



State of Michigan Awards MIRA \$3 Million Grant to Combat Food Deserts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(West Bloomfield, MI -July 2024) – The Midwest Independent Retailers Association (MIRA), through the support of the Michigan Legislature and Governor Gretchen Whitmer, has been awarded a \$3 million grant to support and implement a program to combat "Food Deserts" in Michigan.

Food deserts are generally defined as areas where people have limited access to various healthy foods. This is often the result of living a significant distance from nutritious and affordable food sources.

The USDA set criteria as follows: In urban areas, at least 500 people, or 33% of the population, must live more than one mile from the nearest large grocery store. In rural areas, at least 500 people, or 33% of the population, must live more than 10 miles from the nearest large grocery store.

"MIRA is at the nexus of small, independent food retailers, wholesalers, and distributors and therefore perfectly positioned to bring healthy produce and fresh, unprocessed foods to underserved areas throughout Michigan," said Bill Wild, president and CEO of MIRA.

MIRA's government relations team, headed by VP Jerry Griffin, will oversee the implementation of the grant program. "MIRA will utilize these funds to build a healthy food infrastructure in urban and rural areas where large grocery stores do not exist and access to fresh produce, fruit, unprocessed foods, and other staples of a healthy diet is very limited," said Griffin.

About MIRA

MIRA, which has served as "The voice for the food, beverage, and petroleum industries" since 1910, is the premier multi-state trade association representing thousands of independent retailers operating in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and the rest of the Midwest. MIRA maintains its Executive Offices in West Bloomfield, Michigan.

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