



To: Chairman Ryan Smith

Cc: Members of the House Finance Committee

From: Kristin Mullins, President/CEO, Ohio Grocers Association

Date: 4/15/2016

Re: Support for SB 264

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 264, legislation sponsored by Senator Bacon, to make permanent an exemption of back-to-school clothing, school supplies, and other school instructional materials from the Ohio sales and use tax during a three-day period in August each year.

As President of the Ohio Grocers Association, I proudly represent nearly 400 food retailers, wholesalers and suppliers across the state. My members range from the largest chain stores to the smallest "mom and pop" independent grocers as well as the wholesalers who supply these stores. Today, more and more retailers are offering new nontraditional products in their stores. Many of my members are selling non-food items including clothes and school supplies.

OGA supported the creation of Ohio's first ever sales tax holiday last year and the results show it was a huge success. According to a recently release study by the University of Cincinnati Economics Center, the tax holiday last year save consumers \$3.3 million and provided the state and local governments and with an additional \$4.7 million in sales tax revenue. Furthermore, the sales tax holiday generated greater foot traffic in stores, leading to overall higher retail sales across the board. Additionally, the data confirmed that significant cross-border shopping occurred with Ohio's border counties experiencing a 15.48% increase in sales tax collections during the holiday.

It is important to maintain this growing momentum and reauthorize Ohio's sales tax holiday this year and to make it permanent for 2017 going forward. Senate Bill 264 achieves this goal by further stimulating our economy and by giving the consumer a much needed boost during the expensive back to school season. This legislation has the full support of the Ohio Grocers Association.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristin Mullins".

Kristin Mullins
President/CEO