



**Department of Business Regulation
Office of the Director**

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March 12, 2026

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon
Chairperson, The House Committee on Corporations
State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: H 7857 – AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY – COMMERCIAL KITCHEN EXHAUST SYSTEM INSPECTION AND CLEANING, LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION ACT

Dear Chair Solomon:

I write on behalf of the Department of Business Regulation in support of H 7857. This bill would require certification by the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) of commercial kitchen exhaust system technicians and ensure that those technicians are properly trained and successfully complete a certificate examination prior to performing commercial kitchen exhaust system inspections and/or cleanings.

The OSFM within the Department oversees the enforcement of the fire safety code and seeks to keep Rhode Island safe from fires where possible. OSFM has observed numerous hood related fires in recent years, including at Block Island's Harborside Inn fire in 2023, and East Greenwich's Finn's Harborside in 2024, and the recent Central Falls hood fire a few weeks ago. Introducing this new requirement for commercial kitchen exhaust technicians would provide an additional level of fire safety oversight in commercial kitchen settings by the OSFM, which in turn would improve and enhance the commercial kitchen safety for both employees and customers.

In addition, the duties outlined by this bill may be readily absorbed by the Department and the OSFM without significant impact on the Department's staff resources or additional fiscal concerns.

We would be happy to meet with the Committee and/or sponsors to discuss this bill further. Please do not hesitate to contact me at Elizabeth.dwyer@dbr.ri.gov or 401.462.9615 (office) or 401.578.6653 (mobile) with any questions or for additional information.

Thank you for your consideration of our position on this proposed legislation.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kelleher Dwyer, Esq.
Director, Department of Business Regulation

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations
The Honorable Thomas E. Noret
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House