



July 29, 2011

The Honorable Dick Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Federal Legislation on Interstate Sales Tax Collection

Dear Senator Durbin:

Amazon.com has long supported a simple, nationwide system of state and local sales tax collection, evenhandedly applied to all sellers, no matter their business model, location, or level of remote sales. To this end, I am writing to thank you for your bill that would allow states that sufficiently simplify their rules to require collection of sales tax by out-of-state sellers.

The US Supreme Court has twice ruled that, because of the extreme complexity of the states' and localities' current sales tax rules, it would be an unconstitutional burden on interstate commerce for a state to require an out-of-state seller to collect sales tax. In other words, under current federal law, a retailer may only be required to collect sales tax in states where the retailer's business operations have a physical presence.

The states created the Streamlined Sales Tax Project to simplify and harmonize current state and local sales tax laws. For years, Amazon has participated in the states' project with the shared goal of achieving agreement on meaningful simplifications and interstate harmonization of state and local taxes that would enable Congress to permit states to require all sellers to collect.

Introduction of your bill returns the discussion of interstate collection of sales tax to Congress, which the Supreme Court says is the appropriate forum to resolve the issue. Amazon looks forward to working with you and your colleagues in Congress to help enact sales tax collection legislation.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul E. Misener". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Misener
Vice President for Global Public Policy