

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Commerce Committee**  
**February 19<sup>th</sup> 2015**



**PROPOSED SENATE BILL 819**

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ANNUAL SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:*

*That the general statutes be amended to establish a Small Business Saturday that would encourage holiday shoppers to patronize small, local businesses.*

**Testimony in Support of SB 819 by**

**Scott Coleman of Business Now!**

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**SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF OUR COMMUNITIES**

*They're the corner stores that create jobs. The hardware stores that help build our economy.  
And the mom and pop shops whose very presence makes a neighborhood, your neighborhood.*

**WHAT IS IT:**

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“**Small Business Saturday** is an American shopping holiday dedicated to supporting small businesses across the country and is held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving during one of the busiest shopping periods of the year. Founded by American Express and first observed on November 27, 2010, it is a counterpart to [Black Friday](#) and [Cyber Monday](#), which feature [big box retail](#) and [e-commerce](#) stores respectively. By contrast, Small Business Saturday encourages holiday shoppers to patronize [brick and mortar](#) businesses that are [small](#) and [local](#). In 2015, Small Business Saturday occurs on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

In 2010 the holiday was conceived and promoted by [American Express](#) via a nationwide radio and television [advertising campaign](#). That year Amex bought [advertising inventory](#) on [Facebook](#), which it in turn gave to its small [merchant account](#) holders, and also gave rebates to new customers to promote the event.

American Express publicized the initiative using [social media](#), advertising, and [public relations](#). At least 41 local politicians and many small business groups in the United States issued proclamations concerning the campaign, which generated more than one million Facebook "like" registrations and nearly 30,000 tweets under the [Twitter](#) hashtags #smallbusinesssaturday.”

**WHY WE NEED IT:**

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Small Business Saturday encourages holiday shoppers to patronize brick and mortar businesses that are small and local. It is an opportunity for millions of retailers around the country to turn their ledgers from red to black. While we are buying gifts for loved ones, we are also helping business owners and retail workers who depend on holiday spending to keep their doors open and their sales booming. We need to do more to address the many challenges that all our employers face.

Small Business Saturday is a great way to say ‘thank you’ to a small business near you, especially during the holiday shopping season, Connecticut’s small businesses help define what communities are all about. Small firms create seven out of every ten new jobs, and employ nearly half of all private sector employees in the United States. Small businesses make a big difference in our Connecticut’s economy and their growth is essential to a stronger economic development.

The entrepreneurial spirit is what the American Dream is all about, and it is imperative to support legislation to encourage that spirit and protect that dream.



**AMENDMENT REQUESTED:**

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This Bill is, in its current form, “feel-good” legislation, in that it does not go far enough toward actualizing the potential of the gesture. I believe that with a few minor enhancements, that it could actually produce some measureable gains for the State’s small business community, during the holiday season, which might have long-lasting impact.

I would ask this body to consider adding the following:

- Placement of the responsibility for a plan, and its implementation, under the auspices of either or both the Secretary of the State, and DECD’s Office of Small Business Affairs, to help small business organize and capitalize on Small Business Saturday.
- The Plan might include the formation of a small committee composed of select representatives from the small business community, as well as from organizations such as CBIA, Metro Hartford Alliance, Middlesex Chamber, Glastonbury Chamber, COST, CERC, CCM, and American Express.
- Development of a marketing campaign and merchandising tools to reach the State’s small business community as well as its resident consumers, including a mini web site, web pages added to the SOTS, DECD and partnering organization sites, notices on other compatible State site pages, along with collateral merchandising materials for the Business Community similar to what American Express has made available nationwide. I would be happy to offer my services, gratis, for design and development of the required web sites and marketing materials. This effort does not have to cost a lot to do a lot!

I hope that whether or not these amendments are added, that the original Bill does not get derailed in the process, as can so often happen when one tries to make things better.

**SPECIAL THANKS:**

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... to Senator Paul Doyle and Representative Tony Guerrero for their support of Connecticut small businesses and their persistence and cooperation in raising this legislation for a second year.

I thank this committee for its time and consideration, and am available to answer your questions!

Sincerely and Most Respectfully,

*Scott Coleman*



# THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOPPING SMALL

— SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY IS NOVEMBER 24<sup>th</sup> —

## SMALL BUSINESS

HAS A BIG ECONOMIC IMPACT

**44%**  
SMALL BUSINESSES PAY  
OF TOTAL U.S. PRIVATE PAYROLL

U.S. Small Business Administration (2013)



NUTS.COM  
Greenville, NC

**89%**  
OF CONSUMERS SAID THEY BELIEVE  
THAT SMALL BUSINESSES CONTRIBUTE  
POSITIVELY TO THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

America Express OPEN Small Business  
Saturday Consumer Pulse (July 2013)

**65%**  
SMALL BUSINESSES CREATED  
OF THE NET NEW JOBS CREATED IN THE  
17 YEAR PERIOD ENDING IN 2009

U.S. Small Business Administration, Advocacy  
Small Business Statistics and Research



DUTCH MONKEY DOUGHNUTS  
Carmel, IN



## SMALL BUSINESSES

ENRICH THEIR COMMUNITIES

VOSSGES  
Chicago, IL



PURL SOHO  
New York, NY



5.6%  
Revenue Growth

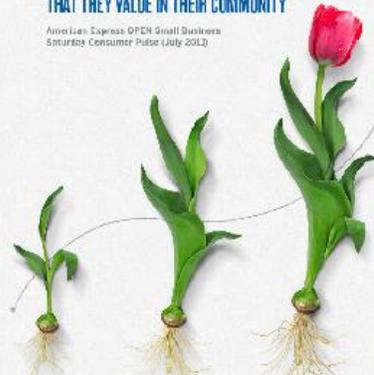
2.1%  
Revenue Growth

INDEPENDENT RETAILERS THAT ARE IN  
COMMUNITIES WITH A "BUY LOCAL"  
INITIATIVE REPORTED REVENUE GROWTH  
OF 5.6% ON AVERAGE IN 2010, COMPARED  
TO 2.1% FOR THOSE ELSEWHERE

Institute for Local Self-Reliance (January 2010)

**93%**  
OF CONSUMERS BELIEVE IT'S IMPORTANT  
TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES  
THAT THEY VALUE IN THEIR COMMUNITY

America Express OPEN Small Business  
Saturday Consumer Pulse (July 2013)



70% OF SMALL BUSINESSES  
BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A  
**GROWING**

APPRECIATION OF SHOPPING LOCALLY  
AT SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE U.S.

Small Business Saturday Insights Survey,  
conducted by NPD in collaboration with  
America Express (October 2012)

SPROUT HOME  
Brooklyn, NY

## Places that people shop for the holidays

### SMALL BUSINESSES AND BOUTIQUES

In 2013, more consumers report they like to shop in local small businesses

**27%**  
2012



**35%**  
2013

**50%**



Big Box  
discount  
chains

**22%**



Will probably shop them all



**22%**



Major retail  
chains

# Shop Rocky Hill

**SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 30TH**

**Sales • Deals • Freebies • Coupons**

*Presented by*



*For More Information  
& Deal List Visit*

**HillToday.com**

or Call 860 529-1777

*You're  
Invited!*



Think outside the "Big Box"!  
**shop local - shop small - save huge**