

BOBBY JINDAL
Governor



TIM BARFIELD
Secretary

State of Louisiana
Department of Revenue

News Release

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New Law Waives Retailer Participant Fee for Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program

Governor signs bill authorizing permanent free membership for retailers

NEW ORLEANS – Governor Bobby Jindal has signed a bill into law that permanently waives the participant fee for the state's retailers who wish to participate in the Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program for International Visitors (LTFS). Act 106 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature is expected to greatly expand the number of businesses who can now take advantage of a program that boosts sales and promotes Louisiana shopping to the world.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for retailers in Louisiana to greatly expand their customer base,” said LTFS Commission Chairman Steven Windham. “We're grateful to the legislature and to our governor for having the vision to waive the participation fee and help grow the Tax Free

Shopping Program. We look forward to working even harder on behalf of the new businesses that will be joining us in the coming months and years, along with those who are already members.”

LTFS is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The program allows international visitors to Louisiana to receive cash refunds for sales taxes paid on eligible purchases of tangible items (not including lodging, food, and services). Visitors can apply for refunds at six locations throughout the state, including New Orleans, Metairie, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Bossier City, and Louis Armstrong International Airport.

The expansion of the program over the past 25 years has seen a direct correlation between its growth and an increase in sales to international visitors. As one of only two programs of its kind in the United States, LTFS gives the state's merchants a competitive advantage over surrounding states, often influencing visitors' travel plans. Studies show that international visitors tend to stay longer in a destination and spend more on shopping than domestic travelers.

There are currently over 900 retailers in Louisiana participating in the LTFS program, ranging in size from large department stores to small independent boutiques and specialty vendors. The program actively reaches out to a global market, working with the largest travel associations in Europe, South America, and Asia. LTFS also works closely with all Louisiana tourism promotion agencies to give participating stores maximum exposure to the lucrative international travel and tourism industry. Merchants wishing to join the program or to learn more can call (504) 484-4739, or visit the member information section at www.louisianataxfree.com.

Louisiana Tax Free Shopping offers international visitors to the state the opportunity to receive cash refunds for sales taxes paid on tangible items purchased at participating tax-free stores and permanently removed from the United States. Visitors can apply for refunds at six locations throughout the state, including New Orleans, Metairie, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Bossier City, and Louis Armstrong International Airport. For more information: www.louisianataxfree.com