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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

BOARD OF CLARK COUNTY COUNCILORS

Tom Mielke • David Madore • Jeanne E. Stewart

October 7, 2015

The Honorable Jaime Herrera-Beutler
U.S. House of Representatives
O.O. Howard House (Officers' Row)
750 Anderson Street, Suite B
Vancouver, WA 98661

Dear Representative Herrera-Beutler:

RE: Cosponsor HR 2775 – *The Remote Transactions Parity Act*

Clark County asks for your support and co-sponsorship of the Remote Transactions Parity Act (H.R. 2775). This bill will modernize our nation's outdated sales tax collection process. The Remote Transactions Parity Act does not impose a new tax, but instead levels the playing field between online and brick-and-mortar stores by closing the online sales tax loophole. Sales taxes are owed on all purchases, and it is unfair for online retailers to skip collecting taxes, while the stores in our community collect all owed taxes.

The Act will also provide local governments with the resources needed to invest in communities, build infrastructure and provide important services like police protection, mental health services, and emergency response.

Today's marketplace offers consumers more choices than ever, but the existing outdated and inequitable tax and regulatory environment puts traditional retail outlets at an unfair disadvantage. The Supreme Court's decision in *Quill Corp. v. North Dakota*, 504 U.S. 298 (1992), left state and local governments unable to adequately enforce their existing sales tax laws on out-of-state catalog and online sales.

Fortunately, with its clear constitutional authority to regulate interstate commerce, Congress can give states and local governments the power to require sellers who do not have a physical presence in their jurisdiction to charge and collect sales taxes. We strongly urge you to support our local businesses and cosponsor H.R. 2775. Thank you for your leadership on this issue, and for all your hard work on behalf of Clark County.

Sincerely,

David Madore, Chair

Jeanne E. Stewart, Councilor

Tom Mielke, Councilor



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WASHINGTON

October 12, 2015

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

RE: SUPPORT THE MARKETPLACE FAIRNESS ACT (S 698)

On behalf of the Clark County, we are writing to request your support for the bipartisan *Marketplace Fairness Act (S 698)*. Such legislation would not impose a new tax, but would enable state and local governments to compel retailers to collect and remit sales taxes on online sales, which are already owed to them under current law.

The current tax structure for online sales creates vast disparities between brick and mortar businesses and online retailers, and costs state and local governments an estimated \$23 billion per year in taxes owed on remote sales. All 45 states that impose a sales tax already require consumers to pay a tax on online purchases. However no federal law exists to enable states to compel online stores to require consumers to pay this tax. In the absence of such a law, these taxes are not being paid, and local businesses are being put at a five to ten percent competitive disadvantage to remote sellers.

Passing internet sales tax legislation now has never been more important because of the tremendous growth in online sales that has taken place over the years. And as online sales continue to increase the amount of taxes going unpaid to state and local governments to provide critical community services also increases. For example, according to the Department of Commerce e-commerce sales in 2005 were \$87 billion, and grew to \$297.5 billion in 2014. The time for congressional action to repair this broken tax system, redress these losses and level the playing field for both brick and mortar and online retailers is now.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. We hope you can sign on as a cosponsor of S 698. We look forward to working with you to advance Senate consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

David Madore, Chair

Jeanne E. Stewart, Councilor

Tom Mielke, Councilor



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October 12, 2015

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

RE: SUPPORT THE MARKETPLACE FAIRNESS ACT (S 698)

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Sincerely,

David Madore, Chair

Jeanne E. Stewart, Councilor

Tom Mielke, Councilor

