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of the Nebraska Grocery Industry
Spring 2023

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NGIA - 2023 Calendar of Events

- June 20, 2023.....Sandbagger Annual golf Tournament, Iron Horse Golf Club, Ashland NE
- Sept. 10-13, 2023 FMI Annual Business conference, Grapevine TX
- Sept. 11-14, 2023.....Convenience Distribution Business Exchange, Louisville KY
- Sept. 26, 2023B & R Annual Golf Tournament, Woodland Hills Golf Course, Ashland NE
- Oct. 3-6, 2023.....NACS Show 2023, Atlanta, GA
- Oct. 3, 2023Hackers and Snackers Golf Tournament- Tiburon Golf Club, Omaha NE

(If you would like to have your event listed on the calendar, please contact the NGIA office)

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Update from the Executive Director



Ansley Fellers
Executive Director

The Legislature convened for a new two-year session in January. Twenty-six members were sworn into office, including nine re-elected senators, sixteen newly elected senators, and one appointment. Senator John Arch from La Vista was elected Speaker.

In a surprise move earlier this month, Senator Suzanne Geist of

Lincoln announced her resignation from the Legislature



Gov. Pillen appoints Carolyn Bosn of Lincoln to replace Sen. Suzanne Geist of Legislative District 25.

to focus full-time on her mayoral campaign. Governor Pillen appointed former Lancaster County Attorney Carolyn Bosn to serve as the new state senator from Legislative Dist. 25. Bosn was sworn in April 11th and indicated she will run for the seat in 2024.

Two months into the session, the legislature considered and advanced one of several controversial bills, kicking off a weeks-long filibuster with no end in sight, prompting a very unique, mid-session rules change and further delaying the ability to work through priority bills. See page ___ for details about several important bills NGIA is following.

While much of the floor time has been dedicated to the Governor’s tax relief and education initiatives as well as the state biennial budget, NGIA continues to work proactively on pharmacy-related issues, changes to garnishment summonses requirements, and a bill to allow lottery ticket sales from vending machines. Equally as important, we also continue to lobby against things which would be damaging the industry like tax increases, fuel mandates, and moving to a statewide consumption tax. But our primary focus this session has been amending the minimum wage ballot initiative passed last November which increases the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by January 2026 and forces the wage up by the Midwest CPI every year after.

Shannon McCord with Ideal Market in Superior was in Lincoln in February, testifying in favor of the NGIA-backed priority measure to establish a youth & training wage (LB 15). Several other rural grocers – Tom Temme, Shell Creek Market in Newman Grove, and Roni Branting, Economy Hometown Market in Stromsburg – were in

town in March to testify in support of LB 327, another NGIA priority which would cap the CPI increase. LB 15 was incorporated into LB 327, and the package was prioritized by Senator Jane Raybould of Lincoln. Given the obstacles this session we continue to seek a path forward.

Other NGIA members and sponsors in town for hearings this year included Nathan Brtek with Lou’s Thriftyway in Norfolk, who testified in support of LB 493, a bill to free up staff resources by allow for vending machine lottery sales, and Matthew Philippsen with Midwest Amusements, who opposed LB 685, a large tax increase on the mechanical amusement devices found in small grocery and convenience stores.

In addition to all the legislative action, on February 13th, NGIA members from B&R and Hy-Vee joined Governor Pillen at the Capitol, where he signed a proclamation declaring “Supermarket Employee Week” in Nebraska.

One week later, NGIA enjoyed hosting several grocery and associate members in Lincoln for the 2023 Grocers Day @ the Capitol (see p. 14). Our attendees spent time lobbying state senators, met with the Speaker of the Legislature, and tuned into legislative hearings. We adjourned in time to walk across the street to the annual Legislative Dinner, where we heard from the new Governor, honored our elected officials, and celebrated longstanding and dedicated members of our industry (see p. 12).

At the federal level we continue to follow the National Grocers Association’s lead on things like credit card fees,

Supermarket Employee Day



Use this link to view full size document:

https://nebgrocery.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/supermarket-employees-proc-2023_pillen.pdf

antitrust, and the Farm Bill reauthorization.

