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Online sales continue to boost retail holiday numbers

[Annapolis, MD] – The holiday sales season is the most important time of year for most retailers, at times accounting for over 25% of sales for the entire year. For the upcoming holiday season, National Retail Federation projections point to between a 3.6 and 4% increase in sales totaling up to \$682 billion in sales nationally.

“The Maryland Retailers Association is thrilled to join Comptroller Franchot again on his statewide tour encouraging Marylanders to shop local for the holidays,” said Cailey Locklair Tolle, president of the Maryland Retailers Association. “Maryland retailers create jobs, give back to their communities and provide much-needed tax revenue to the state. We continue to hope Marylanders will keep these things in mind when shopping, not just for the holidays, but year-round.”

Average consumer holiday spending will again increase this year with a projected average of \$967 on holiday gifts, décor and other items. Gift cards and certificates followed by clothing are the most desired items by consumers would like to receive.

Although national holiday retail sales have been increasing in recent years in large part due to online shopping, many Maryland retailers we surveyed said online sales, weather and the economy will weigh heavily on their outcome this holiday season and are not optimistic for an increase. For the second year in a row, many of our members feel sales will be flat or they will only see a small bump this year.

The yearly “Shop Local” tour with Comptroller Peter Franchot began at Greetings and Readings in Hunt Valley, MD and will continue through the Thanksgiving holiday. The extra publicity from elected officials is a welcome boost as the tour travels across the state bringing attention to the many small retailers Maryland has to showcase.

“Holiday sales are so important to retailers, the season offsets dead sales times throughout the year and enables many retailers to keep their doors open,” said Ms. Locklair Tolle. “With Black Friday deals happening earlier than ever, consumers should be on the look out for some exciting deals .”

MRA’s holiday forecast is based on member surveys in conjunction with a review of the National Retail Federation’s holiday forecast, consumer trends and historical retail sales data.

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