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HOUSE VOTE TO REPEAL DEATH TAX REFLECTS GRASSROOTS EFFORTS

Washington, D.C. (April 4, 2001) — In reaction to the House of Representatives vote of 274 to 154 today to repeal the death tax, Thomas K. Zaucha, President and CEO of the National Grocers Association said, “The vote of the House reflects the grassroots voice of thousands of grocers and other family-owned businesses in expressing their need to repeal this unfair death tax.” Over 225 retailers, wholesalers, and state association executives came to Washington last week as part of the Public Affairs Assembly to deliver this message to Congress, and thousands more wrote and called in support of H.R.8.

The members of the House who voted for H.R.8 and President Bush are to be commended for their support of estate tax repeal. N.G.A. and its members will be working diligently in the coming months to assure that the Senate follows suite by voting for repeal. Zaucha said, “the Senate must act now to preserve the future of privately owned and operated businesses. Our theme is – and will continue to be – **‘End, not amend, the death tax.’**”

H.R.8, which will reduce estate tax rates leading to ultimate repeal by 2010, is a significant victory for family owned businesses. Grocers need capital to reinvest in the business and new technology to better serve their customers. Repeal of the death tax will make a difference to many small businesses in whether they stay in business or are forced to sell to pay the death tax.

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.