



AFSA Education Foundation

919 18th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006

Phone: (202) 296-5544 Fax: (202) 223-0321 Web site: www.afsaef.org

For Immediate Release

Contact: Karen Klugh
(202) 776-7308

Pre-Planning Equals Smart Holiday Shopping

AFSAEF Offers Budgeting Tool and Words of Wisdom for Holiday Shoppers

WASHINGTON, November 16, 2010 . . . Holiday shopping is expected to be on the uptick this year. Just because you may have a little more cash in your pocket, you still need to shop smart by pre-planning, says the American Financial Services Association Education Foundation (AFSAEF).

“Shop smart by taking the time to create a gift list and budget before you hit the malls. That way, you will cut down on the stress of the season and the New Year by shopping within your means,” said Susie Irvine, AFSAEF president and CEO.

The AFSAEF offers a free online worksheet to help you create your holiday spending plan (Visit www.afsaef.org/HolidaySpending.cfm). In addition to planning your gift list, the tool helps you track what you spend on decorations, cards, travel and entertaining. The worksheet can be printed for an in-store reminder of your holiday budget and be updated when you get home.

“Sticking to your budget for the holidays can save you from an overwhelming stack of bills in the New Year,” Irvine said. “Check your holiday budget often to help you stay on track and adjust it if necessary. Don’t beat yourself up over a few extra dollars spent, but be prepared for bigger bills if you go overboard. Remember, planning ahead can help you avoid the temptation of impulse buying at the last minute.”

“And it’s never too early to start thinking about next year,” Irvine added. “Once you’ve determined a comfortable spending amount for the holidays, you can begin planning for next year by saving a little each month. Many banks and credit unions offer special holiday accounts that you can fund with monthly automatic transfers from your checking account in predetermined amounts.”

Based in Washington, D.C., the AFSA Education Foundation’s mission is to help consumers realize the benefits of responsible money management, understand the credit process and seek help if credit problems occur. It is affiliated with the American Financial Services Association, the national trade association for the consumer credit industry, protecting access to credit and consumer choice.

#