



frontline

The Official Monthly Publication of the Minnesota Grocers Association

May 2024

Legislative Session Wrapping Up

The 2024 legislative session is quickly approaching the constitutionally mandated adjournment date of May 20. Though not as momentous as the 2023 session, this year is still seeing the advancement of numerous proposals that would have big impacts on industry and the state. Much of the focus of the MGA's Government Relations Team this session has been in the areas of environmental guidelines, consumer protections, and labor laws.

Lawmakers are forwarding multiple proposals that would create statewide programs overseeing the sale, recycling, and repurposing of items Minnesotans use every day. The most expansive of these proposals is an Extended Producer Responsibility law. The "Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act" would require producers of packaging and paper products to implement and finance a statewide program to provide for the collection and management of used packaging and paper products through waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and product redesign. There's also a bill to create a statewide E-Waste program that would be funded by a new 3.2% point-of-sale tax on the purchase of many electronic devices sold in the state.

The House majority is pushing to repeal the current state statute that prohibits municipalities from limiting the types of bags offered by retailers within their jurisdictions. In addition, they're attempting to limit and regulate food waste that is created by retailers, by requiring anyone who creates food waste to separate and weigh that waste and develop a plan to mitigate and manage it.

HR Corner: Child Labor Laws

With summer right around the corner, child labor laws change as school vacations begin. Please see the insert for information on child labor laws and how they are administered during the summer months. **SB**

Numerous consumer protection proposals are advancing including bills that require that all fees be listed in an item's sale price, ticket purchasing protections, and several anti-trust and competitiveness bills.

Labor provisions advanced by both the House and Senate also include some significant changes for those operating in the state. These include: adjustments to the Earned Sick and Safe Time mandate passed last year, raising the minimum wage and increasing the inflationary adjustment, eliminating the youth minimum wage, requiring employers to list salary ranges for all job postings, and allowing for oral fluid testing for job applicants. There are also stringent new rules regarding Worker Misclassification for independent contractors and technical changes to how the Paid Family Medical Leave program will function when benefits become available on January 1, 2026.

The MGA continues to educate leaders about the impacts of their policy decisions on businesses and consumers in the state. We will ensure that the voice of industry is heard. With only a one-seat majority in the Senate, and critical House elections coming up this fall, there is an opportunity to impact outcomes.

Please stay engaged by reading the weekly MGA Capitol Watch email updates, listening to our bi-weekly Capitol Checkout calls, and responding to calls to action or requests for input from the MGA Government Relations Team. **SB**



Thank You 2024 Legislative Sponsors



Thank you, 2024 Legislative Sponsors, for your commitment and support of the efforts of the MGA's Government Relations Team. **SB**

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Stay Informed with MGA Capitol Checkout Calls

The MGA offers biweekly Capitol Checkout conference calls during the legislative session. The calls last 30 minutes and give pertinent, up-to-the-minute legislative information. Upcoming calls are scheduled for **Friday, May 10, and Friday, May 24 at 9:00 am**. These calls are recorded to easily share with your team members.

Mark your calendars for the MGA's 2024 Session Recap Webinar on **June 6 at 9:00 a.m.** The MGA team will go into greater detail on what laws were passed by lawmakers in St. Paul. **SB**

MGA Contact Key

JP: Jamie Pfuhl, President, jpfuhl@mngrocers.com **KA:** Karly Ackerman, Director of Membership and Communications, kackerman@mngrocers.com
SB: Steve Barthel, Government and Community Relations Manager, sbarthel@mngrocers.com **KC:** Karen Connolly, Office and Foundation Manager, kconnolly@mngrocers.com
SM: Shelby Miklya, Administrative Assistant/Program Coordinator, smiklya@mngrocers.com
The Minnesota Grocers Association, 1360 Energy Park Drive, Suite #110, St. Paul, MN 55108, 651-228-0973 or 1-800-966-8352, Fax 651-228-1949.



MGA Champions Luncheon a Huge Success



This year, the MGA held its first Champions Luncheon and it was an outstanding value for all attendees.

MGA members were able to connect and share relevant conversations on the future of industry. The event also provided an opportunity to recognize some of industry's best. After a networking session, the luncheon program began with the presentation of MGA's Industry Ambassador Award. This award acknowledges individuals who go above and beyond to elevate the grocery industry. They utilize their voice to capture what is great about the grocery business, its workforce, its products, and the passion within it. Congratulations to our 2024 MGA Industry Ambassador, Donald Ericson, of Grocery Store Fanatics.