NGIA did last fall approach Senator Deb Fischer about the lasting and problematic effects of the 2022 infant formula shortage. Sen. Fischer and the Senate Ag Committee Ranking Member, John Boozman, sent a letter with several of their colleagues to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), seeking more detail on the impact of single-source contracting on the price of formula and independent retailers. Earlier this spring, we were notified that GAO has prioritized Senator Fischer's request. We look forward to learning more.

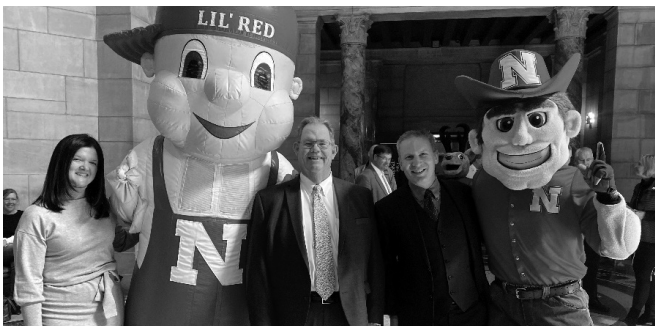
Like most springs, it seems the state legislative discussion has dominated headlines and Association

focus. But despite the controversy (and even some national attention), there are good things happening and more in store.

Every Friday during the Legislative session, NGIA hosts a call and sends a summary email about state and local legislative happenings, politics, and federal updates. If you're interested in joining these calls or receiving these emails, please shoot me an email – afellers@nebgrocery.com.

As always, we thank you and hope you find your NGIA membership valuable. We appreciate your support and value your commitment to your employees and communities.

All the best, *Amsley*



Ansley Fellers, NGIA Executive Director, and Rich Otto, NGIA Communications Director, pose with Herbie Husker and Lil' Red in the Capitol Rotunda.



Shannon McCord testifies on behalf of NGIA on LB 15 to establish a youth & training wage in Nebraska. LB 15 and LB 327 are two of NGIA's highest priorities this legislative session.

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2

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Elmwood
471-2613



3

Carol Blood
Bellevue
471-2627



4

R. Brad von Gillem
Elkhorn
471-2621



5

Mike McDonnell
Omaha
471-2710



6

Machalea Cavanaugh
Omaha
471-2714



7

Tony Vargas
Omaha
471-2721



8

Megan Hunt
Omaha
471-2722



9

John Cavanaugh
Omaha
471-2723



10

Wendy DeBoer
Bennington
471-2718



11

Terrell McKinney
Omaha
471-2612



12

Merv Riepe
Ralston
471-2623



13

Justin Wayne
Omaha
471-2727



14

John Arch
La Vista
471-2730



15

Lynne Walz
Fremont
471-2625



16

Ben Hansen
Blair
471-2728



17

Joni Albrecht
Thurston
471-2716



18

Christy Armendariz
Omaha
471-2618



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Robert Dover
Norfolk
471-2929



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John Fredrickson
Omaha
471-2622



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Beau Ballard
Lincoln
471-2673



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Mike Moser
Columbus
471-2715



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Bruce Bostelman
Brainard
471-2719



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Jana Hughes
Seward
471-2756



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Carolyn Bosh
Lincoln
471-2731



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George Dungan
Lincoln
471-2610



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Anna Wishart
Lincoln
471-2632



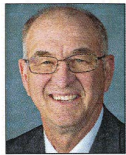
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Jane Raybould
Lincoln
471-2633



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Eliot Bostar
Lincoln
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Myron Dorn
Adams
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Kathleen Kauth
Omaha
471-2327



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Tom Brandt
Plymouth
471-2711



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Steve Halloran
Hastings
471-2712



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Loren Lippincott
Central City
471-2630



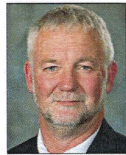
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Raymond Aguilar
Grand Island
471-2617



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Rick Holdcroft
Bellevue
471-2642



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John S. Lowe Sr.
Kearney
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Dave Murman
Glennville
471-2732



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Lou Ann Linehan
Elkhorn
471-2885



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Barry DeKay
Niobrara
471-2801



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Tom Briese
Albion
471-2631



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Mike Jacobson
North Platte
471-2729



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Tom Brewer
Gordon
471-2628



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Teresa Ibach
Sumner
471-2805



45

Rita Sanders
Bellevue
471-2615



46

Danielle Conrad
Lincoln
471-2720



47

Steve Erdman
Bayard
471-2616



48

Brian Hardin
Gering
471-2802



49

Jen Day
Omaha
471-2725

2023 Nebraska State Senators

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NGIA Legislative Dinner Another Success!

