**SAMPLE LETTER FROM RETAILER TO REPRESENTATIVE– FEEL FREE TO PERSONALIZE**

Dear Representative **[INSERT:** Last Name**]**:

I am writing to ask for your support of efairness legislation to close the online sales tax loophole and bring long-overdue fairness to stores like mine.

For too long, brick-and-mortar retailers have been put at a tremendous disadvantage because of an antiquated sales tax framework that clearly benefits online-only retailers. Fair competition is a necessary part of a thriving retail marketplace – but in order for that to happen there has to be a level playing field. We hear repeatedly about business – especially small business, being the backbone of this country - - so I ask you to stand with us. Help modernize our policies and create an environment in which all retailers can grow, create jobs, and continue to drive the American economy.

The current sales tax system works against my business. On average, local businesses like mine circulate more than 40 cents back into the community for every dollar spent, according to the American Independent Business Alliance. Local retailers also drive employment. According to a 2011 University of Tennessee study, each $1 million of new retail sales in traditional brick-and-mortar establishments adds 3.61 jobs. The same $1 million in new sales at an online retailer is expected to create 0.88 jobs. The International Council of Shopping Centers estimates that 1 in 11 jobs are shopping center related. Clearly, local retailers are critical to the economic health of the communities we call home.

Nationwide, passage of federal efairness legislation will help the economy and serve as a vehicle for major job creation over the next decade. According to a July 2013 study conducted by Arthur B. Laffer and Donna Arduin, by closing the online sales tax loophole, states would have the ability to create a more efficient tax system with fewer loopholes, a larger base, and lower rates for all taxpayers. A more efficient system would in turn increase states’ prosperity and employment, increasing GDP by $563.2 billion and adding over 1.5 million jobs in the next 10 years. Federal efairness legislation would current the current inefficiency in our sales tax system and give states the ability to avoid increasing taxes on in-state consumers and businesses.

Efairness will help level the playing field for brick-and-mortar retailers, while restoring the states’ right to establish and enforce collection of their own sales taxes. Under existing tax laws in 45 states, consumers are required to pay the sales tax on purchases made from out-of-state sellers directly to the state when the retailer does not collect it on their behalf. However, only 2% actually report this tax to the state, creating an estimated $23 billion revenue gap for state governments. The tax gap created by the status quo increases taxes on everyone else in the state, especially those paying income and property taxes. This puts my business at a further disadvantage. By correcting this inefficiency through passage of efairness legislation, Congress will give states the ability to avoid increasing taxes on in-state consumers and businesses.

Please ask House Leadership to act on efairness legislation this year and ensure a viable marketplace for all retailers—all without adding to the federal deficit, creating new taxes or increasing existing taxes.

Thank you.