



July 6, 2022

UFCW Local 5
Salinas Office
1145 North Main Street
Salinas, CA 93906

Re: An Open Letter to the Union Leadership of UFCW Local 5 Regarding:

- Harm to working families by opposition to a new grocery store in the City of King; and
- Exclusion of local members from voting on litigation affecting their community.

Dear Sir or Madam:

As you know, the Salinas office of UFCW Local 5 has challenged the approval of a Grocery Outlet, a discount grocery store to be built in King City. Currently, there is only one other grocery store in town – a competitor to Grocery Outlet whose workers are represented by UFCW Local 5.

The misguided lawsuit hurts working families in the King City community. An estimated 1 in 6 people were already living below the poverty line in King City as of 2020 – and this was before costs skyrocketed nationwide. With only one grocery store currently in town, some residents travel almost an hour to either Paso Robles or Salinas to buy groceries at lower prices. However, travel is no longer an option for many with the cost of gasoline soaring to over \$6.00 a gallon and inflation at 40-year highs of 8.6%. Many families are unable to make ends meet. UFCW Local 5 efforts to stop a potential competitor harms the poorest of King City the most, who are already struggling to put food on the table.

The City recently conducted a citywide community opinion survey, and attracting new stores and shopping opportunities was among the top priorities identified. Therefore, this is an important issue to our community.

Additionally, local members of the union who actually live in King City were apparently not even informed of the lawsuit. They were also not given the opportunity to vote on whether their dues should be used to fund litigation to limit the community's grocery choices.

This is disappointing. This ill-advised litigation creates the appearance that the leadership of UFCW Local 5 is much more concerned about stopping some potential competition as compared to the impact it may have on struggling residents of this community or the desires of its own local membership.

The City Council urges you to exercise leadership by withdrawing support of the lawsuit and securing its dismissal. Going forward, the City Council also urges that local members of UFCW Local 5 who actually live and work in King City be able to vote on whether they want their dues being spent on a litigation within their community.

We look forward to your support of working families in King City and the prompt dismissal of the *Efrain Aguilera and Working Families of Monterey County v. King City (Grocery Outlet)*, Monterey Superior Court No. 22V001375.


Sincerely,




Mayor Mike LeBarre



Council Member Darlene Acosta



Mayor Pro Tem Carlos Victoria



Council Member Robert Cullen



Council Member Carlos DeLeon