



## Missouri Grocers Association

*"Committed to Growth & Profitability of Our Members"*

Chairman Hardwick and members of the House Emerging Issues Committee,

The Missouri Grocers Association represents nearly 1,300 members; retailers, wholesalers, distributors, brokers, suppliers, vendors and manufacturers, that constitute the grocery industry in the State of Missouri and ask for you to vote House Bill 2070, sponsored by Rep. Don Mayhew, favorably out of committee.

Energy costs are a top operating expense for these types of businesses. The grocery industry is the second largest consumer of energy outside of manufacturing.

Electric rates have increased rapidly for Missouri and state utilities have published their plans to replace aging electric generation assets costing ratepayers billions of dollars.

According to the [Show-Me Institute](#), in states with retail competition, customers have seen electricity prices decrease, as opposed to monopoly utility states. Electricity prices in competitive states in 2020 were 17% lower than in 2008, whereas prices in monopolized states rose 2%. During this same time frame in Missouri, prices rose 17%.

In the face of these rising and future unbearable costs, we ask the legislature to explore all options and support HB 2070 to open the electric market to competition.

Competitive energy markets also bring optionality in energy use management and generation. Customers in competitive energy states have the freedom to participate in the market as generators, supporting grid resiliency and benefiting from selling excess capacity into the marketplace. Businesses would have access to the variety of tools and plans available in the market including energy use management tools, demand response programs, time-of-use rates, and cutting-edge energy efficiency programs.

Right now, Missouri's utilities are struggling to offer a limited version of some of these products and the ratepayers are funding their attempts. In a competitive energy market, these products are already available and deployed at scale. We ask the legislature to open access to these offerings, so businesses and customers are not burdened with funding their attempts to reinvent the wheel.

House Bill 2070 will allow Missouri to join other states that benefit from competition and create a business-friendly environment to attract new investments in the state. Thank you for your time and consideration.