

November 23, 2011

Dear Senators Enzi, Durbin and Alexander,

On behalf of the commercial real estate industry and our nation's economic development officials, we would like to thank you for your leadership on S. 1832, the Marketplace Fairness Act. We strongly support this bipartisan legislation that will help states and local governments collect much-needed revenue and level the playing field for community-based businesses.

Currently, many states and municipalities are encountering unprecedented budget deficits. In order to meet their obligations many public agencies must either cut jobs and services or raise revenue from increasing sales taxes, property taxes or other business fees. The Marketplace Fairness Act will give the states the power to collect revenue they are owed and help offset current budget shortfalls – all without costing the federal government a dime.

Every day, brick-and-mortar retailers of all sizes collect and remit sales taxes, putting them at a significant competitive disadvantage to online and catalogue retailers who continue to reap the benefits from an antiquated and biased system. The Marketplace Fairness Act will provide a fairer and more transparent market for community based retailers and it will help keep our downtowns vibrant by protecting much needed local jobs, promoting community investment and maintaining access to essential goods and services in our neighborhoods.

It is time for the federal government to allow states to enforce their laws and promote sound policy that supports our municipalities and reflects the realities of today's marketplace.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

International Council of Shopping Centers
The Real Estate Roundtable
National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts
Commercial Real Estate Finance Council
International Downtown Association
NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association
National Association of REALTORS®
CCIM Institute, Institute of Real Estate Management
Realtors Land Institute
Society of Office and Industrial Realtors