JA Members Speak Up for the Jewelry Industry in D.C.

Jewelers of America met with lawmakers during its annual fly-in.

(PRESS RELEASE) NEW YORK, NY — Jewelers of America returned to Capitol Hill last week, as JA leadership and members met with lawmakers to discuss policies and issues impacting the jewelry industry. The annual fly-in, led by the Jewelers of America Political Action Committee (JAPAC), was held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024.

It was a global supply chain issue – concerns about implementation of Russian diamond restrictions across G7 nations including the United States – that took center stage this year. Jewelers of America has repeatedly asked lawmakers to push back against the proposed adoption of an exclusive physical verification and certification system in Belgium for all rough diamonds that is being touted by the European Union. Such a system would cause maximum damage to the global diamond and jewelry supply chain, while having minimal effect on Russia's diamond revenues.

"This trip to Washington D.C. continued our essential representation for Jewelers of America, our members and the United States jewelry industry," says JA President & CEO David J. Bonaparte. "Jewelers of America members made it clear they do not want Russian diamonds in their inventories, but they also don't want solutions that cause unnecessary disruptions to the U.S. diamond industry."

Fly-in Attendees shared this message with more than two dozen Members of Congress and were able to secure support from a senior Republican Member, who pledged to help share industry concerns on the Hill.

Jewelers also emphasized the need for action on critical issues that hit much closer to home, including retail crime and credit card swipe fees. Regarding elevated retail crime levels, the group met with Rep. Young Kim (R, CA-40), who introduced the Organized Retail Crime Act (H.R. 316) which would improve coordination and information sharing among federal law enforcement agencies.

"Our conversations focused on maintaining a supportive economic environment for jewelers, protecting the integrity of our diamond supply, and ensuring that safety measures are in place to combat retail crime," wrote first-time fly-in attendee Amina Sorel of NYC-based Amina Sorel Fine Jewelry. "It's clear that when we come together as an industry, we can advocate effectively for policies that benefit not just our businesses, but our communities as well."