

BENEFIT FROM THE VALUE.



Alabama Retail Association's

**2007 State
Legislative
Agenda**

For more on these issues, go to *Issue Briefs* at www.alabamaretail.org

The **Alabama Retail Association** board of directors has approved this agenda for the 2007 regular session of the Alabama Legislature:

ALABAMA RETAIL ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS:

- the **BUSINESS LICENSE REFORM** Coalition in its efforts to simplify county/state business license application procedures.
- a resolution to create a task force to study the feasibility of **ONLINE FILING AND PAYMENT OF BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATIONS**.
- legislation to **CREATE PARITY AND FAIRNESS** for retailers **ON LATE FEE CHARGES** for consumer credit transactions. We are asking for an increase in the minimum that can be collected from \$10 to \$18.
- legislation to **PROHIBIT LOCALITIES** from enacting **EMPLOYEE BENEFIT MANDATES**.
- legislation to impose **STIFFER PENALTIES** when thieves make their escapes through emergency exits. **THEFT BY EMERGENCY EXIT** would be a crime within the recently enacted ORGANIZED RETAIL THEFT STATUTE.
- an update to the Bad Check Statute to include **WORTHLESS CHECKS WITH ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES OR SIGNATURES ON FILE AS VALID, PROSECUTABLE OFFENSES**.
- changes to the **“RESIDENTIAL HOME BUILDER” AND CONTRACTOR LICENSING STATUTES** to simplify the process for multi-state retailers.
- **TAX CREDITS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES** that provide healthcare coverage for employees.
- legislation to require the **REPORTING OF LOCAL ORDINANCES** to a central location for public viewing.
- a monthlong **SALES TAX HOLIDAY** for **ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS**.
- the **“COMMON SENSE CONSUMPTION ACT,”** legislation that spells out those in the chain of distribution are not civilly liable for a consumer’s weight gain or obesity.
- create the **ALABAMA TAX APPEALS COMMISSION** as an independent state tax court headed by a judge with specific training in the area of state and local taxation. These administrative law judges would be removed from the authority of the Alabama Department of Revenue and placed under the Office of the Attorney General as a separate division.
- the **STREAMLINED SALES TAX** initiative that levels the playing field for in-state and out-of-state retailers. This will provide a simplified sales tax system that makes the collection of sales taxes more manageable for businesses.
- the Alabama Civil Justice Reform Committee (ACJRC) in **TORT REFORM** efforts, including previously introduced bills concerning post-judgment interest, mental anguish and product liability.
- legislation designed to **REDUCE FRAUD** in **WORKERS’ COMPENSATION** and **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**.
- **AMENDMENT-BY-AMENDMENT CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM** in order to streamline Alabama's constitution, remove archaic and offensive language and provide avenues by which the Alabama Legislature can enact meaningful tax reform.

ALABAMA RETAIL ASSOCIATION STATE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

ALABAMA RETAIL ASSOCIATION OPPOSES:

- legislation requiring mandatory **COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING**, or COOL, by retailers or restaurateurs.
- **BAND-AID** or **QUICK-FIX TAX SCHEMES** or singling out one particular industry or segment of business for punitive tax increases. ARA vehemently opposes any patchwork tax efforts.
- legislation to eliminate or restrict **CONTRACTUAL ARBITRATION AGREEMENTS**.
- legislation to change the current **ELECTION PROCESS FOR APPELLATE JUDGES**.
- **MANDATORY HEALTH CARE BENEFITS** that can further increase the price of healthcare coverage.
- **MANDATORY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND WAGES**.
- **MANDATES ON THE PRICE** for which retailers can **SELL PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**.
- legislation restricting **EXPIRATION DATES ON GIFT CARDS OR CERTIFICATES**.
- legislation to restrict the normal **USE OF CUSTOMER INFORMATION** obtained in the regular course of business.