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The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

[HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)

April 24, 2025

Dear Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Retail Federation and the more than 100 stores we represent across the state, I am writing to express our strong support for H 6212, which targets fraudulent activity involving gift cards—a crime that has become increasingly prevalent, complex, and damaging to both consumers and retailers alike.

Gift card fraud is far from a victimless crime. What may appear at first glance as isolated or low-level theft is often part of a larger, organized scheme carried out by criminal networks that exploit weaknesses in current laws and enforcement capabilities. These crimes result in significant losses for businesses, undermine consumer trust, and contribute to a broader wave of organized retail theft that continues to impact retailers of all sizes.

The Rhode Island Retail Federation is proud to join other stakeholders in pushing for action. Our industry has shown an unprecedented level of collaboration to address this issue—partnering with law enforcement, leveraging advanced technologies such as encrypted QR codes and dynamic PINs, and educating consumers on how to protect themselves. But we cannot do it alone. We need our laws to reflect the reality of today’s criminal threats.

This bill takes a comprehensive approach by criminalizing a range of fraudulent activities related to gift cards, including unauthorized acquisition, tampering, and the use of fraudulently obtained cards to secure money, goods, or services. By establishing clear penalties, this bill sends a strong message: Rhode Island will not tolerate the exploitation of its retail system. The proposed

thresholds and penalties appropriately reflect the seriousness of these offenses and offer law enforcement and prosecutors the tools they need to hold offenders accountable.

Retailers throughout Rhode Island are taking steps to enhance security, educate staff, and report suspicious activity. However, skilled fraudsters quickly adapt their strategies to bypass preventative measures, and we need strong legislative tools to complement those efforts. This bill is a timely and necessary response to a real and growing problem, and we believe it will make a meaningful difference in preventing fraud and holding offenders accountable.

We thank the sponsors of this legislation for recognizing the seriousness of this issue and for taking action to modernize Rhode Island's laws to reflect today's retail realities. The Rhode Island Retail Federation urges the committee to pass this legislation to help protect the integrity of our retail system, safeguard consumers, and combat these fraudulent schemes.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional insight or support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laurie White  
President