

U.S. Sens. Baldwin, Vance: Lead bipartisan legislation to increase transparency online and support made in USA products

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and JD Vance (R-OH) today introduced bipartisan legislation to ensure that all goods sold online list their country-of-origin in order to protect Americans' right to know where the products they buy are made and promote American-made goods for online shoppers.

Unlike products sold in-person, products sold online are not currently required to disclose their country-of-origin. The *Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Online Act* would increase transparency online by updating our labeling laws for the e-commerce era so online shoppers have the same access to country-of-origin and seller location information that in-person shoppers do. In addition to Senators Baldwin and Vance, the legislation is also cosponsored by Senators Rick Scott (R-FL), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Josh Hawley (R-MO), and Mike Braun (R-IN).

“Whether we buy things online or in-store, Americans have a right to know if the product they are purchasing was made in America, by American workers,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “I’ve heard from Made in Wisconsin businesses across the state who work hard to innovate and create new products, only to have cheaper, lower quality imitations sold online with no requirements to identify themselves as foreign-made. I am proud to join my Democratic and Republican colleagues to fix our outdated country-of-origin labeling laws to promote transparency for shoppers and boost American manufacturers, businesses, and workers.”

“The American people deserve to know where the products they buy are made,

regardless of whether they're shopping in-store or online," **said Senator Vance.** "Our legislation would close a legal loophole by extending current, commonsense labeling requirements to e-commerce. With this proposal, we can give American consumers the confidence that their online purchases support American workers and industry."

E-commerce's share of total retail sales has been steadily increasing each year, and the pandemic only accelerated that trend. As e-commerce grows, it will pull more sales from brick-and-mortar retail locations, making big companies bigger, while threatening small businesses and mom-and-pop stores nationwide and leaving Americans increasingly unsure about where products are made. According to a [November 2022 poll](#), 79 percent of Americans believe online retailers should be required to provide the same country-of-origin information as in-person retailers, and 81 percent would purchase more American-made goods if they could.

The *COOL Online Act* will update our labeling laws for the e-commerce era by amending the *Federal Trade Commission Act*. Specifically, the bill requires:

- The country-of-origin labeling for a product, as required by existing law, be clearly and conspicuously stated in the website's description of the product
- Clear disclosure of the country in which the seller of the product is located in the online product listing.

The *COOL Online Act* is supported by the Coalition for a Prosperous America, the Alliance for American Manufacturing, and American Compass.

"The Coalition for a Prosperous America fully supports enactment of the *Country of Origin Labeling Online Act*, or *COOL Online Act*, sponsored by Senators Tammy Baldwin and JD Vance. Consumers have a right to know where the products they purchase on the Internet are made and where the seller is located – and to know this when they buy them, not when they show up on their doorstep," **said Michael Stumo, CEO of Coalition for a Prosperous America.** "By requiring this information in Internet sales, the bill will help consumers protect themselves against unsafe, counterfeit and shoddy goods, and, if they choose, to purchase products made in America. CPA urges the bill's enactment into law."

"We applaud Senator Tammy Baldwin and Senator JD Vance for introducing the *Country of Origin Labeling Online Act*. By giving online shoppers information about where a product is being made and where the seller is located, consumers will be

well-positioned to support the U.S. economy and create more jobs for American workers. It is long overdue that Congress close this loophole and we are grateful to Senators Baldwin and Vance for leading the way,” **said Scott Paul, President of the Alliance for American Manufacturing.**

“The foolish economic theory that it doesn’t matter where things are made, or whether America makes anything at all, has done great harm to the United States. Americans want to know where the things they buy come from, and to buy from America when they can. That’s no less true when they shop online, and Senators Vance and Baldwin are right to insist that clear labeling provides the needed information,” **said Oren Cass, Executive Director of American Compass.**

“I moved to Wisconsin in 1986, when manufacturing was still extremely important to the state economy, but since then, I have seen a sharp decline in manufacturing jobs. I believe a lot more could have been done in Washington then, and more should be done now to maintain a strong manufacturing base in the U.S.,” **said Noel Valdes, owner and founder of CobraHead in Cambridge, Wisconsin.** “Senator Baldwin’s *COOL Online Act* helps small family businesses like ours succeed and pushes the U.S.A. in the right direction. This issue is personal for us. When we started our business, we made it our mission to manufacture CobraHead tools locally, instead of overseas, to ensure a high-quality product for our customers. An overseas firm with a cheap imitation of subpar quality knocked off our flagship tool, and the online product description has no mention of its country of origin. We have lost several accounts as a result. Requiring prominent country of origin information on product listings would be a big boost to our family business.”

More information on the *COOL Online Act* is available [here](#). Text of the legislation is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).