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## **N.G.A. ATTENDS TAX RELIEF SIGNING AT WHITE HOUSE**

**RESTON, Virginia (June 7, 2001)** – N.G.A. President Tom Zaucha and Tom Wenning, senior vice president and general counsel, were invited to the White House today to witness President George W. Bush sign the historic tax relief package, including repeal of the estate tax, into law.

Held in the East Room, the N.G.A. executives joined members of Congress who supported the legislation, members of the Cabinet, as well as a cross-section of business organizations that actively lobbied for passage. A number of the members of Congress commented how great it was to be at the White House for bill signing ceremony that would provide the first positive tax relief to the American people in almost a decade.

When President Bush announced how pleased he was that the legislation contained the repeal of the death tax, the crowd roared with approval.

Passage of an across-the-board tax cut has occurred only three times since the second World War.

Responding to the historical setting, Tom Zaucha reflected, “Tom Wenning and I have spent most of our careers representing independent, family-owned and operated companies. After over a decade of lobbying this issue, we couldn’t have been more proud. As I have said before, today’s signing ceremony is a victory for grassroots lobbying. Over the years, thousands of grocers have visited members of Congress, written to them, and called them asking for their support. This is their victory and we are honored to represent them.”

Wenning added, “Today, we celebrate and tomorrow we renew our vigilance to make sure that future Congresses strengthen, not weaken the measure. Ultimately, our goal is to move up the phase-out timetable.”

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.