



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 21, 2017

The Honorable John Eklund, Chairman
Ohio Senate Ways & Means Committee
Statehouse, Rm. 143
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Eklund,

I write today in support of Senate Bill 9, legislation introduced by Senator Kevin Bacon to reauthorize a three day sales tax holiday for back to school purchases. It is my understanding that your committee will be considering it soon, and I urge you and all of your colleagues to support this legislation as it will provide an annual boost to economic activity in the State, while still maintaining necessary revenue streams for the State and local governments.

Before I was elected to Congress, I led a coalition that first advocated for this legislation back in 2009. I did so because at the start of every school year I noticed that my neighbors would travel en masse from Ohio to nearby Pennsylvania in order to purchase school clothes, which have no sales tax in Pennsylvania. The State of Ohio, in particular the counties along the border, were losing tax revenue and missing out on an annual spike in economic activity because of better sales and more options in Pennsylvania.

Ohio's sales tax holiday has done much to remedy this situation and has proven to be of great benefit to Ohio consumers, retailers, and county governments. Year after year, major retailers have reported that sales have increased across the board for both tax-exempt and nonexempt merchandise during the three day holiday period. Likewise, retailers who do not sell tax-exempt items have also indicated an increase in sales during the sales tax holiday. Furthermore, economic metrics from previous years indicated that the holiday is particularly beneficial for border county governments, who experienced an increase in sales tax collection double that of Ohio's statewide average during the three day period.

I appreciate your leadership and your willingness to consider this important legislation in your committee, and I again urge you and your colleagues to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Bill Johnson
Member of Congress