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**150 Local Business Alliances And National Independent Business Advocates
Launch “Shift Your Shopping”**

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November 1 will mark the launch of an unprecedented collaboration among advocates for local independent business. Representing over 38,000 locally owned and independent businesses across the U.S. and Canada, Shift Your Shopping will encourage residents and businesses to make a “Shift” by buying from local independent businesses for the holiday season. Shift Your Shopping offers a simple, powerful way to boost our economy and preserve and create jobs in our local communities.

The campaign encourages residents to take job creation and economic concerns into their own hands by exercising their power to strengthen their own local economies. Numerous studies on the impact of buying from local independent business have found impressive benefits. For example, a 2008 study of Kent County Michigan by Civic Economics projected shifting 10% of the county's per capita spending from chains to locally-owned independent businesses would create “almost \$140 million in new economic activity and 1,600 new jobs for the region.”

In addition, annual surveys over the last four years show that places that “go local” do better. For example, last year, the Institute for Local Self Reliance gathered data on annual revenue changes from nearly 2800 independent business. That data revealed independent businesses in communities executing long-term “buy local and independent” campaigns averaged a healthy 5.6 percent increase over the previous year. This gain more than doubled the 2.1 percent increase reported by independent businesses in areas lacking such campaigns. All of those campaigns operated with support from the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA) and/or Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE).

Shift Your Shopping combines the efforts of AMIBA and BALLE with more than 150 local business alliances comprised of over 38,000 local businesses. Grassroots groups like Asheville Grown Business Alliance in North Carolina and Oakland Grown in California will execute campaigns with their own flair, picking and choosing from campaigns like Buy Local First week, America Unchained!, and Plaid Friday, the colorful alternative to Black Friday. ShiftYourShopping.org will provide access to resources from all of these campaigns, including templates that allow anyone to spread the message easily in their community. Anyone can participate and make a direct impact where they live.

“Shift Your Shopping promotes the united vision and voice of thousands of real people in real communities across the U.S. and Canada committed to building strong local economies,” said BALLE Executive Director, Michelle Long.

Beyond the economic impacts, Shift Your Shopping is also about celebrating the uniqueness of your local community, AMIBA Director Jennifer Rockne said, "By shifting the focus of holiday shopping to locally owned, independent businesses, we can strengthen our communities and economy, create more jobs and -- equally important -- we can enjoy more relaxed and rewarding experiences doing holiday shopping."

Shift Your Shopping will kick off November 1 and extend through December. A list of Shift Your Shopping events, participants, and resources will be online Nov. 1 at ShiftYourShopping.org.