EXCISE TAXES

February 7, 1964

Dear 

Our efforts to repeal excise taxes on jewelry, furs, luggage, cosmetics, and mechanical pens and pencils were narrowly defeated in each case on the Senate Floor.

I was temporarily hospitalized as a result of an ulcer "flare-up" and was therefore unable to be present during the debate, however the Record does indicate my vote in favor of repeal.

The Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee has announced that his committee will make a thorough study of the whole area of excise taxes to determine what changes and adjustments might be achieved. I hope this will be done soon.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
June 19, 1964

Dear:

I can certainly appreciate your interest in the repeal of certain excise taxes. Action on legislation of this type must originate in the House, after which it will come to the Senate Finance Committee of which I am a member.

Earlier this year I offered an amendment which, if enacted, would have completely removed these excise taxes. It was opposed by the administration, however, and defeated as a result of a tie vote. Every Republican member of the Senate supported my amendment but, as you know, the Democrats have a two to one majority.

You can be sure this will have my most careful and thoughtful attention.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
Dear 

The proposal to terminate federal retail excise taxes on leather goods, toilet preparations, and the first $100 on jewelry and furs was adopted by the Senate by a substantial vote. However the House conferees with strong administration support refused to agree to this Senate action and the amendment failed. Earlier this year I had sponsored an identical amendment but it too was defeated. I do not see any possibility of an additional attempt to repeal these taxes this year. I believe that it will be next year before we can make another effort, but I can assure you one will be made.

In addition the Senate considered amendments to remove the excise taxes on telephone service fountain pens, ball point pens, athletic equipment, musical instruments and automobile tires. These were either defeated by the Senate or in conference.

However, the Ways and Means Committee will resume hearings this month on excise taxes, and the Senate will consider repeal during the next Congress.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen