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BUSINESS COALITION SUPPORTS HIGHER DE MINIMIS BILL

Washington, DC, September 21, 2012 – The 28 business associations listed below applaud the bill, S. 3597, introduced September 20 by Senators John Thune and Ron Wyden to raise the de minimis value, the level at which shipments entering the United States are free from tariffs, taxes or formal customs procedures. “The bill introduced by Senator Thune and Senator Wyden is a major step forward in facilitating trade and will particularly benefit small and medium U.S. enterprises, as well as individual consumers, who ship more low value items. A higher de minimis level will stimulate trade, spur the growth of business across a range of industries, and create jobs,” said Michael Mullen, Executive Director of the Express Association of America. “We would like to thank the Senators for their leadership on this issue and call on their colleagues in the Senate to support their efforts toward trade facilitation and customs modernization,” he added.

The U.S. de minimis level has been stagnant at \$200 for almost 20 years. Senators Thune and Wyden are proposing an increase to \$800, the amount a U.S. citizen can bring home from a trip overseas without paying duties or going through a formal entry process. Their bill is a companion to a similar bill introduced in the House by Rep. Schock, which now has garnered the support of 142 bipartisan co-sponsors.

In addition to promoting faster border clearance for low value shipments, a higher de minimis level will benefit the government as customs officers will be able to focus enforcement efforts on higher risks such as product safety and protecting intellectual property. The higher level would also benefit lower-capacity small businesses by reducing the burden associated with importing low-value supply and international retail returns. Furthermore, the legislation has no impact on the security of shipments entering the U.S., as all shipments undergo a security review regardless of value.

In addition to the benefits for traders, consumers and the government, eliminating document preparation, processing, and storage requirements for millions of shipments will allow companies and individuals to have lower costs and the environment to benefit from a significant reduction in paper consumption and energy use.

For additional information or to answer any questions, please contact Mike Mullen at michael.mullen@expressamerica.org or 703 759-2672.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

Airforwarders Association – AFA
Airlines for America – A4A
American Apparel & Footwear Association – AAFA
American Association of Exporters and Importers – AAEI
American Trucking Associations – ATA
Association for Postal Commerce – PostCom
Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance – CANAMBTA
Cargo Airline Association – CAA
Coalition of Service Industries – CSI
eBay
Emergency Committee for American Trade – ECAT
Express Association of America – EAA
Express Delivery and Logistics Association – XLA
Fashion Accessories Shippers Association - FASA
Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America - FDRA
Grocery Manufacturers Association – GMA
Information Technology Industry Council - ITI
National Association of Free Trade Zones – NAFTZ
National Foreign Trade Council - NFTC
National Retail Federation – NRF
Retail Industry Leaders Association – RILA
TechAmerica
The International Air Cargo Association – TIACA
Travel Goods Association - TGA
United States Council for International Business – USCIB
U.S. Association of Importers of Textiles and Apparel – USAITA
U.S. Business Alliance for Customs Modernization - BACM
U.S. Chamber of Commerce