



Internet Association

April 26, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Smith
Representative, Ohio House District 93
77 S. High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Notice of Support to Remove the Expansion of the Sales Tax to Online Travel Agents in Substitute HB 49

Dear Representative Smith,

The Internet Association respectfully urges the removal of the expansion of the sales tax to online travel agents (OTAs) in Substitute HB49. OTAs are an example of internet-enabled innovation that increases quality and choice, while decreasing costs, and it must be allowed to compete and grow in an open market. This value proposition, along with the seamless connection of supply and demand, is unique to the internet and is reflective of all our member companies.

The Internet Association unites the interests of leading global internet companies and their online community of users. The Internet Association is dedicated to advancing public policy solutions at the local, state and federal levels of government to strengthen and protect internet freedom, foster innovation and economic growth, and empower users.

OTAs play an important role in facilitating tourism – a role made possible by these companies' current business model. As an intermediary between hotels and consumers, OTAs are uniquely positioned to help lower the cost and burden of traveling. This, in turn, helps hotels and communities in Ohio by encouraging business for hotels and bringing increased visitor spending at local vendors, supporting jobs and growth in the local economy. A new tax on OTA services would place significant financial burdens on companies and could decrease affordable travel accommodations for travellers looking to visit Ohio.

For these reasons and more, the Internet Association must urge the removal of the expansion of the sales tax to OTAs in Substitute HB49. Should you have any questions about our position, please contact me at brighton@internetassociation.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dustin Brighton'.

Dustin Brighton
Vice President of Government Affairs
Internet Association

CC: Honorable Members, Ohio State Legislature