

House Corporations Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

March 13, 2025

Members of the House Corporations Committee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express our strong support for **H 5552, the Consumer Grocery Pricing Fairness Act**. This vital legislation takes a targeted approach to addressing economic discrimination in the food retail sector and promoting fair competition in the marketplace.

For too long, dominant players in the grocery industry—including large retailers and e-commerce giants—have leveraged their market power to extract unfair advantages from suppliers, leaving independent food retailers and agricultural producers at a severe disadvantage. This imbalance has restricted competition, raised consumer prices, and limited options for farmers and food producers who rely on a competitive retail environment to thrive.

The **Consumer Grocery Pricing Fairness Act** would address these concerns by:

- **Prohibiting Economic Discrimination** – The bill prevents dominant grocery retailers from engaging in price discrimination or imposing unfair trade terms that disadvantage smaller competitors.
- **Promoting Market Clarity** – It distinguishes between pro-consumer efficiencies and harmful anticompetitive practices, ensuring that buyer power is not abused at the expense of competition and consumer choice.
- **Closing Discriminatory Loopholes** – The legislation eliminates unfair retail channel discrimination, such as packaging or pricing strategies that favor dominant retailers over independent grocers and convenience stores.
- **Focusing on the Largest Players** – The bill targets only the most powerful entities in the grocery and consumer supply chain, ensuring that small and medium-sized businesses are not burdened by unnecessary compliance obligations.

The consequences of unchecked market concentration are clear: higher costs for consumers, fewer choices in food retail, and limited market access for independent food retailers and agriculture producers. Small and mid-sized retailers, particularly those serving rural and food-insecure communities, struggle to compete when suppliers

prioritize dominant retailers for product availability, promotions, and lower prices. Additionally, the growing consolidation in grocery retail threatens to further exacerbate these issues.

By addressing these structural inequities, the **Consumer Grocery Pricing Fairness Act** would promote fair competition, support independent businesses, and ensure that consumers across the country benefit from a diverse and competitive grocery marketplace. We urge you to support this legislation and help restore balance to the food supply chain.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to working with you to advance this critical reform.

Sincerely,

American Economic Liberties Project

Energy Marketers of America

Farm Action Fund

National Grocers Association

New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association, Inc.

Small Business Majority