

As a small business owner in Southeastern Ohio, we invest our earnings back into our store, our staff and into our community. However, this is becoming more difficult as national retail chains creep into our community and are slowly chipping away at our customer base and our daily sales. We attempt to offer better customer service and unique items to keep the customers buying local.

An advantage that we have over the national retail chains is Sunday Sales of Beer, Wine and Spirituous Liquor that my father went door to door to campaign for our business to have this service for our community. Currently, other national chains have not taken the extra effort to gain this business which assists our small store, one day a week, to have an advantage to stay alive in the retail community.

In our community, the retail chains do not invest in the community and the schools. The extra revenue they would receive is not kept local to help our children grow. As a small business we are one of the larger employers locally. We try to keep jobs available for our employees which become our family. We pay above minimum wage, we offer benefits for our staff, we try to apply a raise every year, we attend our local fair to purchase 4-H/FFA animals (15 in 2020), and we attend or donate to each charity in the community. However, the national retail chains that have a store in our community employ very few staff, they do not offer benefits except to their management and cut hours so they are not required to offer benefits, pay minimum wage to their non-status employees, they have not been seen attending events to help reinvest in our community and all request for donations are denied.

In addition, our community feels they should have a vote on who sells alcohol. In one election a few years ago, there were two issues on the ballot to sell alcohol. One was for a locally owned retail store and the other was a national retail chain. In that same election, the locally owned store passed by a landslide, but the national retail failed significantly. In our faith based community, the residents place trust into the local business owners to train and monitor staff to ensure laws are abided when it relates to alcohol.

We strongly oppose the passing of House Bill 674. We believe it is in the best interest of the community for the decision to be voted on for Sunday sales. Initially, this bill did not bother me as I did not mind that the work that my father did help pave the wave for future retailers to have it easier. However, after I understood the financial statistics and how it will negatively impact our business and community I have had a change of heart. To reiterate, we strongly oppose House Bill 674, Sunday-Sales.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Crock

Owner of F & W Grocery, est. 1963

D.B.A. Caldwell Food Center