

RE: HB 8044 Gift Card Fraud

Chairwoman McEntee and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am Daniel Liparini, a resident of North Kingstown, and I am writing in support of this bill. This bill would make the fraudulent use of gift cards a larceny when the value involved is over \$1500.

Gift card fraud is a serious issue and scams involving these cards have resulted (according to the FTC) in over \$200 million of losses in 2023. While gift cards are often used by people for perfectly legal purposes, they are also a favorite of fraudsters for a variety of scams – Social Security, Romance, sweepstakes just to name a few. Scammers like these cards because they are readily available and can be loaded with large dollar amounts.

Gift cards can be tampered with before purchase, causing them to lose value as soon as they're activated. In 2024, in Rhode Island, three men were arrested for tampering with over 2,000 gift cards, resulting in tens of thousands of dollars being impacted.

Please support this bill.

Daniel Liparini