

For Immediate Release

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## **Farmers, Grocers, Small Businesses Praise Governor Snyder for Signing Reform to Keep Michigan Food Affordable**

*Michigan Food Access and Affordability Act – Public Act 135 – to  
Keep Michigan Grocery Items Tax Free*

**LANSING**—Michigan farmers, grocers, small businesses, social service providers and labor leaders today praised Governor Rick Snyder for signing into law bipartisan legislation to guarantee Michigan families' food and grocery items will remain free of new local taxes.

Public Act 135 was sponsored and advanced in the House by state Representative Rob VerHeulen, and championed in the Senate by state Senator Peter MacGregor.

“The Michigan Food Access and Affordability Act ensures Michigan families can count on affordable, tax free food and beverages,” said Dan Papineau, Director of Tax Policy at the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. “Families, job makers, and workers are grateful for Governor Snyder’s signature, and his leadership on this critical issue.”

Bill Black, Legislative Director of the Michigan Teamsters Joint Council 43 added: “Local food taxes have a devastating impact on working men and women. My colleagues in states where taxes like these have been experimented with report layoffs and job losses, and the Governor’s signature ensures that won’t happen here in Michigan.”

Neighborhood anchors like small grocers, diners, restaurants, and theaters provide great jobs to thousands of Michiganders, but would be jeopardized by new taxes on food items. Recently enacted beverage taxes in Cook County,

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Illinois (surrounding Chicago) and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania have driven up prices on local families, killed hundreds of jobs, and slashed paychecks for others. The Cook County tax was recently repealed by local policymakers.

The legislation signed today may serve as a good-government model for other states, where social service, business, and labor organizations were watching closely.

“Michigan is a national leader in agriculture and farm-to-table dining,” said Rebecca Park with the Michigan Farm Bureau. “The last thing Michigan farmers need are new local taxes on their products at stores, markets, and restaurants. We’re glad Governor Snyder took this step today to protect Michigan agriculture.”

Keep MI Food Affordable is a coalition of Michigan farmers, small businesses, and labor leaders committed to preventing new taxes on food and beverages across Michigan. Coalition partners include the Michigan Farm Bureau, the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Food Bank Council, Michigan Grocers Association, Michigan Retailers Association, Small Business Association of Michigan, Michigan Restaurant Association, National Federation of Independent Business – Michigan, Michigan Dairy Foods Association, Michigan Food Processors Association, Associated Food and Petroleum Dealers Michigan Chapter, Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc., American Sugar Beets Association, Michigan Soft Drink Association, Michigan Distributors and Vendors, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Teamsters, Bowling Centers Association of Michigan, National Association of Theater Owners of Michigan, and more.

More can be found online at: <http://keepmifoodaffordable.com/>

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