Members of the food industry filled the Scottish Rite Ballroom as they met with State Senators and listened to Governor Pillen and the keynote speaker - TEAMMATES CEO, DeMoine Adams. The Scholarship Silent Auction continues to be a key fundraising tool for the scholarship program. Awards were presented to industry leaders. See more about our 2023 industry award winners on page 17.





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Balancing Ballot and Business

In Response to the Lincoln Journal Star Editorial Board

Nebraska is a big state. The needs of its urban centers in the east are far different from the rural communities that dot the rest of the landscape. That's one of the reasons the concept of local control is essential here. And it's one of the reasons that statewide solutions can have unintended and far-reaching consequences. – LJS Editorial Board

We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

While we understand why a sharp increase in the minimum wage sounds promising, the impact of such a mandate, especially in rural areas, is much starker. An arbitrary hike in the minimum wage doesn't hurt businesses we generally consider to be bad actors.

ANSLEY FELLERS Businesses who exploit labor, short benefits, or cut hours despite record profits. Like most mandates, the policy hurts our local businesses: grocers, daycares, restaurants, hardware stores, salons, builders, bakeries, and the list goes on.

There is a reason large, national and multinational corporations don't fight union-backed minimum wage initiatives. Those companies automate sooner, cut jobs, hours and benefits, absorb the tighter margins, and simply wait for their small and medium-sized competition to go out of business.

Local retailers cannot simply absorb this cost. While not everyone will shutter because of the new mandate, they will be forced to stop hiring, cut positions, reduce hours of operation, cut services, increase prices, or all of the above. The positions we are going to see lost are those for young people, people entering or reentering the workforce, and people with disabilities. Valuable entry-level jobs, the fun jobs, the ones where you work for caring and creative people who are willing to offer flexibility, aren't going to exist.

High schoolers looking for after-school work in small communities will be forced to drive further, and options will be limited to a big box store or fast food. Childcare centers offering positions to high schoolers and college students will be forced to stop. While the cost of childcare will continue to climb, the number of caregivers in those classrooms will be reduced.

LB 15 and LB 327 do not represent efforts to undermine the initiative. If both of these bills passed, the minimum wage would still climb to \$15 by 2026 and would still increase every year after that. There is no effort to dismantle the vote. There is, however, an effort to bring a semblance of relief to the companies and local

businesses who, while not the target of voters, will be the most harmed.

A number of states and the federal government recognize that a youth wage encourages employers to continue hiring young people, even though they are restricted by federal law from doing the same work as an 18-year-old. And a number of states – including California – cap their minimum wage CPI increase, recognizing that left unchecked, such a provision would drive inflation and leave businesses with a great deal of uncertainty.

The people of Nebraska agreed that there should be balance between the petition process and the Unicameral when they added language to the Constitution to allow 2/3 of the Legislature to amend an initiative petition. It is the role of the legislature to make sure no one is unduly harmed by unintended, but still harmful, impacts of the initiative process.

Clearly the voters understood that for the sake of the bigger picture, there should be balance. Is it too much for our leaders to do the same?

Ansley Fellers, Nebraska Grocery Industry Association, Lincoln, NE
Bud Synhorst, Lincoln Independent Business Association, Lincoln, NE
Bob Hallstrom, Nebraska Federation of Independent Business, Syracuse, NE

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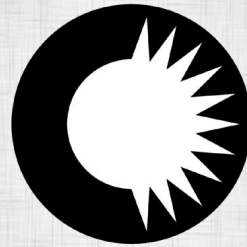
NGIA Day @ the Capitol



L – R Mike Barbour, Kiley White, Angie Fitzgerald, Tom Laven, Katie Nyberg, Roni Branting, Kathy Gunlock
Other attendees not pictured: Sam Saffa & Garrett Pklapp

NGIA was pleased to have several grocery and associate members in Lincoln for the 2023 Grocers Day @ the Capitol. Attendees (pictured) arrived Tuesday for a short briefing at the capitol, and spent the remainder of the morning in the Capitol Rotunda, lobbying senators. After a number of great conversations, members enjoyed a casual networking lunch followed by a meeting with the Speaker of the Legislature. We adjourned early-afternoon so folks could choose between legislative hearings and seeing the sights and sounds of Lincoln before walking over to the NGIA Legislative Dinner, which was held at the Scottish Rite Center, just a short walk from the Capitol.

