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July 26, 2024

Maura O'Brien
Government Affairs Manager, Ahold Delhaize USA
1835 Hancock Street
Quincy, Massachusetts 02169

RE: Concerns regarding announced closure of 132 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead Village store

Dear Mrs. O'Brien:

We write to express our deep concerns regarding the announced closure of the Stop & Shop supermarket located at 132 Fulton Avenue in Hempstead Village, New York. While we appreciate that you took the opportunity to speak with Legislator Bynoe on Friday, July 12 regarding this situation, there are many unresolved issues related to the potential loss of a vital community hub that is relied upon by countless seniors and other nearby residents. Moreover, we are deeply concerned about how Hempstead Village residents may experience intensified difficulties in acquiring fresh, nutritious, and affordable food in a community that was recently designated a food desert by experts.

Upon research, it has been determined that Stop & Shop, at 62,370 square feet in size, is the only classified supermarket operating within the Incorporated Village of Hempstead and is significantly larger than other food markets in the Village. Closing this store would inflict a disparate and unequal impact upon consumers by eliminating the economies of scale associated with national supermarket brands, thereby driving up costs without consumer having access to the full complement of alternatives that exist in other communities. Compare this to East Meadow, where Stop & Shop at 61,044 square feet is the fourth largest grocer/market in the hamlet, and consumers would have over 190,000 more square feet of food market space remaining at their disposal as compared to Hempstead Village.

The Hempstead Stop & Shop is centrally located in a working-class neighborhood that faces significant economic challenges as compared to the other neighborhoods in your supermarkets are scheduled to close. According to the most recent Census data, Hempstead's median household income of \$80,350 is significantly less than East Meadow's median income of \$129,268; additionally, Hempstead Village's poverty rate of 16 percent is nearly three times higher than East Meadow's, which is 5.9 percent. As a result, approximately 20 percent of

Hempstead Village's population is on public assistance, and nearly 66 percent of Hempstead public school students qualify for free or reduced lunch services as compared to East Meadow, where less than 10 percent of the student population is eligible.

Additionally, the departure of a reliable source of nutritional options threatens to exacerbate existing healthcare disparities in Hempstead Village, where 13.2 percent of persons under age 65 lack health insurance. In East Meadow, the figure is 5.1 percent.

While the existence of food deserts in our communities is a nationwide challenge, their prevalence on Long Island in particular has captured the attention of New York's federal representatives – so much so that U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand traveled to Long Island earlier this year to highlight the issue.

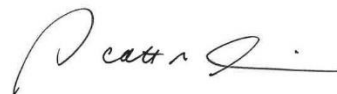
Taken together, the data illustrates how the Hempstead Village Stop & Shop is an essential nutritional resource for numerous economically disadvantaged families and how its closure would escalate food inequality within the community by dramatically constricting consumer choice and curtailing access to affordable nutrition options. This would be especially harmful to individuals who do not own cars because those residents would now have to rely upon rides from friends, family and neighbors, mass transit, or rideshare services, or utilize delivery services that may bear upcharges or fees. All of these alternatives result in increased time and money spent by consumers who are already facing heightened challenges within the current economic climate.

For these and many other reasons, we implore you to identify pathways for balancing your corporate goals with fulfilling an altruistic commitment to the community you serve by keeping the doors of the Hempstead Village Stop & Shop open. We stand ready to work alongside you as partners to reach an outcome that meets the nutritional and economic needs of the thousands of residents who rely so heavily upon the store's services.

Sincerely,



Siela A. Bynoe
Alternate Deputy Minority Leader
Nassau County Legislature, Second District



Scott M. Davis
Nassau County Legislator
First Legislative District