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JA Welcomes Senate Introduction of “Sales Tax Fairness and Simplification Act”

Legislation would require remote sellers, such as Internet retailers, to collect sales taxes

New York, NY – Jewelers of America has announced its full support for the swift passage of the “Sales Tax Fairness and Simplification Act,” which was introduced Tuesday, May 22, in the Senate by Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY). The bill promises to help states efficiently and fairly collect sales and use taxes from remote sellers, who currently are not required to remit these taxes on catalog and Internet purchases.

“For 15 years, Internet and other remote retailers have had an unfair tax advantage that has harmed both consumers and traditional business owners. We don't believe consumers should be punished because they would rather shop on Main Street than in cyberspace,” says JA President and CEO Matthew A. Runci.

According to Senator Enzi, the legislation would streamline the country's more-than 7,500 diverse sales tax jurisdictions by permitting states that become voluntary members of the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA), to require remote sellers to collect and remit sales and use taxes. A total of 15 states have already changed their tax laws and implemented the requirements of the SSUTA, which would help harmonize states sales and use tax rules, bring uniformity to the definitions of items in the sales tax base, reduce the paperwork burden on retailers, and incorporate new technology to modernize administrative procedures.

"The states have acted. It is now time for Congress to provide states that enact the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement with the authority to require remote retailers to collect sales tax, just as Main Street retailers do today," says Enzi.

JA has joined the E-Fairness Coalition, a large group of businesses, associations, labor unions and state and local governments working to get the "Sales Tax Fairness and Simplification Act" enacted. The association has been working on the sales tax fairness issue since 2002, and vows to remain committed until the bill's passage into law. It will closely monitor hearings and other action on the bill.

The association urges all retail jewelers to write to their state's U.S. Senators expressing support for the "Sales Tax Fairness and Simplification Act." Jewelers can also send letters to Senator Enzi's office, 379A Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.

For more information about Jewelers of America, visit www.jewelers.org.

Jewelers of America is the national trade association for retail jewelers. With 11,000 member stores, JA also works locally through its 40 state and regional affiliates. JA advocates high social, ethical, and environmental standards, promotes professional business and leadership skills, and enhances its members' profitability by offering education, certification, marketing and cost-saving programs.

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