



**WORLD TRADE CENTER®
NEW ORLEANS**

Serving the State of Louisiana

February 26, 2016

Dear Legislators:

I am writing this letter in support of extending the sunset provision of the Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program. Act 435 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature is set to expire, and a new bill to renew the LTFS Program is being submitted in the upcoming 2016 Regular Session.

The Tax Free Shopping Program is an essential tool used to encourage international tourists to visit Louisiana by offering a sales tax refund on qualified purchases.

Tourism generates \$11.2 billion in annual spending for Louisiana businesses, and shopping is a top activity of all travelers. International visitors, on average, spend 20% more than their domestic counterparts and stay at a destination two to three days longer.

Tourism is a major Louisiana industry which positively impacts the economy of our state. The Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program is a tremendous marketing tool; giving our state an added advantage in attracting international visitors, who in 2015, spent nearly \$42 million. We believe the Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program plays an essential role in strengthening the economic ties between our state and the many other countries that choose to visit and conduct business here.

The World Trade Center of New Orleans, representing more than 1,000 corporate and individual members across Louisiana, fully supports the passage of legislation to extend the Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program.

Sincerely,

Dominik Knoll
President & CEO

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