



To whom it may concern,

It is my pleasure to express our strong support for RWJBarnabas Health and the renewal of State-appropriated funds to RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) in the FY 2027 New Jersey State Budget.

The Common Market Mid-Atlantic is a mission-driven distributor of regional farm products. The organization strives to strengthen small and family-owned farms while simultaneously improving food access and public health. The Common Market was founded to in 2008 to empower, strengthen and connect two vulnerable populations: low-income communities and local family farmers. We work tirelessly to build health and wealth in urban and rural communities. Our organization has over 17 years of experience addressing food insecurity and local farm viability. These State-appropriated funds allow RWJBH to support local food system partners like ours that directly address barriers to health, rural development, and economic opportunity here in New Jersey.

Our mission is deeply aligned with RWJBH's commitment to building and sustaining healthier communities. RWJBH's role as an anchor institution, and its long-standing focus on addressing barriers that drive poor health outcomes, makes its partnership essential to the work we do. Through our collaboration, RWJBH has supported our organization in delivering over 200,000 fresh produce boxes and grocery staples to over 70 community sites across the RWJBH network. Since 2021, this partnership has facilitated over \$400,000 in local economic development and fresh food access for the communities RWJBH serves. These purchasing commitments allow The Common Market to not only to support direct community food access but also provide our farm partners with forward purchasing commitments that allow them to build more resilient and sustainable businesses.

The partnership with RWJBH has proven consistently reliable, impactful, and mission-driven. Their expertise, community outreach infrastructure, and ability to mobilize resources have strengthened our programs and increased our capacity to serve vulnerable households. The continuation of State-appropriated funds to RWJBH is critical: without these funds, the system's ability to support community partners like ours would be significantly diminished. Reduced investment would directly affect the number of farmers we can support and families we can reach, limiting access to fresh and nutritious foods, and hinder our shared efforts to address the root causes of food insecurity across the state.



We express our sincere appreciation for our partnership with RWJBarnabas Health and remain grateful for their ongoing commitment to building and sustaining healthier communities throughout New Jersey.

Sincerely,

Rachel Terry
Rachel Terry
VP of Partnerships
The Common Market

