



Rosauers CEO Jeff Philipps, Spokane business leaders rally support for Initiative 1634
Hospitality and business development organizations echo the call

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SPOKANE – July 19, 2018 – Rosauers Supermarkets CEO Jeff Philipps today hosted a meet-and-greet for Spokane area businesses to build support for Yes! to Affordable Groceries, Washington State Initiative 1634. The ballot measure would prohibit any new, local taxes on all groceries.

“We want to stop new taxes on groceries before they happen,” said Philipps. “A tax on groceries or any category of groceries is a regressive tax. It hurts the buying power of those who struggle to meet a grocery budget – those who are on fixed incomes and most in need of cash in their pockets.”

Greater Spokane Incorporated, Better Spokane, Teamsters 690 and local members of the Washington Food Industry Association joined the event.

Michael Cathcart with Better Spokane said protecting the community from the problems related to such taxes is a priority.

“Local taxes on grocery items have led to losses in sales and jobs in other communities. We have to act to make sure Spokane and our neighboring cities aren’t vulnerable to the same harms,” said Cathcart.

Barbara Richardson and Sonja Halverson, co-chairs of the Spokane Hospitality, perfectly captured local businesses’ concerns about local taxes on food and beverages in their [opinion piece in the Spokesman Review](#).

“If you look at some of the decisions made and some of the taxes levied in other parts of the state it is easy to understand that the threat to a tax on groceries is real. We saw this happen in Seattle with the huge, new sweetened beverage tax. This is a slippery slope and once it starts, there’s no turning back,” they wrote.

Today also marks the addition of the coalition’s 1,000th member, Spokane’s Zach McBournie of The Buzz Pizzeria & Lounge. McBournie joins the Washington businesses, organizations and individuals actively supporting and organizing on behalf of I-1634. Together, this coalition is taking a stand to bring fairness to our tax structure, to protect jobs and neighborhood businesses, and to prevent excessive taxation on what we eat and drink. [A full list of the 1000 grassroots supporters](#) and the communities in which they work and reside can be found online.

McBournie says the rising cost of living and the ongoing burden on businesses from taxes and regulations are among the reasons he is now actively supporting I-1634.

“Owning a business has its challenges and the recent tax increases have definitely not made that any easier. Any other tax increases, especially on groceries, would not only affect our costs of certain items, but would increase the prices that the people in our community pay every day for groceries. That is why I joined to be the 1,000th member of this coalition to protect three of the things I treasure most: my business, my community, and my growing family.”

More than 360,000 signatures were submitted to the Washington Secretary of State’s Office earlier this month and the Yes! To Affordable Groceries campaign was officially launched Monday, July 9.

Coalition members from all corners of Washington are available for comment. To learn more about our coalition, visit the [website](#).

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Paid for by Yes! to Affordable Groceries, supported by the Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28, Washington Farm Bureau, Washington Food Industry Association, and Korean-American Grocer’s Association of Washington, and sponsored by the American Beverage Association. Top 5 contributors: Washington Food Industry Association; The Coca-Cola Company; PepsiCo, Inc.; Dr Pepper Snapple Group, Inc. and Red Bull North America. PO Box 50705, Bellevue, Washington, 98015.