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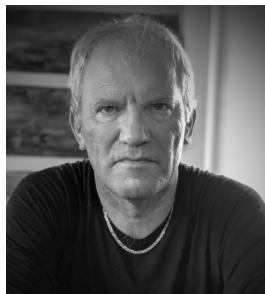
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NGIA Presents Awards to Industry Leaders During NGIA Legislative Dinner

Mogens Knudsen Spirit of America Award



The Spirit of America Award was initiated by the National Grocers in 1982 to honor individuals who have provided leadership in the areas of community service and government relations. Mogens has been in the grocery business since 1983. He's owned and operated

Plum Creek Market Place since 1989 and Holdrege Market Place since 2007.

Mogens has served on the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association Board of Directors for more than a decade. He moved through officer ranks and was elected Board Chair in 2015, serving as Chair until 2017. Mogens also served as a member of the Investment Committee, the PAC Committee, and on various Nominating Committees.

Mogens has four children and ten grandchildren and tries to spend as much time as possible hiking in the mountains, and adventure traveling, which involves climbing high-altitude mountains.

Mark Griffin Distinguished Service Award



Mark Griffin has served the grocery industry for 43 consecutive years. At age 16, Mark started working for Furr's Supermarkets where he progressed through positions, including serving as Retail Operations Manager for the familiar Bag N Save and Food Emporium

divisions. In 1998, Mark joined Affiliated Foods in Amarillo, Texas, where he started as their Investment Buyer and left as Executive Vice President. Mark and his family moved to Nebraska in 2011 and he joined B&R Stores in 2016 and has served as President & COO since January 2020.

Mark and his wife Lee Ann have two sons, Jeff age 30, a graphic designer for Utah Museum of Modern Art and Kyle, 26, a real estate developer for Rio Tinto Mining Company. They enjoy traveling, hiking, camping, and golf.

Republic National Distributing Co. Vendor of the Year



Republic National Distributing Company is the second largest beverage alcohol distributor of premium wine and spirits in the U.S. with roots that extend back before prohibition, RNDC is one of the nation's leading wholesale beverage alcohol distributors, specializing in wine and spirits.

When Republic was nominated, several NGIA member stores indicated that they rely at least in part on distributors such as RNDC for labor. The company helps keep shelves stocked and really does try to be responsive to retailer and consumer demands while respecting the fact that we have to abide by the three-tier system. Brian Bemer, RNDC Executive Vice President for Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota (pictured), serves on the NGIA Board of Directors.

Bob & Mary McKinney Lifetime Achievement Award



Bob McKinney got his start in grocery while he was still in school, working at a few different stores. In 1971, he and his wife, Mary, opened their first grocery store in Papillion. At the time, Bob was working at a store owned by Green Hills Grocery. When Green Hills decided to leave the market

area, the McKinney's worked to secure financing and took over the store.

After 51 years in grocery and 26 years in Gretna, the McKinney's closed McKinney's Food Center in Gretna on March 30, 2022. Bob and Mary now get to enjoy retirement with their two children, Cindy and David, and five lovely grandchildren.

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NGIA General Membership Meeting & “Sand Baggers” Golf Outing

Tuesday June 20, 2023 at Iron Horse Golf Club

The Iron Horse Golf Club is located in Ashland, Nebraska, just minutes from Omaha and Lincoln. This unique golf course is built around an old rock quarry and features incredible views and exceptional course conditions.

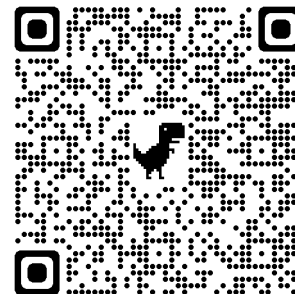
10:00 a.m. Shotgun Start
Boxed Lunch on the Course
3:45 p.m. Meal at Clubhouse
4:00 p.m. Membership Meeting
4:15 p.m. Pin Prizes, and Raffle Prizes Awarded

This event is a **10:00 a.m.** shotgun start, scramble format. Two flights will be established after scores are turned in. Each team sets their own foursome; those players without a full group will be combined with others. Flag and flight winner prizes include \$50 gift cards to the pro shop. Fees include the driving range, green fees, cart fees, 2 beverage tickets, a boxed lunch, and dinner.

