senate is moving forward with bi-partisan legislation to close this tax loophole," said Gerry Gonya, co-owner of Harvey Oaks Jewelers in Fremont. "Too often, I have customers come in to my store, find the item they like and then purchase it from an online jewelry store to avoid paying sales tax."

The group making the trip to Washington included small business owners in a number of retail sectors particularly disadvantaged by the lack of online sales tax collection, including jewelry stores, tire dealers, and restaurant supply companies.

"Brick and mortar retailers make up the heart of our communities," said Angela Morelock, Executive Director of Downtown Fremont. "Passing this bill would help small businesses in Fremont and across Ohio by eliminating the unfair sales tax loophole for online retailers."

"A sale is a sale, no matter whether it happens on Main Street or online," said Julie Kreilick, Owner Looking Good Salon, "We came to Washington to ask our legislators to pass the Marketplace Fairness Act which would help keep jobs and revenue in Fremont."

The group of Ohio business owners also met with representatives from the offices of Senator Rob Portman, Congressman Steve Stivers, Congressman Pat Tiberi, and Congressman Bob Latta and encouraged them to stand with their local businesses by supporting and sponsoring the legislation. Small business owners from Ohio who traveled to Washington, D.C. for meetings on Capitol Hill included: Gerry Gonya, Harvey Oaks Jewelers (Fremont); Julie Kreilick, Looking Good Salon (Fremont); Angela Morelock, Downtown Fremont (Fremont).

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