His dedication and commitment to the entire industry exemplify the definition of an Industry Champion.

The MGA welcomed Commissioner Thom Peterson, MN Department of Agriculture, who recognized the 2023 Minnesota Grown Retailers of the Year. The winning individual store entries were selected based, by region, on a variety of criteria including the number of Minnesota Grown products and how they were promoted to customers.

The winner from the Northeast Region was Chris' Food Center – Sandstone; West Central Region was Elden's Fresh Foods – Alexandria; Northwest Region was Hugo's Family Marketplace – East Grand Forks; Twin Cities Region was Kowalski's Market – Grand Avenue; Southwest Region was Mackenthun's Fine Foods – Waconia; Southeast Region was Nilssen's Foods – Zumbrota; People's Choice was Festival Foods – Hugo.

The MGA Bag Hunger Silver Plate winners were acknowledged and congratulated for their amazing support of this important program.

The winners of Best Creative Partnerships were Hugo's Family Marketplace & Russ Davis Wholesale; Kowalski's Market & Russ Davis Wholesale; and Lund's & Byerlys, Post Consumer Brands & Prairie Farms Dairy. The winners for Best Campaign Execution – Teal's Market; Best Innovative Marketing – Knowlan's Super Markets, Inc.; Best Community Hunger Support – Mackenthun's Fine Foods. The Campaign Champions were also highlighted: ALDI, Inc., Chris' Food Center, Cub Foods, Super One Foods/Miner's, Inc., and Rush Foods, Inc.

Michael Sansolo, Retail Food Industry Consultant, was back by popular demand. He provided great insights into today's workforce challenges. There was a multitude of valuable takeaways for all of those in attendance. **SM**



MGA Congratulates All Winners

2024 MGA Foundation Golf Event & Scholarship Fundraiser

The MGA's Annual Golf Event is fast approaching! Join us on **Tuesday, May 28, 2024**, at The Refuge Golf Club in Oak Grove, MN. This event is brought to you in partnership with the MGA Vendor Leadership Committee. The golf event is the sole fundraiser for the MGA Foundation Scholarship program, which provides scholarship opportunities for your employees and their dependents.



The MGA Foundation will also be hosting its 16th Annual Silent Auction held in conjunction with this event. The auction raises funds for the MGAF scholarship program and 100% of the proceeds directly support education advancement. Back again this year are the ever-popular MGAF Swag Bags. Each attendee will receive one swag bag in their golf cart.

Registration forms have been emailed and the deadline to sign up is **May 10, 2024**. Space is limited and filling up fast, so register today! Visit www.mnngrocers.com to register. **SM**

2024 Annual Conference

The MGA invites you to the 2024 MGA Annual Conference **Sunday, July 28 – Tuesday, July 30** at Madden's Resort in Brainerd, MN – let the adventure begin! All registrations have been emailed. Register by **June 7** to guarantee your attendance.



Our three-day action-packed conference is a unique experience that delivers unparalleled networking opportunities, cutting-edge seminars, and socializing to build relationships between vendors and retailers. The MGA anticipates a sell-out, so sign up early! **KA**

Stay Connected with Industry

The MGA has various member benefits that bring value to multiple areas of our company, but we don't always get the word out to the right people. To ensure you are getting the most value from your membership, please provide us with additional company contacts we need to reach the appropriate people in your company. The new 2024 password for the MGA website is "apple". This gives you exclusive access to the Members Area. Lastly, be sure to connect with the MGA on social media @MNGrocers.

The 2024 MGA Member Directory has been mailed. We are proud of the members we serve and this year we are working on expanding our member base. In your day-to-day business activities, you work with many partners – other retailers, vendors, and suppliers. As you read through the directory, please consider those relationships. Who's missing? Let us know and let's get them involved. The MGA wants to ensure a diverse membership is represented and that every corner of the state has a strong voice. **KA**



MGAF Carts to Careers: Elevate Your Workforce

The MGA Foundation receives ongoing funding through a State of Minnesota appropriation/grant that provides us—and you—the opportunity to provide tuition support to your employees seeking education and training in the food industry. This funding may be used for any education or training as it relates to the food industry—from non-college-credit leadership/manager training to accounting certification programs to baking/pastry certificates, CDL licensing, and more. Please contact the MGA if you might have a use for this type of funding now or in the near future. **KC**



WASHINGTON NEWS

Proposed Visa/Mastercard Settlement

In late March, Visa and Mastercard announced a \$30 billion settlement plan to limit swipe fees for retailers. The offer is in response to an ongoing lawsuit that has been filed by the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) and other retail-focused groups. The proposed settlement was immediately met with opposition by the plaintiffs in the case. The settlement would not address the lack of competition in the marketplace and could be used by Visa and Mastercard as a bargaining chip to prevent movement on the Credit Card Competition Act (CCCA).

