



MEDIA RELEASE
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COURT DECISION SHOWS NATIONWIDE CONSISTENCY NEEDED ON EASTER SUNDAY

Retail NZ says ongoing confusion over Easter Sunday trading can only be resolved by Government leadership to repeal the shop trading hours restrictions. The comments follow a Court decision overturning a Napier City Council policy allowing shops to open on Easter Sunday.

"Easter Sunday is not a public holiday - and retailers should have the right to close their shops, or open them if they wish, taking into account customer and employee demand," Greg Harford, Retail NZ's General Manager for Public Affairs said today. "There's strong customer demand to be able to go to the shops on Easter Sunday, with Nielsen research showing 50 per cent of Kiwis shopped or did some other commercial activity on Easter Sunday. Those New Zealanders who want to stay at home, or only go to Church on Easter Sunday should have that right, but equally those who wish to shop should be able to do so.

"The previous Government failed both the retail sector and consumers by delegating decision-making on this issue to local councils. The National Government's law perpetuated pre-existing exemptions that advantaged certain retailers over others, and created a mishmash of confusion throughout the country. It has required councils to undertake time-consuming and expensive processes, and created uncertainty for consumers and retailers alike. The Court decision in relation to Napier City's consultation process shows how needlessly complex this issue can be for everyone.

"New Zealand is a small country, and we should have one set of consistent rules applying nationally. Retail NZ is repeating its call for the Government to remove all restrictions on shop trading hours on Easter Sunday. There is still time for new legislation to be implemented ahead of next Easter, recognising that individual customers, retailers and employees should be allowed to make their own decisions about how they spend Easter Sunday".

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