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Mayor

Jonathan Vanderbilt

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Village Clerk

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Village Manager

Thomas Mick

Village Hall

350 Victory Drive
Park Forest, IL 60466
(708) 748-1112

**DownTown
Management Office**

226 Forest Blvd.
(708) 503-8153

Fire Department

156 Indianwood Blvd.
(708) 748-5605

Freedom Hall

410 Lakewood Blvd.
(708) 747-0580

Police Department

200 Lakewood Blvd.
(708) 748-4700

**Recreation and
Parks Department**

350 Victory Drive
(708) 748-2005

September 28, 2022

Donna Miller, 6th District Commissioner
Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 N. Clark St., Rm. 567
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Ordinance Amendment - File# 22-5345

Dear Commissioner Miller:

The lack of access to healthy food choices contributes to disparities in health outcomes and life expectancy. Data from the Illinois Suburban Cook County Community Health Assessment demonstrated that south suburban Cook County has the least access to full-service chain supermarkets per person, and a high density of corner stores with few to no healthy food options. Park Forest is an unfortunate example of this. Our community has nearly 22,000 residents and not 1 major grocery store!

It is vital to encourage the location of new grocery stores, and assist in retaining existing grocery stores, in identified food deserts to expand healthy food access and improve economic opportunities for underserved communities.

Therefore, this letter is written in full support of your legislation to create a Class 7d property tax incentive to attract or retain grocery stores in food deserts, which has been shown to be an effective strategy for sustainable development in urban areas. It will hopefully help create greater access to healthy foods in food deserts while serving as an economic development catalyst. The end result will be the creation of good jobs and economic vitality while improving the health of south suburban communities.

I would like to thank you, President Preckwinkle and the Cook County Board for your leadership in helping to revitalize the Southland. Should additional details been needed from the Village of Park Forest, do not hesitate to contact me or Village Manager, Tom Mick.

Sincerely,

Jonathan M. Vanderbilt, Mayor
Village of Park Forest

cc: Board of Trustees
Village Manager
Economic Development & Planning Staff