This tournament is included in the annual sponsorship package.

Sponsorships are still available:

- Pre-event publicity, 1 entry fee, hole signage, and recognition in *The Voice* - \$500
- Raffle prizes & goodie bag donations (at least 144 of each item) are needed and appreciated!



For more information, please reach out to 402-423-5533 or rich@nebgrocery.com.



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2022 Nebraska Grocery Industry Association Legislative Report

“Committee” Status means the bill is still in Committee.

“General” Status means the bill has been reported to General File, the first of three stages of debate.

“Select” Status means the second round.

“Final” Status means the last round of legislative discussion before the bill is sent to the governor for approval.

Bill #	Senator	NGIA Position	Status
ALCOHOL			
LB301	Linehan	Oppose	Committee
Increases the tax on ready-to-drink cocktails from .95 cents/gallon to \$3.95/gallon.			
LB375	Lowe	Oppose	Committee
Allows a craft brewery with the appropriate retail license for retail sale for consumption on premise to purchase alcoholic liquor products from a gas station, grocery store, liquor store, or similar establishment.			
LB403	Vargas	Oppose	Committee
Allows a craft brewer to directly sell up to 5,000 barrels, up from the 250 barrels which was passed in a bill last year.			
LB452	Murman	Oppose	General
Allows a micro distillery to directly sell up to 2,000 gallons per calendar year directly to retail licensees.			
LB512	Brewer	Oppose	Committee
Change the number of locations allowed for a craft brewery or micro distillery license from 5 to 10.			
LB667	Hughes	Support	Committee
Allows only aimed at preventing alcohol retailers with tasting rooms from getting a discounted bar/restaurant rate.			
LB376	Lowe	Neutral	Final General Affairs Priority Bill
Change provisions relating to the importation of alcoholic liquor; amended in committee to cap fees; current vehicle for liquor bills including LB 667 related to channel pricing.			

BUSINESS PRACTICES			
LB132	Cavanaugh, J.	Oppose	Committee
Adopt the Automatic Renewal Limitation Act.			
LB466	DeBoer	Support	Committee
Change provisions relating to service of garnishment summons, continuing liens, and notices upon corporate garnishees.			

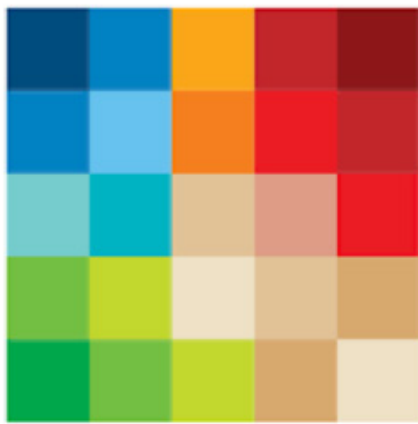
ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT/TRANSPORTATION			
LB180	Brandt	Support	Committee
Adopts a 14 cent per gallon refundable Biodiesel Tax Credit through 2028; NOTE: incorporated into LB 727.			
LB329	Raybould	Support	Committee
Clarifies that equipment upgraded to comply with new federal refrigerant laws does not violate building codes as long as equipment is installed in accordance with safety standards.			
LB688	Erdman	General	Committee
Appropriates \$10 million to the DMV for the purpose of providing grants to community colleges, employers, and non-profit organizations which provide worker training programs designed to help individuals obtain a CDL or a diesel tech degree; NOTE: Amending to LB 136 which is currently on Select File.			
LB562	Dorn	Neutral	Committee
On Jan. 1, 2024, if a fuel retailer constructs or substantially renovates a motor fuel site, the retail dealer must sell E-15 or higher blends of fuel from at least 50% of all qualifying dispensers. On January 1, 2028, if the state has not met an ethanol sales target, retailers have to make E-15 available from at least one pump unless the change would cost more than \$15k. The bill also increases for several years the tax credit for sales of E-15 or higher blends.			

