



MEDIA RELEASE
29 August 2017

WELLINGTON CITY CAN BE PRO-CHOICE AND PRO-BUSINESS LEADER ON EASTER SUNDAY SHOPPING

Retail NZ says that Wellington City Council has a golden opportunity to cement itself as being the only major city to embrace personal and business choice. The comments follow decisions last week by Auckland and Christchurch City Councils to deny shops from having a choice as to whether or not they open on Easter Sunday.

"While many provincial heartland councils have been keen to maximise the choices available to business owners and consumers by permitting retailers to make their own decisions about opening on Easter Sunday, our larger city councils have shown that they are not interested in choice," Retail NZ's General Manager for Public Affairs, Greg Harford, said today. "Wellington has not yet considered the Easter Sunday trading issue, but has an opportunity to do so and to show the rest of the country that it is prepared to allow individual retail businesses the right to choose.

"This is not a debate about whether shops should open on Easter Sunday - the question is whether retail businesses should be able to make their own decisions about shopping hours, or whether the Council should make that decision. Retail NZ firmly believes that the best people to make a decision about when shops should open are individual retailers, based on their assessment of whether there is customer demand and whether employees are available to work.

"We fully expect that, if Wellington City Council adopts an Easter Sunday trading policy, then there will be some retailers who

choose to remain closed - just as there are now retailers who choose to close on days like New Year's Day. It's entirely right that businesses and shoppers are empowered to make their own decisions, but it's not the Council's role to try to regulate shopping between consenting adults.

"Unlike in other sectors, there is special legislation protecting the rights of retail employees not to work on Easter Sunday, so the only people working in retail will be those who want to do so. We hope that the Wellington City Council will consider this issue and move to adopt a policy that allows choice on Easter Sunday ahead of Easter next year."

For further information, please contact:
Greg Harford
General Manager, Public Affairs
Retail NZ 027 243 2842