



MEDIA RELEASE

TRACIT endorses INFORM Consumers Act

Supports legislative measures to improve verification of online suppliers

Washington, DC, 29 July 2020 – The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT) endorsed the introduction of new legislation to combat the online sale of stolen, counterfeit, and dangerous consumer products. The *Integrity, Notification, and Fairness in Online Retail Marketplaces for Consumers* (INFORM Consumers) Act was introduced by U.S. Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (IL-09), a Senior Chief Deputy Whip and Chair of the Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee.

“The INFORM Consumers Act will provide much needed transparency of online marketplaces,” said TRACIT Director General Jeffrey Hardy. **“If platforms like Amazon and eBay start improving the verification of third-party sellers, then they’ll be taking a giant step in protecting consumers from fraud, counterfeiting and other forms of illicit trade.”**

According to the sponsors, the Act directs online marketplaces to verify high-volume third-party sellers by acquiring the seller’s government ID, tax ID, bank account information, and contact information. High-volume third-party sellers are defined as vendors who have made 200 or more discrete sales in a 12-month period amounting to \$5,000 or more.

“We look forward to working with Congresswoman Schakowsky and members of the House Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee,” said Hardy. **“We’ll need to make sure that the legislation is structured in a way that prevents sellers from gaming/exploiting the provisions defining “high volume” sellers, and we’ll need commitments from platforms to present the information in ways that assist consumers to make safe and secure shopping choices.”**

The organization, known for mitigating illicit trade across industry sectors worldwide, recently issued a report detailing the growing incidence of fraudulent advertising and counterfeits on popular social networking platforms like Facebook and Instagram and called for measures to gather and verify information on who is utilizing their advertising service and to conduct a more rigorous review of an advertisement prior to publication.

“It makes no sense to continue letting third-party suppliers or fraudulent advertisers hide behind the curtain,” said Hardy. **“Consumers trust these big brands, so there is an incumbent responsibility to rid their platforms of deception and fraud.”**

#

About TRACIT

The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade ([TRACIT](https://www.TRACIT.org)) is an independent, private sector initiative to drive change to mitigate the economic and social damages of illicit trade by strengthening government enforcement mechanisms and mobilizing businesses across industry sectors most impacted by illicit trade. For more information, to arrange an interview, please contact:

Cindy Braddon

Head of Communications and Public Policy, TRACIT

Tel: +1 571-365-6885 / cindy.braddon@TRACIT.org / Twitter: [@TRACIT_org](https://twitter.com/TRACIT_org)