



Marc Maurer, *President*

200 East Wells Street

at Jernigan Place

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Chris Danielsen
Director of Public Relations
National Federation of the Blind
(410) 659-9314, extension 2330
(410) 262-1281 (Cell)
cdanielsen@nfb.org

National Federation of the Blind and H&R Block Announce Agreement Assuring Accessibility

H&R Block Will Make Online Tax Prep and Mobile Apps Accessible

Boston, Massachusetts (March 25, 2014): [The National Federation of the Blind \(NFB\)](#), the oldest and largest nationwide organization of blind Americans, and H&R Block, which prepares approximately one in seven tax returns in America, announced today that they have reached an agreement to make H&R Block's Web site, online tax preparation products, and mobile applications fully accessible to blind taxpayers. Blind people access computers, Web sites, and mobile applications through screen access software that converts what is on the screen into spoken words or Braille, but improperly coded Web sites and applications can prevent this software from working properly, denying the blind user equal access. The agreement is contained in a consent decree ending litigation involving NFB, two of H&R Block's subsidiaries, two blind Massachusetts residents, and the United States Department of Justice. The consent decree outlines steps that H&R Block will take to assure that its Web site, including the utility for preparing income tax returns, is accessible by January of 2015 and that its mobile applications are accessible by January of 2016. The agreement also contains measures to ensure that accessibility is maintained and that blind users and others with disabilities can provide feedback and receive assistance with accessibility issues.

Dr. Marc Maurer, President of the National Federation of the Blind, said: "We are pleased to have reached this agreement, which will make the online services of one of America's largest and most popular tax preparers available to blind taxpayers. Blind people will soon be able to file their tax returns privately and independently if they wish, rather than seeking assistance in doing so. We commend H&R Block for its commitment to making its services accessible to all taxpayers, including those who are blind."

Jason Houseworth, President of Global Digital Tax Solutions and Product Management at H&R Block, said: “H&R Block is pleased to have reached an agreement with the National Federation of the Blind that insures the accessibility of our online resources for individuals who use assistive technologies and will work with the organization on further refinements to our online resources. We are committed to providing superior customer service to all Americans, including those with disabilities. As part of that commitment we want to serve all clients how they prefer to be reached — in a retail office, online, using software or a combination of methods.”

The National Federation of the Blind and the individual plaintiffs are represented in this matter by Christine M. Netski of the Boston firm Sugarman, Rogers, Barshak & Cohen, P.C., and Daniel F. Goldstein and Gregory P. Care of the Baltimore firm Brown, Goldstein & Levy LLP.

###

About the National Federation of the Blind

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) is the oldest, largest, and most influential nationwide membership organization of blind people in the United States. Founded in 1940, the NFB advocates for the civil rights and equality of blind Americans, and develops innovative education, technology, and training programs to provide the blind and those who are losing vision with the tools they need to become independent and successful.