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## **L.A.'s Grocery Chains Don't Make the Grade for Much of L.A. Community, Faith Leaders Issue Mixed Grades in Report Cards on Grocery Stores' Neighborhood Impacts**

November 11, 2010 (Los Angeles, CA) – Grocery chains received mixed grades, but they are all clearly failing large sections of Los Angeles, according to report cards released today. In a first-of-its-kind study, community and faith leaders with the Alliance for Healthy and Responsible Grocery Stores issued report cards Thursday, grading Los Angeles grocery chains in the areas of food access, store quality, and job quality.

“While none of the chains is failing overall, the industry is completely failing a large portion of Los Angeles. The chains scoring well on store quality, who provide healthy food and better job standards are not locating in the areas of L.A. that are most in need. Meanwhile, the few chains that are locating in those areas are providing substandard service,” explained Elliott Petty, Director of the Alliance for Healthy and Responsible Grocery Stores.

The Alliance began the project early this year, building on the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission on L.A.'s Grocery Industry and Community Health, which convened in 2008. Community members with the Alliance carried out standardized surveys of stores across Los Angeles, grading them on service, selection of healthy food, job standards, and accessibility. Community and faith leaders held a press conference outside the VONS on Sepulveda in West Los Angeles, to release the grades, which can also be found at [www.goodgrocerystores.org](http://www.goodgrocerystores.org). They were joined by Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz, who listened to the findings and pledged that addressing food access issues would be a priority at City Hall.

Food deserts – areas with no easy access to healthy food – are one of the chief problems targeted by the Alliance. Surveys found that chains have been failing these underserved areas, which include large parts of South L.A., East L.A. and areas of the San Fernando Valley. The group defined food deserts by ZIP code, according to the number of stores per capita and rates of diet-related illness.

In light of this data, the Alliance calls on our elected leaders to take action holding grocery chains accountable for their impact on all Los Angeles neighborhoods.

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