

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2004

Dear Chairman Thomas:

We have read recent press accounts of your efforts to construct a FSC/ETI tax bill for consideration by the House of Representatives with interest. Specifically, we are alarmed by the back-and-forth on a tax provision that all of us have worked tirelessly, for many years, to see enacted. Namely, the deductibility of sales tax payments from federal income taxes for taxpayers living in states without an income tax, such as ours, continues to be a pressing issue across Washington state.

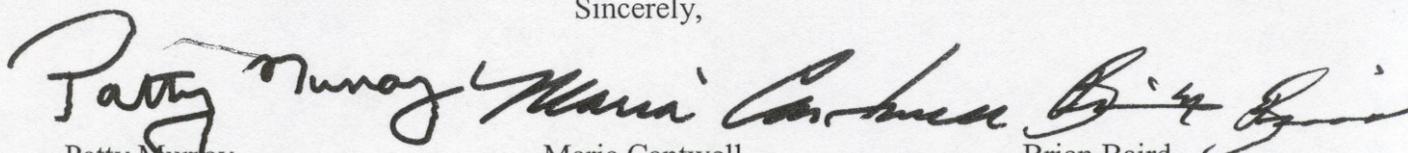
Several members of the House announced this week, apparently prematurely, that sales tax deductibility is included in your mark. We then read your comments, reported yesterday afternoon, in response to those assertions, "Some people have gotten out ahead of it. Nothing's in and nothing's out."

We urge you without delay to include permanent sales tax deductibility in your bill.

Unfortunately, many of the tax provisions passed by the majority in the last several sessions of Congress have done very little to improve economic conditions for the vast majority of our constituents. Unemployment remains unacceptably high, job growth is anemic, and the share of the tax burden borne by middle class families has grown. We believe we should take our nation's tax policy in a different direction. Inclusion of the sales tax deductibility provision in the FSC/ETI bill would be a first step in providing some real relief to our constituents.

We thank you for your consideration, and look forward to learning of your final decision regarding the inclusion of permanent sales tax deductibility in the FSC/ETI bill.

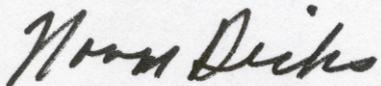
Sincerely,



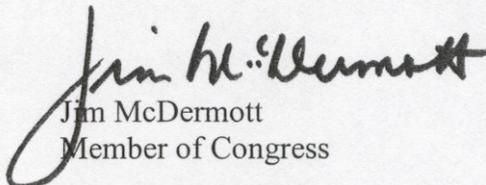
Patty Murray
United States Senate

Maria Cantwell
United States Senate

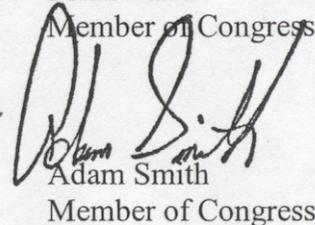
Brian Baird
Member of Congress



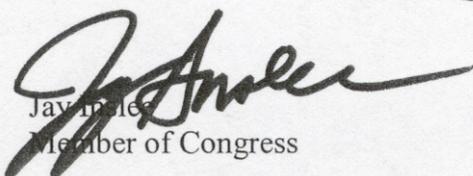
Norm Dicks
Member of Congress



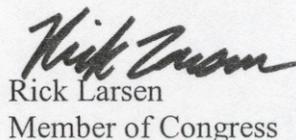
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Jay Inslee
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress