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OF
REAL ESTATE
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REITS:
BUILDING
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March 11, 2014

The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte:

The National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts® (NAREIT®)¹ commends the House Judiciary Committee for holding its March 12 hearing regarding “Exploring Alternative Solutions on the Internet Sales Tax Issue.” We are hopeful that the information developed at the hearing will expedite the Committee’s consideration of the internet sales and use tax issue, and help move the matter to a satisfactory resolution.

NAREIT not only supports the Marketplace Fairness Act that passed the Senate with strong bipartisan support last May, but we are also in favor of any other reasonable and workable solution which may be developed by your Committee.

Simply put, NAREIT urges enactment this year of legislation providing a bipartisan solution to the unsustainable and inequitable differing sales tax and use tax collection requirements that currently exist between “remote” and “brick-and-mortar” retailers. Such a step would provide a level playing field for off-site, out-of-state and on-site, in-state sellers, and would assist states in collecting billions of dollars of currently owed but unpaid sales and use taxes.

Absent Congressional action, the current sales price discrimination against Main Street retailers stemming from the tilted playing field in effect today will be only magnified as remote sales continue to increase relative to on-site sales. Plainly stated, remote vendors should not be afforded by Congress with an economic advantage over brick and mortar businesses that are the lifeblood of our communities.

¹ NAREIT is the worldwide representative voice for real estate investment trusts (REITs) and publicly traded real estate companies with an interest in U.S. real estate and capital markets. NAREIT’s members are REITs and other businesses throughout the world that own, operate, and finance income-producing real estate, as well as those firms and individuals who advise, study, and service those businesses. NAREIT’s members include the lessors of shopping centers, regional malls and free standing retail properties whose tenants are legally obligated under current law to collect the sales tax applicable to in-state purchases, while many online and other remote retailers are not so obligated.



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Thank you for your leadership on this issue and for your efforts to achieve a workable solution for all interested parties. NAREIT believes now is the time for Congress to approve parity between remote and on-location sellers with respect to sales and use tax collection responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.A. Wechsler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Steven A. Wechsler
President and CEO

