

NEWS RELEASE



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Contact:

Jamie Pfuhl, President
Minnesota Grocers Association
(651) 228-0973
jpfuhl@mngrocers.com

Minnesota Grocers Association Presents Bipartisan Bag-Off Participant Senator Paul Anderson with Donation to Second Harvest Heartland

St. Paul, MN – May 18, 2020 – The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) held its 2020 Bipartisan Bag-Off in February at the State Capitol. This event highlights the impact the Minnesota food industry has on serving consumers, providing careers, and investing in its communities. As a participant in this event, Senator Paul Anderson was awarded \$500 to donate to a food charity of his choice. Customarily, this contribution is made during an in-person presentation in district. Today, on behalf of Senator Anderson, a virtual donation was made to Second Harvest Heartland. This format was used to respect the social distancing guidance due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Bipartisan Bag-Off featured leadership from each of the four legislative caucuses. This year's contestants were Senator Paul Anderson, House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt, Senator Jeff Hayden, and Speaker Melissa Hortman. A panel of industry leaders judged the contest based on speed, distribution of weight, proper bagging principles, along with style, attitude, and appearance. The Minnesota Department of Commerce Commissioner Steve Kelley was the "official weigher" to ensure accuracy. Speaker Melissa Hortman won the competition for the first time and took home the trophy.

"The food industry and our grocers are an integral part of the fabric of Minnesota, and I was thrilled to be part of an event that showcases the important job of bagging groceries," said Anderson. "It was fun to participate in the bag-off and now be able to present this donation to Second Harvest Heartland. I also want to recognize and match this donation by donating \$250 to the IOCP Food Shelf in Plymouth and \$250 to ICA Food Shelf in Minnetonka. Partnerships like this bring home the value of the work we do at the Capitol."

"Our annual Bipartisan Bag-Off is a great showcase of the outstanding work of the food industry of Minnesota. It also highlights our appreciation for the partnerships we value with our elected officials," said Jamie Pfuhl, President of the MGA. "This donation, made today on behalf of Senator Anderson is a positive example of what can happen for our communities when we all work together."

"More Minnesota families than ever are seeking food assistance as they navigate the effects of our current economic and public health crisis, many for the first time" said Second Harvest Heartland CEO Allison O'Toole. "At Second Harvest Heartland, our team is working harder than ever to ensure Minnesotans are able to access the food resources needed to stay safe, fed, and healthy through this pandemic. The support of our community is vital to this work, and we are so grateful to Senator Anderson and the Minnesota Grocers Association for their generous support."

Second Harvest Heartland is one of the nation's largest, most efficient and most innovative hunger relief organizations. Second Harvest Heartland provides an average of 75 percent of all food distributed by its food shelf partners, and in 2019, provided more than 97 million meals to nearly 1,000 food shelves, pantries and other partner programs serving 59 counties in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Second Harvest Heartland leads through innovation, finding efficient, effective solutions to connect the full resources of our community with our hungry neighbors.

The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) is the only state trade association that represents the food industry of Minnesota from farm to fork. We are a legacy organization, having served the industry for over 120 years. We have over 300 retail, manufacturer, and wholesale members supporting nearly 1,300 locations statewide. Our member companies employ over 150,000 union and non-union Minnesotans. We actively advance the common interest of all those engaged in any aspect of the food industry as a leader and advocate in government affairs.

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