



Media release
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LOCAL COUNCIL CANDIDATES SHOW STRONG SUPPORT FOR EASTER TRADING

78% of local council candidates around the country support the introduction of a local Shop Trading Hours policy to allow shops to open on Easter Sunday, according to a survey by Retail NZ.

“It’s encouraging to see that, around the country, 78% of candidates who responded to our survey say that they would be willing to allow businesses, customers and employees a choice as to whether they open, shop or work on Easter Sunday,” Retail NZ’s General Manager for Public Affairs Greg Harford said today.

“Under new legislation, Councils are able to decide whether to allow residents and visitors the choice to go to the shops on Easter Sunday, or to continue current outdated legislation that seeks to ban shopping. We know that some customers will not want to shop on Easter Sunday, and some retailers won’t want to open - but it’s great to see that so many Council candidates are in favour of a permissive approach.

“Our survey shows that there is particularly strong support for allowing shops to choose to open on Easter Sunday in Rotorua-Lakes, Marlborough, New Plymouth, Queenstown-Lakes, South Waikato, Tasman, Timaru, Thames-Coromandel, Waimakariri, Western Bay of Plenty and Asbhurton Districts, as well as Wellington, Hamilton and Tauranga Cities.

“Support for Easter Trading was evenly split in Christchurch, Dunedin and Palmerston North.

“We had low response rates to our question from around the rest of the country, but there was strong opposition to Easter Trading in Carterton and the Far North District, while Lower Hutt and Nelson were the only cities where the majority of candidates told us they were opposed to shops opening.

“Overall, Retail NZ is optimistic that, after the local elections, new councils will move swiftly to consider this issue. Not every retailer will want to open on Easter Sunday, and not everyone will want to shop, but we have long been of the view that it is the role of neither Government nor Councils to seek to regulate shopping between consenting adults.”

Mr Harford added that the rights of retail employees and small businesses are well protected under recent amendments to the Shop Trading Hours Act. “No employee can be forced to work on Easter Sunday, and no business can be forced to open, even if they are located in a shopping mall.”

For further information, please contact:

Greg Harford
General Manager, Public Affairs
Retail NZ
greg.harford@retail.kiwi

See the full list of council candidate responses [here](#).