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Downtown Alliance Joins Speaker Silver at Century 21 to Discuss Restoration of Clothing Sales Tax Exemption



Downtown Alliance President Elizabeth H. Berger speaks at Century 21 News Conference

(April 1, 2012, New York) – A crowd formed outside of Century 21 well before its 11 AM opening on Sunday. And as the shoppers – many visiting from abroad – rushed into the popular shopping destination, they were in for a better bargain that they could have expected.

New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Alliance for Downtown New York President Elizabeth H. Berger, and Century 21's Ed Gindi held a news conference to mark the first day New York State stopped collecting sales tax on clothing and footwear under \$110 – an increased exemption that took effect Sunday. A temporary suspension of the state sales tax went into effect in October 2010, which was expiring. The state had begun to phase out the four percent sales tax on April 1 of last year, and over the last year, sales tax wasn't collected on items under \$55.

"The sales tax exemption is good for families. It's good for business. It's good for New York," New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said inside Century 21.

"Thank you to Speaker Silver and his colleagues for their dedication to restoring this important tax exemption," said Berger, wearing an outfit fully purchased completely at Century 21. "Last year, nearly 10 million tourists flocked to Lower Manhattan – to experience our rich history, to eat at our amazing restaurants – and to shop at our renowned retail destinations like Century 21."

Berger pointed out that annual spending power of these visitors, along with 310,000 workers, and 57,000 residents in the Lower Manhattan market, stands at \$4.7 billion.

Lower East Side Business Improvement District Executive Director Bob Zuckerman, Chinese Chamber of Commerce Chairman Justin Yu, and Chinatown Partnership Executive Director Wellington Z. Chen were also on hand to announce the restored tax exemption.

The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to provide service, advocacy, research and information to advance Lower Manhattan as a global model of a 21st century Central Business District.

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