



March 8, 2016

Appropriations Subcommittee: Agriculture and Rural Development
The Honorable Nancy Jenkins, Chair
N-991 House Office Building
124 North Capitol Ave.
Lansing, MI 48933

Representative Jenkins and committee members,

Thank you for allowing me today to provide written testimony in support of HB 5180 that establishes a statewide program to increase the availability of fresh and nutritious food in certain communities.

As the "Voice for the food, beverage and petroleum industry" since 1910, AFPD is a multi-state trade association representing thousands of retailers operating in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and surrounding states. Our members include chain stores, independent supermarkets, convenience stores, petroleum retailers and specialty food markets. Our membership also includes wholesalers, distributors and manufacturers who support the retail industry.

HB 5180 will provide a unique financing tool to our members to construct, rehabilitate, or expand their stores in order to provide increased access to healthy food. Currently, in underserved areas across the state our retailers run on thin margins and securing resources to make a significant investment in their store through traditional financing is difficult. This program will provide our members the opportunity to make an investment that will allow them to increase their product selections when it comes to fresh and nutritious food.

Whether it be the required infrastructure necessary to carry these, often times, perishable items or resources to reconfigure the layout of their store to carry these types of food financing will be available to them to engage in the worthwhile endeavor of giving people easy access to food that is good for them.

Where fresh food access is at its lowest the need is at its highest. Across the State, in both urban and rural settings, we see the need to have healthy food available to all people. The financing options suggested in HB 5180 will allow and jumpstart the movement to provide these offerings across the State to people that want them.

In closing, I would again like to thank you and the committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 5180. My contact information is below and urge you to always feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
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