

ThinkBeforeYouClickCA.org

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GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS LAUNCH CAMPAIGN TO DEMAND AMAZON “STOP CHEATING CALIFORNIA”

www.thinkbeforeyouclickca.org

Senator Hancock joins broad coalition of Californians to pressure Amazon to play by the rules

Sacramento, CA – On Monday, August 15th, State Senator Loni Hancock (D-Oakland), Assembly Majority Leader Charles Calderon (D-Montebello), and Assemblymember Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley) joined dozens of California seniors, low-income families, people with disabilities, and health care and human services advocates to launch the “[Think Before You Click](http://www.thinkbeforeyouclickca.org)” campaign demanding online retail giant Amazon.com to end its efforts to reverse the recently passed “Sales and Use Tax Law” – which would require online retailers to charge state and local sales tax to online transactions.

Participants in Monday’s press-conference, which took place shortly before the Senate Appropriations Committee hearing to discuss four new revenue proposals, called on Californians to close their accounts with Amazon.com in response to the online retailer’s efforts to delay, and overturn the new law.

“The \$200 million in annual revenue that California loses each year through Amazon’s tax loophole would have been enough to prevent the \$90 million cut from California’s Adult Day Health Care (ADHC), as well as cuts to other vital health and human services programs,” said Nan Brasmer, President of the California Alliance for Retired Americans.

According to the California Budget Project, California loses more than \$1 billion each year in uncollected taxes on internet sales. That’s because out-of-state online retailers like Amazon.com have the ability to refuse to collect state and local sales taxes owed on consumers’ purchases. This has traditionally given online retailers a significant advantage over “brick and mortar” retailers who have no choice but to charge their customers the necessary sales tax.

The “Sales and Use Tax Law” would eliminate this advantage and help level the playing field for online retailers like Amazon.com competing with locally owned and family operated businesses in California, while at the same time generating an estimated \$200 million in additional annual sales tax revenues for California – helping to reduce the need to make steep cuts to critical health care and human service programs.

“Over the last four years, California has cut more than \$15 billion from essential health care and human services programs. These cuts have cost our state much-needed jobs and have shifted responsibility for balancing the budget deficit onto the backs of our state’s most vulnerable residents. In that same time,

Amazon.com and other online retailers have made billions in profits. If Amazon isn't willing to contribute to California, then why should we continue to contribute to Amazon?" said Jessica Lehman of Community Resources for Independent Living.

In addition to the launch of the "**Think Before You Click**" campaign, participants also called on Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee to support four key revenue proposals up for discussion later that day. These proposals included:

- **AB 155 (Calderon)** – expands the definition of businesses that have to pay sales and use tax in California
- **AB 6 (Fuentes)** – Implements semi-annual reporting on state programs and eliminates the State Finger Imaging System (SFIS) which will save our state millions of dollars each year.
- **AB 1424 (Perea)** – The Delinquent Taxpayer Accountability act will help save California an estimated \$81 million a year.
- **SB 116 (DeLeon)** – Repeals the Single Sales Factor corporate loopholes – saving California over \$1 billion a year.

The "**Think Before You Click**" campaign is sponsored by the Health and Human Services Network of California, a grassroots coalition of non-profit organizations across the state supporting strong health care and human services programs for the most vulnerable Californians, along with strong support from Courage Campaign and partner organizations and allies all across the state. For more information, please visit www.ThinkBeforeYouClickCA.org.

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