

## **Coalition Statement on Formation of the *Yes! To Affordable Groceries* Committee**

*On Monday, the coalition Yes! To Affordable Groceries registered a ballot committee with Washington's Public Disclosure Commission to forward a statewide ballot measure that will keep groceries affordable and free of new local taxes. The coalition is made up of citizens, farmers, businesses and community organizations who seek to prevent new taxes on everyday grocery items such as meats, dairy and beverages from burdening working families and local businesses. The ballot committee is sponsored by the American Beverage Association as part of a coalition that includes the Korean American Grocer's Association, Washington Food Industry Association, Washington Farm Bureau and Joint Council of Teamsters.*

“With the harm working families and small businesses are experiencing from taxes in Seattle, people are concerned that these could spread to other communities across Washington. Working families and individuals are clearly being pressed on the affordability of their communities. They feel taxed enough and can't afford new taxes on what they eat and drink. Therefore, with a coalition of taxpayers, grocers, farmers and union members, the Yes! To Affordable Groceries Committee will seek to prevent local government from enacting new taxes on groceries. The pending ballot measure will give working families more voice and protection on the affordability of their groceries and their communities overall. As members of these communities who employ thousands of people across the state, we have a responsibility to protect those who would be harmed by these taxes.

“To be clear, we are not looking at any actions that would end or reverse revenue streams that have already been passed by local governments. Our coalition will be focused on a forward-looking initiative to make sure pressures for new revenues in communities don't cross into the grocery cart where people already living paycheck to paycheck are hit the hardest. We appreciate the challenges communities face, but there is a better way to address them than with taxes that do more harm than good.”