



## MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION

1360 Energy Park Drive, Suite #110 • St. Paul, MN 55108 • 651-228-0973 • 1-800-966-8352 • [www.mngrocers.com](http://www.mngrocers.com)

March 13, 2023

Chair Stephenson, Ranking Minority Member O'Driscoll, and Members of the House Commerce Committee,

The Minnesota Grocers Association thanks you for the opportunity to express our concerns regarding HF1315. While this proposal looks to clarify what food and beverage packaging can be labeling as "compostable", we are concerned about the potential unintended consequences this proposal would present to a complex, and already stressed, supply chain.

The Minnesota Grocers Association is the only state trade association representing the food industry of Minnesota from farm to fork. Minnesota has a unique culture of hundreds of hometown grocers and convenience stores, many of whom are independent, multi-generational, and locally owned. The MGA is their state trade association, with over 125 years of advancing industry. We have over 300 members with over 1,300 locations statewide, as well as food producers, manufacturers, brokers, and wholesaler members. Our industry provides over 150,000 jobs in the state – both union and non-union. The retail food industry is the backbone of Minnesota's prosperity, providing 1 out of every 20 jobs in our state.

As we learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is typically no quick solution when there are abrupt changes to any part of the supply chain. These complicated systems require that multiple production, packaging, logistical, and governmental systems are working together to make sure the conveyor belt of the market are operating in an efficient and safe manner.

Many products are produced, packaged, and purchased by retailers' far in advance of when they appear on store shelves. Any changes to current packaging requirements should be thoughtfully advanced and discussed with production and retail stakeholders. We are concerned that adopting language that is too stringent will create a shortage of permissible packaging, forcing packagers and retailers to switch to packaging that is not compostable at all. This would have the unintended consequence of actually reducing the amount of composting currently taking place.

There is also concern that retailers could be fined for selling products in packaging that a manufacturer has labeled as compostable, but the fails to meet the new standards. We believe that the responsibility of ensuing a product packaging meets any new standards should not fall to the retailers, whom rely on suppliers to be following state law regarding what materials they use to create their packaging products.

On behalf of our membership, we thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns. We thank Representative Pursell for meeting with us and for her willingness to discuss these concerns. We look forward to working together as this bill moves through the committee process.

We are here to be a resource and look forward to working to promote a strong economy that has positive outcomes for everyone.

Sincerely,

Jamie L. Pfuhl  
President  
Minnesota Grocers Association