

Lou Mansolillo

From: Edward Brady <ed@digindining.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2022 1:28 PM
To: House Corporations Committee
Cc: Alzatek12@gmail.com
Subject: Representative Karen Alzate's House Bill 7060 - Please consider.

Dear Esteemed House Corporations Committee Members,

I write to you as a Rhode Island restaurateur who is overwhelmingly in support of using "Happy Hour" as a potential tool of economic benefit for RI's continually recovering restaurants and bars. With consumer buying habits rapidly changed due to the pandemic and our world consistently evolving to a more virtual, on-demand space, Legislation like Representative Karen Alzate's House Bill 7060, will continue to help our hospitality small businesses survive and hopefully thrive.

Currently, we are one of the only eight states in the country that does not allow "Happy Hour" in some form, and that in and of itself puts us at a disadvantage in some aspects for tourism and travel. We all know that the Rhode Island hospitality industry has been disproportionately hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay-at-home orders, followed by continuous government mandated capacity restrictions and regulations, alongside declining consumer confidence, reduced sales revenues and increased the cost of business operations. The shift to telecommuting has left many RI office buildings empty, resulting in less lunchtime and after-work restaurant and bar sales. "Happy Hour," specials are a simple, yet effective way to get people back through the doors of RI's renowned restaurants and bars.

This will not be a revenue loss leader. Some restaurants may only consider utilizing "Happy Hour" seasonally and during off peak times, but every restaurant should have the right to produce specials in an effort to spread customer volume throughout the day. It is also a way for restaurants to get creative and introduce new menu items at a discounted rate, on a trial basis.

House Bill 7060 would allow happy hour drink specials "as part of a larger transaction that includes a meal." It notes that "snacks" will not suffice. I would argue that making "Happy Hour" an "Appy Hour" and allowing for appetizer and drink specials to be marketed as one, would make this legislation easier to execute, increasingly effective, and more enforceable. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Edward Brady

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