

Sherman Enterprises Inc.

d/b/a

Stowe Mercantile

Boutique

PO Box 358

Stowe, VT 05672

802-253-4598

June 15, 2015

Re: Sales Tax disadvantage

I own and operate Stowe Mercantile, a typical general store here in rural Vermont. We have countless instances of losing sales because of internet vendors and the unfairness of on-line merchants not having to collect sales tax.

Of particular concern is our product category of Vermont made wooden products such as bowls, utensils, cutting boards and the like. A large cherry handmade bowl retails anywhere from \$300.00 to over \$500.00 depending on the size of the bowl and the wood species it is crafted from.

A customer purchases a beautiful cherry hand-carved bowl for \$500.00, add Vermont State sales to that (6%) and the customer's cost is \$530.00 and the customer walks out the door happy and my business has made a great sale.

Another customer considers the purchase but decides to search on line for the item. The customer is able to find a similar product for \$50.00 less from a discount source on-line because the on-line retailer has less overhead than my brick & mortar store. Then the customer sees the on-line retailer offers free shipping, which my business can't absorb either. And then the customer realizes there is no sales tax on the transaction since it is being shipped to another state.

This scenario occurs all the time.

I am all for competition and for customers to shop wherever they desire. But it is maddening and absolutely un-fair for on-line retailers to avoid collecting existing sales taxes. For businesses like mine, we're at an inherent dis-advantage just because we have a store front on Main Street.

Sales tax collection needs a national solution and small retailers like myself need the US Congress to act on this important issue quickly.

Respectfully,

Marc Sherman

Owner

Stowe Mercantile

Stowe, VT