

Miller's fresh foods

MAYVILLE, COOPERSTOWN, HATTON,
NEW ROCKFORD, OAKES, LARIMORE, EDGELEY,
NORTHWOOD, Hankinson, Hillsboro

Chairperson Klein and members of the Industry, Business and Labor Committee.

I am Torry Reutter the General Manager of Miller's Fresh Foods, we own and operate ten grocery stores in ND. I am here to support House Bill 1175

In early March of 2020 COVID-19 drastically changed our retail business. In a short period of time our businesses were impacted as I would compare it to a big ND storm being predicted yet even bigger. We dealt with new mandates and changes sometimes on a daily basis. Thankful to NDGA, National Grocers Association, CDC and our local community health departments they all contributed to the direction we should proceed in.

Such As: Wearing masks, 6 feet distancing, markings on our floors to guide customers, Plexiglas guards put in place, sanitation stations for us and our customers, cleaning and disinfecting not just regularly but all the time. Our company put one person in charge and immediately designed a COVID-19 manual for all of our employees to follow and document what changes we put in place as we are considered "essential businesses" to serve our communities we live in. We did not take the spread of this disease lightly and maintained our stores for the safety of our customers and employees. We encouraged hand sanitization, frequent hand washing, glove wearing, mask wearing and try to keep the customers moving and not standing around talking or touching things. This in its self was a hard task at first as you all know small town friendly talk is a must with our customers and of course COVID-19 was the topic of conversation, kept short and sweet of course these days.

We informed our customers through signage and Social Media all while trying to keep our customers and our employees healthy and happy. Trying to keep everyone informed on all the changes was another challenge that we faced but handled on a daily basis. Trying to explain to customers there are certain products we just can't get was challenging but eventually they listened to us and understood the problems we faced. All in all throughout the entire Pandemic I believe our employees and team leaders did an excellent job in reducing the spread of the Corona Virus and as of today we continue to follow those same procedures we implemented and will continue on this path.

In closing I would like to remind the Committee that we are designated as an "essential business". We were expected to stay open and provide for our communities, and we did that with PRIDE.

House Bill 1175 recognizes the difficult situation we were put in and affords us protection from frivolous civil law suits. The grocery industry in North Dakota rose to the challenge and provided goods and services in a manner that protected their customers and employees.

We ask that the Industry, Business and Labor Committee acknowledge the commitment we made and support HB1175

Thank You, Torry Reutter

