



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

12 March 2012

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Snowe and Senator Collins:

I would like to respectfully call on you both to lend your strong support to the Marketplace Fairness Act.

Maine's economy is in transition. Although we still want to attract large manufacturers, we also need to recognize that our economy is increasingly reliant on small businesses and start-ups. That includes a healthy concentration of retail businesses. They are the backbone of our economy and our communities. That is why I believe this piece of legislation has particular merit for the people of Maine.

From my experience in the retail world, I can assure you that Maine retailers love competition. They know competition sharpens their services and products, and keeps customers coming back. But the rules need to be fair and applied equally. Give Maine people a chance to compete on a level playing field and they will shine.

Unfortunately, a damaging inequity exists in the retail marketplace because some online retailers are not required to collect Maine sales tax, but Maine retailers are. Not only does this hurt Maine businesses, it hurts the State. If the handcuffs on these small retailers were removed, they could compete on equal terms. They would generate more sales, pay more sales tax to the state treasury, hire more local retailers, and pump more money into local economies throughout Maine.

As you know, the Marketplace Fairness Act does not raise taxes. It simply provides for the collection of sales tax already due. State budget deliberations are well under way, and it would be quite helpful to have certainty about our future revenue streams. I have pledged to lower Maine income taxes and stop wasteful government spending. One powerful tool in achieving these goals would be to have the ability to collect taxes that are due.



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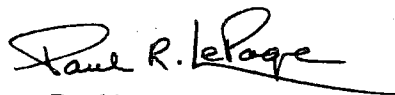
Senator Olympia Snowe
Senator Susan Collins

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There's no denying that passing the bill would give thousands of small Maine businesses a real boost. Through no fault of their own, federal policy now gives some out-of-state corporations an unfair advantage over other Maine retailers. Our citizens have been patient as Congress tended to the needs of Wall Street. Having studied this bill, I feel that it is now time for Congress to tend to the needs of Main Street. I urge you to vote in favor of the Marketplace Fairness Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul R. LePage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul R. LePage
Governor