



Gary P. LaGrange, PPM  
President and Chief  
Executive Officer

February 1, 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 is one of Louisiana's top industries, generating \$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.

During 2015, international visitors spent \$42 million in tax free shopping purchases from 51,000 international visitors. Nearly 10,000 of those visitors were cruise ship passengers or crew members on cruise ships or vessels.

The Port of New Orleans and Port Commission fully support this initiative and has seen tremendous value and the impact it offers to all of the businesses in the Greater New Orleans area and throughout the State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gary P. LaGrange", written over a horizontal line that extends across the page.

Gary P. LaGrange, PPM  
President & CEO

