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NEWS RELEASE

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Ontario County Board of Supervisors Calls for Internet Fairness Provision in State Budget to Protect Local Retailers

Canandaigua, NY – March 21, 2018 It is New York State budget negotiation time in Albany. In Ontario County, the Board of Supervisors is calling for the New York State Senate and Assembly to include a key provision in the budget to protect Ontario County retail businesses.

The provision, the Internet Fairness Conformity Tax, would ensure online businesses are required to collect the same sales tax revenue as traditional retail stores. This provision was introduced in Governor Andrew Cuomo's Executive Budget, and is estimated to generate \$159 million in revenue for counties in the first year of implementation.

"Our local brick and mortar stores are essential to Ontario County's economic engine. They provide great jobs and significant retail revenue, both of which are jeopardized by online businesses that are not held to the same standards for paying sales tax," said Ontario County Chairman Jack Marren. "We urge our partners in the Senate and Assembly to enact this proposal so that our shopkeepers on Main Street and in our shopping malls can continue to remain competitive and thriving."

Currently, online behemoths such as Amazon and eBay are required to collect sales tax from New York residents *only* if the seller is located in New York State. The Internet Fairness Conformity Tax would ensure the state's sales tax laws are enforced fairly across all sales platforms – whether the vendor is a storefront or an online outlet.

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“This is not a new tax. This initiative is about fairness and keeping up with technology that has allowed some online businesses to avoid collecting sales tax, which has put our hard working merchants at a serious disadvantage,” said Marren. “The Legislature can help reduce the unjust burden that is being placed on Ontario County’s small businesses, protect our taxpayers, protect our retail jobs, and preserve critical revenue for our communities by enacting this proposal.”