JUDICIARY/LEGAL			
LB19	Wayne	Oppose	Committee
Increase dollar amount thresholds for criminal penalty classifications, including theft.			



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Bill #	Senator	NGIA Position	Status
FOOD			
LB321	Brandt	Oppose	General
Would broaden the type of food allowed to be sold directly to consumers without a food permit, with different rules for products that are time/temperature controlled for safety. The bill also limits any misdemeanor fine based on a violation of the cottage food requirements to \$75.			
LB524	Fredrickson	Support	Committee
Provides that any grocery store or restaurant that donates food to a food pantry or food bank shall be eligible for and income tax credit equal to fifty percent of the value of the food donations made during the taxable year, not to exceed \$2,500.			
LB661	Ibach	Conditional Support	Committee
Awards \$2.5 million to nonprofit organizations for regional or local food distribution capacity similar to grant program funded with ARPA funds in 2022.			
LB740	Vargas	Watch	General
Outlines a new regulatory structure for food trucks; allows for reciprocity among cities/health districts.			
LB763	DeBoer	Watch	Committee
Provides for up to \$10 million in grants annually to nonprofit food banks for the following purposes: Purchase & distribute food; Infrastructure; Food storage; Equipment; and Construction of increased capacity.			
LB84	Day	Support	Committee
Eliminates the 2023 sunset of the 2021 income eligibility increase for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).			
LB262	Agriculture	Neutral	General
Committee package to update Pure Food Act, includes LB 740 to allow for food truck permitting.			
LABOR			
LB15	Briese	Support	General
*After amendment, the bill will establish a youth wage of \$10.50 per hour for 14–17-year-old workers, and a separate 3-month training wage for 18–19-year-old workers of \$10.50 per hour until 2027, when the training wage will be 75% of the minimum wage.			
LB57	Cavanaugh, M.	Oppose	Committee
Adopt the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act to require employers pay into a new program which could be drawn from to provide workers a portion of their salary when on leave for things like childbirth, sickness, or to take care of a sick family member.			
LB161	McDonnell	Oppose	General
Prohibits electronic devices to track employee movements unless a state of emergency is declared by the governor.			
LB367	Conrad	Oppose	Committee
Adopt the Fair Chance Hiring Act, which would implement a process where employers with 15 or more employees must provide applicants who are rejected for a position based on criminal history a pre-adverse action notice, the applicant has 10 days to appeal. Further outlines additional requirements.			
LB380	Conrad	Oppose	Committee
Clarifies it's unlawful for an employer to discriminate or retaliate against an individual because such individual has reported a work-related injury, brought a claim, or sought remedies under Workers Comp.			
LB670	Hunt	Watch	Committee
Prohibit discrimination under the Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation and prohibit discrimination by employers of any size (one or more employees).			
LB191	Halloran	Support	Committee
Provide for confidentiality of and access to certain injury reports under the Nebraska Workers Compensation Act.			
LB327	Raybould	Support	General
NGIA PRIORITY: Caps the minimum wage CPI increase at the lesser of the Midwest CPI or 1.5%; includes an amendment to incorporate youth/training wage.			
LB671	Hansen, B.	Watch	General
Bill Allow the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund to be used for retention of existing employees of Nebraska businesses.			



