



MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION

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March 29, 2023

Dear Chair Champion and members of the Senate Jobs and Economic Development Committee,

The Minnesota Grocers Association and Foundation would like to thank Chair Champion and the committee for including the funding for the Carts to Careers Program (SF2507 – Westrom) in SF3035.

Minnesota has a unique culture of hundreds of grocers and convenience stores, many of whom are independent, multi-generational, and locally owned. From farm to fork, our industry is incredibly labor intensive and provides 1 out of every 20 jobs in our great state. These are not just jobs, we offer opportunities for a successful lifetime career, with competitive pay and a wide range of benefits to meet the needs of our very diverse workforce. The support of this committee will allow the Carts to Careers program the opportunity to grow talent from within our industry and highlight the life-long careers that are available to workers and necessary for healthy and viable communities.

This continued funding will allow Carts to Careers to continue the successful work of our Retail Management Certificate Program, which started in 2019 in conjunction with Alexandria Technical & Community College. In addition, we are excited about the opportunity to create new avenues to life-long careers. Carts to Careers is developing a new meat-cutting program in partnership with Ridgewater Community College to address the chronic shortage of professional meat-cutters in the state. The Carts to Careers Program is also excited about our new transportation and driving program that will allow warehouse workers already working in the industry to advance their career by training them to become in-demand transportation professionals.

As a state, we understand the importance of having a viable brick-and-mortar grocery store and a robust supply chain. This takes a strong workforce and we are proud of the incredible opportunities – from farm to fork – for careers in our industry. As one of our graduates so eloquently testified before this committee, “This program helped me find my way and guided me to where I belong in the retail field.” Thank you again to the committee for your support of the Carts to Careers program.

Sincerely,

Jamie Pfuhl
President
Minnesota Grocers Association

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, multigenerational, 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 both union and non-union. The MGA is tasked to support and represent industry while advancing the common good of our great state.