



Media release  
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## RETAIL NZ DISAPPOINTED THAT AUCKLAND COUNCIL WANTS TO DENY CHOICE TO CONSUMERS, EMPLOYEES AND BUSINESSES

Retail NZ says it is disappointed that a staff report to Auckland Council is recommending that the Council decide not to propose a policy on Easter Sunday Trading after the Government delegated decision-making to local councils last year and is asking Councillors to overturn the staff recommendation on Thursday this week.

"Customers can and do want to be able to shop on Easter Sunday. Research by Nielsen for Retail NZ shows that 57 per cent of Aucklanders engaged in some sort of commercial activity at Easter Sunday this year. Despite the fact that most shops are required by law to be closed, the majority of Aucklanders still like to get out and about on Easter Sunday. Aucklanders are keen to spend their Easter Sunday shopping online, in one of the businesses that is allowed to open, going to a café or restaurant; or a garden centre. These are all commercial activities - but are often done as part of an outing with friends and family.

"The Auckland Council's own statistically representative research by Colmar Brunton shows that 55 per cent of Aucklanders would like to see more shops open on Easter Sunday, so it's baffling that Council employees are proposing to maintain an out of date ban on shopping.

"Under changes to the law last year, the Government created a framework that allows Councils to allow (but not require)

businesses in their districts the right to open on Easter Sunday, while providing a cast-iron guarantee that no employee can be forced to work, and that no retail business can be forced to open. Shop employees now have specific protection under law so they can't be forced to work - while no protections apply to employees in any business outside retail.

"There is already a host of exemptions that make a mockery of the ban on opening shops: garden centres are allowed to open, but not hardware shops with a garden centre attached; small grocery stores are allowed to open, but not supermarkets; and any shop is allowed to open if it's located on Parnell Road, but not if it's located on the Onehunga Mall.

"Auckland Council has the opportunity to create real choice for retail employees, shoppers and businesses as to whether shops are allowed to open on Easter Sunday, and it's disappointing that Council employees are seeking to deny people from making their own choices about how they spend Easter Sunday.

"Retail NZ is asking Auckland Councillors to progress with the development of an Easter Sunday Trading policy, and to have this in place as soon as possible, to allow individuals to make their own decisions ahead of Easter 2018."

For further information, please contact:

Greg Harford  
General Manager, Public Affairs  
Retail NZ  
027 243 2842