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Dear Members of the House Business Affairs and Labor Committee and General Assembly:

On behalf of United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, Local 7 (“UFCW Local 7”), which represents 18,000 Kroger (King Soopers / City Market) and Albertsons-Safeway grocery workers in Colorado and Wyoming, I write to express UFCW Local 7’s strong support of the bipartisan bill **HB24-1373**. I also want to thank the sponsors and co-sponsors of this legislation for fighting for the hard-working families who make up Local 7 and for standing up against the well-funded, national grocery store chains that continue to try and consolidate their power to the severe detriment of their employees, Colorado consumers, local economies, and communities across the state, especially those in rural Colorado.

As you know, Colorado Attorney General, Phil Weiser, has filed a lawsuit to prevent the proposed \$25 billion merger between Kroger and Albertsons (Safeway) which would result in the new mega-corporation having 50% of the market share in Colorado, which poses a clear and present danger to communities, workers, producers, and consumers. This is an industry that is already too consolidated, where too few companies have too much control over our food and beverage supply, including alcoholic beverages.

One of the key elements of **HB24-1373** seeks to prohibit large national grocery store chains from mandating they receive free labor from alcohol distributors, which currently occurs daily. To bypass using trained store employees, national grocery chains such as King Soopers and Safeway force alcohol distributors to provide free merchandising staff to handle, stock, and display alcohol throughout the store. These third-party merchandisers are now performing work throughout the

entire store daily -- stocking beer and wine and creating countless “temporary displays” in nearly every aisle and endcap, near stores exits, and even surrounding self-checkout registers. This is just another example of how these large corporations use their market dominance to manipulate the competitive landscape in their favor and do everything in their power to avoid strengthening their employee base and creating good-paying union jobs.

We saw this firsthand back in 2016 and 2018 when the grocery stores did everything possible to eliminate the critical requirement that alcohol be delivered by an employee of the grocery store that held the liquor license. The national grocery store chains attempted to eliminate these jobs and instead give the responsibility of safely delivering alcohol to inexpensive, third-party delivery drivers who do not have any tie or accountability to the licensed retailer. Thanks to strong opposition by the UFCW and bipartisan legislators from across Colorado, this irresponsible demand by the national grocery chains was defeated. However, the grocery stores and other corporations once again tried to bypass the legislature, and in 2022, poured millions of dollars into Proposition 126 to allow third-party delivery of all alcohol, which the voters wisely rejected.

Kroger, Albertsons, and numerous other mega-corporations continue to demonstrate that if given the chance to consolidate power and grow market share, even at the expense of Colorado’s workers and consumers, they will not hesitate to do so. **HB24-1373** will not only provide more work and opportunities for hard-working union employees, but it will also ensure that these national grocery chains stop abusing their purchasing stranglehold over their distributors to receive free labor, which creates an even more unfair and anti-competitive landscape for Colorado’s independent, mom-and-pop liquor stores.

Please support HB24-1373.

In Solidarity,



Kim C. Cordova
UFCW Local 7 President
UFCW International Vice President

cc: Speaker Julie McCluskie
Majority Leader Monica Duran
President Steve Fenberg
Majority Leader Robert Rodriguez
Sen. Dylan Roberts
Sen. Perry Will