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**AG SLATERY FILES BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF STATES' AUTHORITY TO
REGULATE PRICE GOUGING**

***States' Price Gouging Laws Are Necessary to Protect Vulnerable Residents During
Emergencies***

Nashville – Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery III joined a bipartisan coalition of 31 states filing an amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit to support states' authority to enforce price gouging regulations to protect consumers during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The coalition is urging the appellate court to overturn the district court's decision in *Online Merchants Guild v. Cameron*. During the COVID-19 pandemic, more consumers have turned to online sellers to purchase food, medicine, cleaning supplies and other household essentials. The Online Merchants Guild, claiming that price gouging laws should not be applied to retailers selling goods on Amazon.

The court entered a preliminary injunction preventing Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron from enforcing price gouging regulations against retailers selling products on Amazon.

In the brief, the coalition states that national and local emergencies, such as the pandemic, create significant shortages for essential items. State price gouging laws are essential to ensuring that goods can be fairly allocated among residents, and to preventing bad actors from profiting off residents by charging excessively high prices for goods that are scarce.

"This Office is responsible for enforcing price gouging laws activated during an emergency in Tennessee," said General Slatery. "The State has acted, with positive results, to protect consumers during COVID-19 and must be able to continue to do so."

States have taken action that has been crucial to curbing price gouging during the pandemic, including working toward voluntary compliance, issuing subpoenas, sending cease and desist letters, and filing civil actions.

In Tennessee, the Division of Consumer Affairs has managed 302 formal complaints of alleged price gouging on essential items such as personal protective equipment, paper goods, and food.



Herbert H. Slatery III Attorney General & Reporter

The coalition is asking the appellate court to reverse the district court's order granting injunctive relief.

To read the brief, click here:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/attorneygeneral/documents/pr/2020/pr20-38-amicus.pdf>

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