March 2, 2012

We, the undersigned organizations, strongly oppose H.R. 3596, the “United States Call Center Worker and Consumer Protection Act.”

Enactment of H.R. 3596 would have a substantial and harmful effect upon a wide variety of business sectors in the United States. As proposed, the bill would mandate the Department of Labor publish a “blacklist” of American companies that relocate call centers overseas and would disqualify such companies for eligibility for federal grants and loan guarantees even if the company in question maintains 99% of all its employees in the United States. Further, the bill provides that this “blacklist” could be used by agencies to unnecessarily preclude the procurement of federal contracts by companies that have call centers overseas. Finally, the bill would require businesses annually to certify compliance with the provisions of this legislation, and would subject them to fines up to $10,000 per day for failing to notify the Secretary of Labor in advance of a relocation of call center operations outside the United States.

For consumers, this bill would curtail the level of customer service support that people expect when purchasing goods and services. Specifically, H.R. 3596 would require customer service agents to identify their physical location at the outset of each and every phone call, needlessly increasing time for consumers seeking assistance. Moreover, by coercing U.S. businesses to use call centers exclusively within the United States, the ability of companies to offer robust 24-hour customer service and product support would be undermined.

The negative consequences of H.R. 3596 would cut across a wide array of business sectors including telecommunications, consumer electronics, equipment manufacturers, financial services, credit card firms, and major retailers. Passage of this legislation would increase costs and regulatory burdens for companies and would weaken customer service support for American consumers.

The undersigned organizations strongly urge you to oppose this misguided legislation and urge you to reject any effort to include such legislation as part of any other bill.

Sincerely,

Cargill, Incorporated
The Coalition of Service Industries
Consumer Electronics Association
Covergy Corporation
HR Policy Association
Kiewit Corporation
LORD Corporation
National Association of Manufacturers
National Retail Federation
Retail Industry Leaders Association
Security Industry Association
TechAmerica
Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA)
Texas Association of Business
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Universal Weather and Aviation