



Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair

April 14, 2026

House Finance Committee

Rhode Island State House

Re: In Support of H7698

Dear Chair and members of the House Finance Committee,

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank supports Representative McEntee's bill H7698, which would create a tax credit for qualified taxpayers who donate food to nonprofit organizations that provide food to people in need. Under the bill, the credit would equal 75 percent of the fair market value of donated food, up to \$5,000 per tax year, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2027.

The Food Bank supports this bill because Rhode Island continues to face extraordinarily high levels of hunger and need. Our 2025 Status on Hunger Report revealed that 1 in 3 Rhode Island households now experiences food insecurity. In late 2025, food assistance reached historic levels—over 102,000 Rhode Islanders turned to local food pantries in November alone. At a time when food donations have declined, we find ourselves serving more food to more people, with less resources.

This bill is especially timely because the charitable food system has changed significantly. Purchased food is now the largest single source of inventory, reflecting sustained demand and the limits of donated supply. That means we are increasingly required to buy food in a much more expensive environment, even as the number of Rhode Islanders seeking help remains historically high. At the same time, the Food Bank expects the number of Rhode Islanders seeking help to grow even further as recent federal changes to SNAP in H.R. 1 reduce benefits and make it harder for more households to afford groceries.

For those reasons, the Food Bank is interested in any support that can help bring more food into the emergency food network. H 7698 is a constructive idea that may encourage additional donations from grocers, farmers, restaurants, wholesalers, and other businesses, and the Food Bank appreciates the sponsor's effort to strengthen food access in Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank respectfully urges its passage. At a time when one in three Rhode Island households are food insecure and more than 102,000 Rhode Islanders turned to the charitable food network during a period of acute disruption, policies that encourage additional food donations are welcome and worthwhile.

Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership in this effort.

Sincerely,

Melissa Cherney, CEO