



*Advocating the views of convenience stores, supermarkets,
independent grocers, wholesalers and consumer product vendors.*

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PFMA praises President Trump's signature of 2018 Farm Bill

CAMP HILL, PA (December 21, 2018) – The Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association (PFMA) applauds President Donald J. Trump's signing of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, also known as the Farm Bill, which offers a host of provisions greatly beneficial to its members and to Pennsylvania residents.

The final bill is a significant win for many PFMA member organizations, including convenience stores, grocery chains, and independent grocers. For one, the bill reauthorizes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the country's most effective anti-hunger program, helping one in eight Americans afford a basic diet, as well as permitting online SNAP sales.

"We are pleased that the final bill retains critical anti-hunger programs that many families across Pennsylvania rely on for nutrition assistance," PFMA President & CEO Alex Baloga said. "We also support the positive changes to the EBT programs that will greatly benefit our members."

In addition, the bill:

- Modernizes Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) regulations;
- Prohibits EBT processors and their subcontractors from charging retailers a fee for switching or routing a transaction;
- Authorizes mobile EBT payments;
- Rejects a pilot project to test the Harvest Box proposal, which would have replaced about 40 percent of SNAP benefits with a government-run food delivery service.
- Creates a clearinghouse to offer technical assistance for participating retailers in the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grants and;
- Extends the ban on interchange fees to a permanent prohibition on state EBT processing fees – which is expected to save independent grocers much needed dollars.

The legislation passed the House of Representatives 369-47 and the Senate by a vote of 87-13.

About PFMA

The Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association, a statewide trade association, advocates the views of nearly 800 convenience stores, supermarkets, independent grocers, wholesalers and consumer product vendors. PFMA members operate more than 3,200 stores and employ more than 150,000 Pennsylvanians. For more information on PFMA, visit www.pfma.org.

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