

PRESS RELEASE REGARDING
SEPTEMBER 29, 2000 PUBLIC HEARING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 7, 2000

Streamlined Sales Tax Project Announces Public Hearing on Project Proposals

Charles D. Collins, Jr. (North Carolina Department of Revenue) and Diane L. Hardt (Wisconsin Department of Revenue), co-chairs of the Streamlined Sales Tax Project, today announced that the Project will hold a hearing on Project proposals to streamline and simplify the current sales tax system. The hearing will take place on September 29, 2000 at 9:00 a.m. at the Sheraton Gateway Suites O'Hare in Rosemont, Illinois.

Background

The current state and local sales tax system has become outmoded to deal with transactions occurring in the existing and electronic commerce economies. In response to requests from the business community for simplification of the sales tax and to incorporate the use of technology in the administration and collection of the tax, states formed the Streamlined Sales Tax Project in March 2000. The goal of the Project is to design and implement a simplified sales tax collection system that can be used by traditional brick and mortar vendors and vendors involved in e-commerce. 38 states are currently involved in the Project.

Designing and implementing a new sales tax system is expected to take several years. However, the Project hopes to complete a large portion of its work by January 2001. Elements expected to be finalized in the first phase include a set of uniform definitions, uniform rules for sourcing, rounding and bad debts, modernized exemption administration and other simplification features. Model legislation will be drafted incorporating these elements to enable states to adopt the system and will be presented to state legislatures for consideration. Work is expected to continue on additional elements through 2001.

In announcing the hearing, Co-chairs Collins and Hardt stated: "We believe it is important to hear the views of the business community and others on the proposals that Work Groups in the Project are formulating. There are a tremendous number of issues to consider—uniform definitions, sourcing of transactions, how technology should be incorporated, privacy considerations, and many others. We hope the hearing presents a constructive dialogue on the proposals the Project puts forth and helps direct the Project to other issues that it must consider."

Details for Presenting Oral Testimony or Written Comments

Oral Testimony

Individuals wishing to testify in person at the hearing must notify the Project co-chairs no later than Monday, September 25, 2000. Notification should be in writing (no email notifications accepted) and directed to:

Charles D. Collins, Jr.
State of North Carolina
Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 871
Raleigh, NC 27602-0871

Diane L. Hardt
State of Wisconsin
Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 8933
Madison, WI 53708

Please note on the outside of the envelope: **Request to Testify**

Oral testimony will be limited to no more than five minutes in length. Additionally, individuals and organizations testifying at the hearing are asked to provide a copy of their testimony to the Project co-chairs and the Project's communications liaison by September 27, 2000. A copy of the testimony can be provided in hard-copy form to the addresses listed above or transmitted electronically via email. Email addresses are as follows:

ccollins@ncdial.net, dhardt@dor.state.wi.us, ellen_marshall@hotmail.com

Written Comments

Any person or organization wishing to submit a written statement for the printed record of the hearing should submit five (5) single-spaced copies of their statement, along with an IBM compatible 3.5-inch diskette Word format, with their name, organization, address, and hearing date noted on the diskette label, by October 6, 2000. Copies of written statements should be sent to: Ellen B. Marshall, Palumbo & Cerrell Consulting, Inc. 1717 K Street, NW, Ste. 500, Washington, DC 20006.

Formatting Requirements

Each statement prepared for the public hearing by a witness and any written statement or exhibit submitted for the printed record must conform to the guidelines listed below. Any statement or exhibit not in compliance with these guidelines will not be posted to the Project's website, but will be maintained by the Project for review and use by the Project.

1. All statements and any accompanying exhibits for posting must be typed in single space on letter-size paper and may not exceed a total of 10 pages including attachments. At the same time written statements are submitted to the Project, witnesses are requested to submit their statements on an IBM compatible 3.5-inch diskette in Word format.

2. Copies of whole documents submitted as exhibit material will not be accepted for posting to the Project's website. Instead, exhibit material should be referenced and quoted or paraphrased. All exhibit material not meeting these specifications will be maintained in the Project's files for review and use by the Project.
3. A witness appearing at the public hearing or submitting a statement for the record of the hearing must include on his/her statement or submission a list of all clients, persons, or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears.
4. A supplemental sheet must accompany each statement listing the name, full address, telephone number and email address (if applicable) where the witness or the designated representative may be reached.
5. An executive summary, not to exceed two pages, must accompany each statement. The executive summary will not be included in the information posted to the Project's website.
