

SHAME ON SAFEWAY

Safeway's corporate policy of hurting community health by blocking access to healthy foods must stop! Grocery stores should be in the business of providing access to healthy foods, not preventing them. By eliminating their restrictive covenants, it will be one less barrier to neighborhoods having access to healthy foods, helping to create healthier communities.

Neighborhoods Deserve Healthy Foods

While working on the lack of access to healthy foods in the community of Vallejo, CA, we found Safeway had placed a restrictive deed (R.C.) on their former downtown location, which blocked any other grocery store from moving in for 15 years!

Upon researching Safeway's restrictive covenants, of which we have obtained copies, we found numerous locations throughout the U.S. and Canada where Safeway (who operates as a banner store of Albertsons Companies) has blocked communities from having access to healthy food with these harmful corporate policies.

Because of these restrictive covenants, communities are then faced with a dilemma: travel at a significant cost of time and money to where grocery stores are (if they have the time, money and/or transportation), or get their food at other places left in their community, like liquor stores, gas stations, and fast food restaurants.

Many residents rely heavily on walking as a means of gaining access to fresh food. A lack of stores offering healthy food options leads to unhealthy food choices and related health problems. (1)

Restrictive covenants are a common practice in the grocery retail industry and are used by grocery operators as a way to protect profits and combat competition; however, for consumers, these practices contribute to a lack of access to healthy foods.

As a response, local governments are using legislation to fight these anticompetition practices. Cities such as Chicago, Illinois, and Madison, Wisconsin, have approved ordinances that ban this type of restrictive covenant, while Washington, D.C., continues to pass emergency bills blocking Safeway from placing restrictive covenants in their communities. (2, 3, 4)

Restrictive covenants or deed restrictions are legally enforceable clauses in a deed that limit certain future uses of property. They are used as a tool to impose a wide range of limitations and conditions, such as limits on building density and the types of structures that can be erected, and they can prevent buildings from being used for specific purposes or even from being used at all.

29.7 MILLION

People in the U.S. do not have access to a supermarket within one mile of their home. (5)

Albertsons Companies



Safeway Company

Safeway operates as a banner of Albertsons Companies, one of the largest food and drug retailers in the U.S. With both a strong local presence and national scale, Safeway operates stores across 35 states and the District of Columbia under 20 well-known banners. (6)

On May 27, 2015, Food Empowerment Project (F.E.P.) sent a letter to Albertsons CEO, Robert Miller; VP of Public Relations, Brian Dowling; and Director of Public Relations, Teena Massingill urging them "to pass a policy within Safeway and Albertsons stores to put an end to this practice, which has negative effects on the health of many people across our nation."

Safeway received our letter, via Certified Mail, on June 1, 2015, (7) and on July 6, 2015, we received a response from Brian Dowling in which he stated that "it is sometimes necessary," but when pressed that there is never a need to impact the health of communities, he was non-responsive.

Safeway Company (cont'd)

On May 28, 2019, Food Empowerment Project (F.E.P.) sent another letter to the new Albertsons CEO, Vivek Sankaran; VP of Communications, Christine Wilcox; Director of Public Relations, Teena Massingill; and Director of Communications, Dennis McCoy, Sr., urging them “to do everything in your power to help put an end to this practice—a practice that has negative effects on the health of many people across our nation.”

Safeway received our letter, via Certified Mail, on May 30, 2019. (8)

F.E.P. has not received a response as of August 2019.



Albertsons (Safeway) Foundation

According to Safeway, in 2017, the Albertsons Foundation gave more than \$44 million to “better the lives of people in our neighborhoods.” (9)

On February 28, 2019, Food Empowerment Project (F.E.P.) sent a letter to The Foundation and their Executive Director, Christy Duncan Anderson; Board Chair Andy Scoggin; and Board Member Jonathan Mayes “urging them to cease with the restrictive covenants that negatively impact the health and wellbeing of many people across the country, including children.”

Safeway received our letter, via Certified Mail, on March 4, 2019. (10)

F.E.P. has not received a response as of August 2019.

Restrictive Covenants & Locations

So far, we have documented 12 communities that have been negatively impacted by Albertsons and their banner companies corporate policies:

- Vallejo, CA – 15 Year R.C. (11)
- Chicago, IL – 6 stores in total with R.C. (12)
- Greeley, CO – 20 Year R.C. (13)
- Bellingham, WA – 20+ Year R.C. (14)
- Napa, CA – 10 Year R.C. (15)
- Milwaukee, WI – 3+ Years R.C. (16)
- Centennial, CO – 20 Year R.C. (17)

Quick Summary:

- > Safeway (Albertsons Companies Banner store) places restrictive covenants on former locations, blocking community access to healthy foods. Some of these restrictions have been for 20 YEARS!
- > Albertsons Foundation works to eradicate childhood hunger while placing blockades that hurt children’s access to healthy foods.
- > 12 communities have been documented having been negatively affected by Safeway’s restrictive covenants.

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