



June 15, 2011

Senator Tom Coburn
172 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
OF
REAL ESTATE
INVESTMENT
TRUSTS®
♦ ♦ ♦
REITS:
BUILDING
DIVIDENDS
AND
DIVERSIFICATION®

Re: Support Main Street Fairness Tax Act

Dear Senator Coburn:

The National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts (NAREIT), which represents REITs and publicly traded real estate companies that own and operate shopping centers, regional malls and free standing retail properties, is strongly committed to tax equality for online and onsite business operations. We believe all commercial sales transactions should be subject to the same tax collection responsibilities, since they already are subject to the same tax liabilities. Remote vendors should not be afforded an economic advantage over brick and mortar businesses that are the lifeblood of our communities, particularly during one of the worst economic crises in generations.

Under current law, Internet and other sellers that do not have a physical presence in a state avoid the responsibility of Main Street retailers who must collect the sales and use taxes necessary to fund basic government responsibilities, including education, emergency preparedness, homeland security, health care, and transportation. As a result of this unfair situation, billions of dollars in sales taxes owed state and local governments for remote sales – estimated at over \$10 billion a year annually by 2012 – have gone uncollected.

Passage of the **Main Street Fairness Tax Act**, introduced in 2009 as H.R. 5660 and soon to be introduced in the 112th Congress, would address the current inequity by authorizing states that have simplified and streamlined their sales tax rules in recent years to require retailers – other than “small businesses” – to collect sales tax on remote sales. NAREIT supports passage of this legislative solution that will level the playing field for brick and mortar and remote retailers, and assist states and localities in providing vital support for fund-challenged services.

NAREIT encourages you to seriously review the **Main Street Fairness Tax Act** and consider adding your name to the proposal when it is introduced later this year in the United States Senate. This important legislation should be adopted without delay, either as a free-standing proposal or as part of the ongoing



negotiations on the Federal budget deficit, to respond to the states' existing fiscal needs and the current disproportion method to collect sales tax.

We look forward to working with you and your Senate colleagues to ensure that simple and equitable sales tax collection becomes a reality nationwide.

Sincerely,

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

Steven A. Wechsler
President and CEO

