

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Stephen Casey
RI House Committee on Health and Human Services
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: House Bill No. 5152

Dear Chairman Casey:

On behalf of the RI Hospitality Association, I write to express concern about H. 5152, which defines what constitutes a multi-use food and beverage storage container and provides for sanitary use of said containers.

The intent of this legislation is already permitted under Section 3.304.17 of the RI Food Code, which outlines what restaurants need to do if a customer uses a reusable container. Unfortunately, this legislation adds burdens on restaurants who have been using this established process for several years. It also creates new definitions that don't exist in the RI Food Code, which further complicates an existing process.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many restaurants, including quick service establishments, stopped allowing customers to use reusable containers due to the concern about cross-contamination. This was done at the discretion of individual restaurants due to their own operational concerns and not due to any mandates by the State.

We fully support the safe use of reusable containers in food service establishments, but ask that the existing process in the RI Food Code be used as to not add further burdens onto the industry.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at sarah@rihospitality.org or 401-223-1120.

Sincerely,

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