Final PFAS National Drinking Water Regulation

On April 10, the EPA announced the final National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) for six PFAS chemicals, establishing legally enforceable levels, called Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), in drinking water. The EPA expects that the final rule will prevent PFAS exposure in drinking water for approximately 100 million people, prevent thousands of deaths, and reduce tens of thousands of serious PFAS-attributable illnesses. In addition to the final rule, \$1 billion is available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help states implement PFAS testing and treatment at public water systems and to help owners of private wells address PFAS contamination.

Final WIC Food Package Rule

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) completed its long-awaited review of the WIC food package revisions. The rule would update the WIC food package to align with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and recommendations from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. The proposed rule, released in November 2022, proposed changes to increase benefits for fruits and vegetables, reduce the amount of juice allowed, adjust whole grain options and requirements, and allow for more non-dairy options, among other items.

Final OSHA Walkaround Rule Issued

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued the final walkaround rule to enable an employee's third-party representative(s) to accompany an OSHA Compliance Safety and Health Officer (CSHO) during an inspection. The final rule is effective May 31, 2024. The rule goes beyond the initially proposed rule to include a wider scope of individuals who could be considered third-party representatives. There are concerns from industry of potential disruptions and harms in food production should third-party individuals or groups of individuals be granted access to facilities. Expanding the skills definition could include representatives of unions (at non-union facilities) and non-governmental organizations. It is expected that the rule will be challenged by numerous groups that have raised significant concerns with the scope and authority of OSHA to issue such a sweeping regulation.

New Overtime Salary Threshold Announced

The US Department of Labor (DOL) just released the new overtime salary threshold required to exempt a salary professional from federal overtime pay. Starting July 1, 2024, the threshold will increase to \$43,888, and will increase again, to \$58,656 by Jan 1, 2025. Starting in January 2027, salary thresholds will increase every three years based on wage data. This is a 60% increase from the 2019 rule update under President Donald Trump where the DOL set the level at \$35,568. The proposed rule would impact and estimated 3.6 million workers.

Showcase Your MGA Foundation Scholarship Recipients

Place a Congratulations Advertisement in the Summer 2024 Minnesota Grocer magazine. The MGA Foundation Scholarship Program has ended and recipients will be announced in the coming weeks. Showcase your company's commitment to great careers and the success of your team members. **Ad deadline May 24. KA**

MGA Circular

The MGA Circular is a quarterly email update that provides simple marketing ideas and tools to expand your customer connections. In April the MGA held a 10-day Earth Day promotion on social media highlighting the good work of the food industry and engaging consumers. Thank you to Miner's, Inc. Super One Foods for sharing their #GrocersGetGreen stories. This month, share the summer grill safety insert with your customers to celebrate May BBQ Month. **KA**

2024 MGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE JULY 28-30, 2024 MADDEN'S RESORT, BRainerd, MN



Don't miss out – there is still plenty of time to sponsor this year's conference. Sponsoring the Annual Conference elevates your company and shows your commitment to the food industry of Minnesota. Thank you to the below companies who have supported the MGA and are committed to industry. **KA**

Thank You Survival Kit Sponsors

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July 28 – 30
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MGA Program



It’s not too late to get your Food PAC stripes on your name badge for the MGA’s upcoming events. The MGAF Golf Event and Annual Conference are around the corner, now is a fantastic time to show your support for industry and get your Food PAC of MN stripes!

The Food PAC of MN is the MGA political action committee. Food PAC funds are necessary to conduct the MGA’s government relations work in St. Paul. Your PAC donation is an investment in your business. Stripes will be worn at all MGA events for the remainder of 2024. Help us reach the industry’s fundraising goal, and show your peers you mean business – please donate today! Contributions are only accepted from personal funds. See insert. **SB**

The Food PAC of MN needs you in 2024!

The Food PAC of MN has raised 38% of its election goal! Thank you for your support!

Invest in Your Business Donate today!

You Asked it

Q: When does the new Retail Delivery Fee Begin?

A: Starting July 1, 2024, there will be a Retail Delivery Fee of 50 cents that applies to each transaction where items equal or exceed \$100 of tangible personal property subject to sales tax or clothing. See insert for more details.



Questions? Call MGA 1-800-966-8352



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