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**N.G.A. PRAISES CONGRESS ON HISTORICAL OVERTURN
OF OSHA ERGONOMICS RULE**
*Clinton Administration Rules were Too Cumbersome and Expensive
for Independent Retailers and Wholesalers*

RESTON, Virginia (March 8, 2001) — The National Grocers Association (N.G.A.), the trade group dedicated to the representation of and service to the independently-operated or family owned grocery retailer and their wholesalers, commended the House of Representatives for joining the U.S. Senate in overturning the recently-implemented OSHA ergonomic rules. The rules would have had a costly, devastating impact on the nation's retailers and wholesalers. The vote represents the first time Congress rejected a regulation under the Congressional Review Act.

The House, by a vote of 223 to 206, rejected the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's rules, implemented by the Clinton Administration, late on Wednesday. The Senate voted (56-44) to overturn the regulations on Tuesday evening. President George W. Bush, who has called the regulations too costly and extreme, is expected to sign the legislation into law in the near future.

N.G.A. President and CEO Thomas K. Zaucha said the OSHA regulations could have done permanent harm to the nation's small businesses, particularly independent retail and wholesale grocers. He noted that the rules were rushed through the Clinton Administration without consideration for their far-reaching impact on business.

"This is a major victory for the supermarket industry and its employees," said Zaucha. "These courageous votes by the Congress free our industry from the yolk of an oppressive regulation that would have overloaded our retailers and wholesalers with excessive and unneeded costs. If implemented, these regulations could have left many independent operations on the verge of bankruptcy. Now, small business owners—in a collaborative partnership with their employees—will get the chance to review the situation and come up with workplace practices that are sensible for all involved. We are confident that this will lead to a safer and healthier workplace."

Tom Wenning, Senior Vice President and General Counsel of N.G.A., added that Congress moved swiftly on this legislation due to the amount of feedback representatives got from their constituents, including many N.G.A. members.

"We are proud of our members and the grassroots effort that made clear to congress what these regulations could have done to the grocery industry," said Wenning. "Our members were not going to sit back and let a disaster take place. They got on the telephone and informed their Congressman and Senators about the potential ramifications of these regulations. For example, yesterday all 30 independent retailers participating in a N.G.A. sponsored share group meeting placed personal phone calls to their Congressmen. This shows that the system does work and, if you get involved, your voice can be heard in the halls of Congress."

N.G.A. is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent sector of the food distribution industry. An independent retailer is a privately owned or controlled food retail company operating in a variety of formats. Some are publicly traded but with controlling shares held by the family. Most independent operators are serviced by wholesale distributors, while others may be partially or fully self-distributing. Independents are the true "entrepreneurs" of the grocery industry and dedicated to their customers, associates, and communities. N.G.A. members include retail and wholesale grocers and their state associations, as well as manufacturers and service suppliers.