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Statement of the Connecticut Food Association – Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth

Wayne Pesce, President, Connecticut Food Association

In opposition of the Report of the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth

The Connecticut Food Association (CFA) proudly advocates on behalf of the food retail industry. Its mission is to promote the growth of Connecticut's grocery retail community and its supplier network.

Reasoning:

While we support the ethics behind this report, the current economic climate in Connecticut is tenuous. Based on multiple, credible wage studies, there is high probability that job security, employer paid benefits, and economic development will all decrease. Creating an unfriendly, uncompetitive business environment, allows regional states to better compete for our most valued asset – our citizens. Economy shrinkage is directly related to job creation/opportunity and population declines.

Economics:

The minimum wage is one of the most studied topics in economics. The vast majority of research suggests that minimum wage increases, in fact reduces youth employment. Teens acquire more than extra spending cash in their first jobs: Research shows they also pick up valuable workforce experience that benefits them later in life.

Conclusion:

You may believe you are moving towards an admirable goal by taking this action. For the record, action is not always the answer. I encourage you to dig a little deeper and question the timing of these recommendations. Connecticut already has an established minimum wage above the national and regional levels. Supporting these recommendations passes along additional costs to the largest collective employer in the state with negative consequences to jobs for existing employees as well as higher grocery prices for Connecticut consumers.

Given the current economic climate in our state the business community is requesting transparency and consistency from lawmakers, these recommendations deliver neither. We urge a measured and thoughtful approach that parallels advances in Connecticut's economic growth and future.