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Contact: Kipp Cheng
For AAAA
212-850-0720
kipp@aaaa.org

Lesley Weiner
For ANA
212-455-8079
lweiner@cooperkatz.com

Michael Kaminer and
Patrick Kowalczyk
For Commercial Closet
212-627-8098
michael@mkpr.com
patrick@mkpr.com

**AAAA AND ANA JOIN IN SUPPORT FOR CCA'S
PRINCIPLE OF FREE MARKET ADVERTISING EXPRESSION**
Principle Calls for Advertising to All Consumers Respectfully and Inclusively

New York, NY, March 22, 2006 ... The **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of ADVERTISING AGENCIES** and the **Association of National Advertisers, Inc.**, today expressed support for **Commercial Closet Association's** "Principle of Free Market Advertising Expression." The Principle, released today and available online in its entirety at www.CommercialCloset.org, declares that advertisers must remain free to market their products and services to prospective consumers—with the time-honored objective to expand business and pursue profits—regardless of a consumer's race, ethnicity, gender/gender expression, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation.

The support of CCA's Principle was announced during the ANA's **2006 Television Advertising Forum: Life Beyond the :30**, held today at the Grand Hyatt, New York City.

"Together, as industry leaders, we are standing up for a basic principle—the right of every advertiser to reach all consumers. Intolerance hurts the market as much as it does society, and this Principle ought to speak to everyone," said **Mike Wilke**, executive director, Commercial Closet Association.

The Commercial Closet Association's "Principle of Free Market Advertising Expression" states:

In America, all companies have the basic right to determine their own market expression—by advertising and selling to all customers respectfully and inclusively. We oppose all forms of attacks intended to disrupt free commerce based on intolerance or hostility toward any consumer, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

"The ANA and our members recognize the vitality and dramatic growth of America's ethnic and niche markets, and we continue to work to educate and inform our constituents on key diversity issues to help them maximize their multicultural marketing efforts," said **Marco DiDomizio**, director, ANA member relations, and staff representative to the ANA Multicultural Marketing Committee.

(more)

“The AAAA applauds the CCA and supports the fundamental, free-market principle that companies can and should determine their own advertising strategies and target consumers as they see fit,” said **Don Richards**, senior vice president, AAAA Agency Diversity Programs, and staff representative to the AAAA Diversity Committee.

The ANA and the AAAA have a long history of supporting multicultural and diversity initiatives in marketing and agency businesses. Both Associations support and recognize the importance of nondiscrimination and inclusiveness in American society and the consumer marketplace.

Each year, the **ANA Multicultural Excellence Awards** recognize the efforts of companies that have resulted in outstanding multicultural advertising campaigns in the African-American; Asian-American; Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT); Hispanic; and General Market segments.

In addition to the AAAA’s long-running **Multicultural Advertising Intern Program**, and **Operation Jumpstart**, which awards scholarships to students at eight portfolio schools, the AAAA launched **Operation Success** in 2004 to help member agencies increase ethnic and racial diversity and inclusiveness in three critical areas: 1) employee recruitment, especially at the mid- and senior-levels; 2) retention and training; and 3) minority vendor and supplier relationships.

About the AAAA

The AMERICAN ASSOCIATION *of* ADVERTISING AGENCIES is the national trade association of the advertising agency business. The 1,196 member agency offices it serves in the U.S. employ 65,000 people, offer a wide range of marketing communications services, and place 80 percent of all national advertising. The management-oriented association helps its members build their businesses, and acts as the industry’s spokesman with government, media, and the public sector. For more information visit our Web site at www.aaaa.org.

About the ANA

The Association of National Advertisers, Inc., leads the marketing community by providing its members insights, collaboration and advocacy. ANA’s membership includes 355 companies with 8,000 brands that collectively spend over \$100 billion in marketing communications and advertising. The ANA strives to communicate marketing best practices, lead industry initiatives, influence industry practices, manage industry affairs and advance, promote and protect all advertisers and marketers. For more information, visit www.ana.net.

About CCA

Commercial Closet Association (CCA) educates and influences the world of advertising to understand, respect and include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) references in advertising to achieve a more accepting society while achieving successful business results. CCA brings together Best Practices, advertising sensitivity training, journalistic reporting, an LGBT-themed ad archive with 3,000-plus ads from 33 countries spanning 85 years, ad critiques, visitor reviews, and other resources for advertisers and ad agencies. Those resources are found at www.CommercialCloset.org, serving 100,000 unique visitors monthly.

The Commercial Closet

Principle of Free Market Advertising Expression *Presented by Commercial Closet Association*

Preamble

America's bedrock commitment to entrepreneurialism and to free markets is older than our nation itself. Free markets recognize the worth of every single consumer without discrimination. In our extremely competitive economy, no company today can afford to neglect or shun any of its customers.

Corporate leaders today have advanced principles of inclusion and equal respect for all in their hiring and employment practices, as well as their advertising and selling strategies. Behind us are the times when some companies turned their backs on people because of the color of their skin, their ethnic origin, their physical disability or religious faith. Today, inclusion truly means everyone, including gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people.

Why? It is simply smart business for companies to market their products and services to every American. With \$641 billion in buying power, GLBT households, along with millions of their family members and friends, play a critical role in the success of America's dynamic economy. They believe as we do that advertising their products respectfully to all customers helps their bottom line.

Although one-third of Fortune 500 companies and many others already have created inclusive marketing and advertising strategies, a handful of small groups have chosen to object to advertising that respects or targets gay and lesbian consumers. These groups apply rigid agendas to boycott and target companies for merely doing what any business has the absolute right to do—*reach out to all potential customers*.

America's free enterprise system deserves much better. Together, we can and must speak up and be heard today—or choose to be silenced by a few. Thus we introduce two simple sentences as a fundamental Principle of Free Market Advertising Expression. We ask fair-minded business leaders, as well as professional and civil rights associations, to join us in public endorsement of our Principle:

CCA Principle of Free Market Advertising Expression

In America, all companies have the basic right to determine their own market expression—by advertising and selling to all customers respectfully and inclusively. We oppose all forms of attacks intended to disrupt free commerce based on intolerance or hostility toward any consumers, including GLBT people.