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Bill #	Senator	NGIA Position	Status
LOTTERY/KENO			
LB493	Dungan	Support	Committee
Remove the prohibition that a lottery ticket cannot be sold through a vending or dispensing device under the State Lottery Act.			
LB705	Murman	Watch	Committee
Change provisions for the distribution of lottery funds used for education, transfer powers and duties, create new acts and funds, and change education provisions.			
PHARMACY			
LB202	Walz	Support	Committee
Provides that pharmacy techs can administer intra-muscular (arm) vaccines to those 3 years of age and older.			
LB595	Hardin	Support	General
Change supervision requirements under the Pharmacy Practice Act to allow a pharmacist to supervise up to 4 technicians instead of 3.			
LB778	Bostar	Support	Committee
Would take steps to limit actions for pharmacy benefit managers. Multiple items addressed including Spread pricing, maximum allowable cost prices, pharmacy reimbursement minimums, and other items.			
LB181	Hansen, B.	Support	General
Health and Human Services Priority Bill Provide for filling and refilling prescriptions in certain circumstances; Committee vehicle which includes LB 202, pharmacy tech scope of practice. Note: these bills have been rolled into LB 227.			
TAX			
LB685	Briese	Oppose	Committee
Imposes a 20% tax on mechanical amusement devices, despite current framework and input from the industry and retailers.			
LR7CA	Erdman	Oppose	Committee
Constitutional amendment to require the state to impose a consumption tax or an excise tax on all new goods and services and provide tax exemption for grocery items.			
LB79	Erdman	Oppose	Committee
Adopt the Nebraska EPIC Option Consumption Tax Act			
LB727	Linehan	Watch	Committee
Revenue Committee priority vehicle for a variety of tax-related changes including LB 584 and LB 180.			
LB754	Linehan	Support	Select
Would lower the top individual and corporate income tax rate to 3.99% by 2027; includes child care tax credit, elimination of state tax on ss benefits, and SALT workaround.			
TOBACCO			
LB745	Cavanaugh, M.	Oppose	Committee
Would Increase the tax on a package of cigarettes from \$.64 to \$2.14. This is an increase of \$1.50 per package. \$1 of the new tax would go to the Property Tax Credit Cash Fund; the other \$.50 would go to the Medicaid Waiver Cash Fund.			
LB584	Hughes	Watch	General
Imposes a tax on electronic nicotine delivery systems of five cents per milliliter of consumable material; NOTE: incorporated into LB 727.			

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Nebraska & Iowa Best Baggers Place at National Event

Las Vegas, NV – The National Grocers Association (NGA), the trade association representing the independent grocery industry, presented a \$10,000 cash prize to Karli West of Macey’s in Utah after being crowned the winner. Representing Nebraska was Nathan Brtek of Lou’s Thriftyway in Norfolk and he finished 4th one spot ahead of Iowa’s best bagger Nolan McGregor with Fareway Stores in Sergeant Bluff.

The results of the competition were as follows:

- Winner: Karli West, Macey’s (Utah)**
- 2nd: JDana Sparks, United Supermarket (Texas)**
- 3rd: Brennan Davenport, Publix (Georgia)**
- 4th: Nathan Brtek, Lou’s Thriftyway (Nebraska)**
- 5th: Nolan McGregor, Fareway Stores (Iowa)**



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Sponsor Spotlight



1. Can you give readers a little history of Bernatello's?

Family owned and operated by the Ramsay family, Bernatello's Foods began its operation in 1982 in Minnesota. Since that time, they have acquired a few brands and have since grown to a portfolio of 5 brands including Brew Pub Lotzza Motzza, Bellatoria, Roma, Orv's and Pizza Corner Pizzas. Bernatello's currently has two production facilities, one in Maple Lake, MN and the other in Kaukauna, WI while servicing all of the upper Midwest with Direct Store Delivery.

2. How did you hear about NGIA and what made you decide to join?

We heard about the opportunity to join the NGIA through Dirk Baughman, Regional Sales Manager, who currently lives in the Lincoln area.

3. What makes Bernatello's products different?

You know one of the things that we pride ourselves on is consistency. At Bernatello's Foods, we strive for a consistency that will bring our consumers a satisfaction every time they purchase one of our pizzas. We offer a premium pizza with our Brew Pub and Bellatoria brands, while also offering a solid pizza in the value category with our Roma brand. At Bernatello's we use award winning Wisconsin mozzarella cheese on each of our Brew Pub Lotzza Motzza pizzas, and we certainly don't skimp, we bombard over half a pound of cheese on each za. Plus, we use high quality toppings that are generously portioned along with a flavorful sauce. So if you're looking for a pizza that's high quality and in your price range, you'll find one courtesy of Bernatello's Foods.

4. Where can customers find your products?

Customers can find our products in any one of their local grocery stores, or their nearest Menards location.

5. What excites you most about 2023?

I think the opportunities that are before us excite me the most about 2023. We have lots of exciting events, new products, and potentially even some facility upgrades that we'll be working on in 2023 with growth and expansion in mind. Working for Bernatello's Foods, a company that is continuously looking for growth is a thrilling ride to be on.

6. Who should grocers contact if they're interested in carrying your product?

Grocers can contact Dirk Baughman at dbaughman@bernattelos.com for more information on how to have our pizzas in your stores.



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