



**Senate Bill 56
House Judiciary Committee
June 4, 2025**

Chair Thomas, Vice-Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the hemp related provisions recently amended into Senate Bill 56.

As President of the Ohio Grocers Association, I proudly represent food retail, wholesale and supply companies across the Buckeye state. My members include the smallest “mom and pop” stores, independent grocers as well as some convenience stores and of course the food wholesalers who supply these stores.

We share the House’s concerns on making sure intoxicating products are kept out of the hands of our children. Our members have extensive experience and take the responsibility of selling a wide range of adult products to consumers on a daily basis. There are rigid protocols and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that any adult use product is only sold to an age-appropriate consumer. We appreciate language within SB56 that would allow certain types of hemp beverages to continue to be sold at retail locations. However, we have concerns that the language in SB56 would prohibit on premise consumption for hemp beverages and ban most of all other types of hemp products from retail sales.

We instead urge the committee and welcome an approach like HB198, that addresses youth access by incorporating strict regulatory oversight. These include components such as age-restricting products; product labeling and rigid testing procedures; and other regulatory requirements. We believe this is the best approach to not harm legitimate Ohio businesses, like grocery stores, while maintaining proper limitations and safety measures.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature on this legislation moving forward.

