March 24, 2015

Senator John Thune
Dirksen Senate Office Building 511
Washington, DC 20510

CC: Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Majority Whip John Cornyn, Congressman Kevin Brady

Dear Senator Thune:

The undersigned organizations support your bill, the *Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015*.

We appreciate your work to lead the country towards a common sense tax code that does not impose a destructive double or triple tax at death. We support full and permanent repeal of the federal estate tax for the following reasons:

Repealing the death tax would spur job creation and grow the economy. Many studies have quantified the job losses caused by the death tax. Last year the Tax Foundation and Heritage Foundation both found that the US could create over 100,000 jobs by repealing the death tax. A 2012 study by the House Joint Economic Committee found that the death tax has destroyed over $1.1 trillion of capital in the US economy -- loss of small business capital means fewer jobs and lower wages. Lawrence Summers, former Secretary of the Treasury under President Clinton; Alicia Munell, member of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors; Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate for economics; and Douglas Holtz-Eakin, former CBO Director have all published work on the death tax's stifling effect on job growth and the economy as a whole.

The death tax contributes a very small portion of federal revenues. The death tax currently accounts for less than half of one percent of federal revenue. There is a good argument that not collecting the death tax would create more economic growth and lead to an increase in federal revenue from other taxes. A 2014 Tax Foundation analysis found repeal of the death tax would increase federal revenues by $3.3 billion per year using a more realistic, “dynamic” economic analysis. In addition, the death tax forces family businesses to waste money on expensive insurance policies and estate planning. These burdensome compliance costs make it even harder for business owners to expand their businesses and create more jobs.

The death tax falls particularly hard on minorities. The death tax threatens to confiscate generational capital from African-American and minority communities. Death tax liabilities bankrupted the Chicago Defender – the oldest black-owned daily newspaper in the United States – and will reduce net African-American wealth by 13 percent, according to a study conducted by Boston College professors John Haven and Paul Schervish. According to a 2004 Impacto Group poll, 50 percent of Hispanic business owners know someone who sold their business to pay the death tax and a quarter expect to sell their business because of the death tax.

A super-majority of likely voters support eliminating the death tax. Poll after poll has indicated that a super-majority of likely voters support repealing the death tax. Typically, two-thirds of likely voters support full and permanent repeal of the death tax. People instinctively feel that the death tax is not fair.

The death tax is unfair. It makes no sense to require grieving families to pay a confiscatory tax on their loved one's nest egg. Often this tax is paid by selling family assets like farms and businesses. Other times, employees of the family business must be laid off and payrolls slashed. No one should be punished for fulfilling the American dream.

The negative effects of the death tax make permanent repeal the only solution for family businesses and farms. Your legislation will help America's family businesses create jobs, expand operations, and grow the economy. We thank you for your continued leadership on this important issue.

Signed,

AMT – The Association for Manufacturing Technology

Food Marketing Institute

American Wholesale Marketers Association

International Franchise Association

American Supply Association

Agricultural Retailers Association

Heating, Air-conditioning, & Refrigeration Distributors International

National Association of Electrical Distributors

National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

American Trucking Association

Associated General Contractors of America

Wine & Spirit Wholesalers of America

National Grange

Associated Wire Rope Fabricators

Forest Landowners

Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.

American Loggers Council

American International Automobile Dealers Association

Hardwood Federation

Associated Equipment Distributors

NAHAD – The Association for Hose and Accessories Distribution

Tire Industry Association

National Electrical Contractors Association

Window & Door Manufacturers Association

Industrial Supply Association

Aeronautical Repair Station Association

American Beverage Licensees

Mason Contractors Association of America

International Foodservice Distributors Association

ISSA – The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association

United Fresh Produce Association

WADA Service Station & Automotive Repair Association

International Association of Plastics Distribution

United States Cattlemen's Association

International Sign Association

Auto Care Association

National Black Chamber of Commerce

National Small Business Association

International Housewares Association

Petroleum Marketers Association of America

National Funeral Directors Association

Professional Beauty Association

North American Meat Institute

Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades

Printing Industries of America

Truck Renting and Leasing Association

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

American Foundry Society

National Propane Gas Association

Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association

Forest Landowners Tax Council

NPES – The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies

Irrigation Association

National Insulation Association

Hispanic Leadership Fund

Woodworking Machine Industry Association

Materials Handling Equipment Distributors Association

National Confectioners Association

Americans for Tax Reform

Americans for Prosperity

Heritage Action for America

Club for Growth

R-Street Institute

Competitive Enterprise Institute

Center for Freedom and Prosperity

National Taxpayers Union

American Conservative Union

American Business Defense Council

Free Congress Action

Let Freedom Ring

American Civil Rights Union

American Commitment

National Tax Limitation Committee

Association of Mature American Citizens

Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Campaign for Liberty

Taxpayer Protection Alliance

Less Government

American Values

Maryland Taxpayers Association

Americans for Constitutional Action