



David Dadekian
Eat Drink RI LLC
1061 Fish Hill Road
Coventry, RI 02816

Testimony in support of H 7698

April 14, 2026

Honorable Chairperson Abney and the members of the House Committee on Finance:

I am the founder and president of Eat Drink RI, one of the top media and marketing companies in the region for all things culinary. As an advocate for our food system, a small business owner working with many small business farmers, and as a citizen concerned about our changing climate, here are five key reasons I **strongly support H 7698**:

1. To increase food and nutrition security in Rhode Island: This tax credit would incentivize more businesses to donate surplus food. More food donations - especially fresh, nutrient-dense, culturally and religiously appropriate foods - would benefit the 31% of Rhode Island households who face food insecurity, meaning they cannot consistently rely on the ability to acquire nutritionally adequate, safe or acceptable food, which leads to inequities in health, education and economical achievement.
2. To support local non-profits: By delivering food donations to local non-profit organizations, they may invest more funds into their programs instead of food. Additionally, it has come to our attention that food donations help staff invest more time engaging with their clients from the time saved not having to prepare meals.
3. To benefit a growing number of businesses: Dollars spent on water, energy and labor invested to produce discarded food goes to waste. But if it's donated instead of discarded, the Tax Credit would help offset this. Supporting businesses that do the right thing would encourage others to do the same.
4. To preserve our environment and our health: Methane gasses released from food rotting in landfills are more potent than carbon dioxide and affect the quality of our air and water, threatening our health. 270 tons of methane gas are omitted daily just from wasted food. Less food in the landfill would lead to cleaner air for all Rhode Islanders.

5. To save the State of Rhode Island money: RI's Central Landfill is expected to run out of space by 2040 and is responsible for 97% of waste generated in the Ocean State. The 722 tons of food that occupies the landfill daily is 19% of the total daily collection of 3,800 tons. By diverting food from the landfill, we would expand the life of the landfill.

By incentivizing businesses to donate unused food, The State of Rhode Island has the opportunity to support local businesses, support local non-profit organizations, increase food equity, extend the life of the landfill and preserve the environment.

Thank you to Representative McEntee and her co-sponsors on H 7698. Respectfully, I urge you to pass H 7698 forward to the full House for passage this session. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David S. Dadekian". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

David Dadekian