



April 8, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee, Chair

House Judiciary

State House

Providence, RI 02908

Re: Testimony Supporting H 8060 relating to Impersonation and Identity Fraud

Dear Chair McEntee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Retail Federation, I write in **support of H 8060** which modernizes Rhode Island's criminal statutes to address entity impersonation and identity fraud and provides law enforcement and prosecutors with needed tools to respond to evolving fraud schemes harming Rhode Islanders—particularly consumers and small businesses.

We support modernizing the identity theft statute to include those who knowingly engage in entity impersonation and deepfakes to perpetrate fraud. Sadly, today's scams are increasingly sophisticated and often leverage the names of institutions people know and trust including government agencies such as the IRS and DMV, and state programs such as unemployment benefits. They also target private-sector organizations including banks, retailers, insurers, and others.

As technology evolves, including artificial intelligence and voice and video “deepfakes,” scammers can more convincingly imitate trusted sources, making it harder for Rhode Islanders to recognize and avoid fraud. This bill equips law enforcement with necessary tools, protects Rhode Island residents and small businesses from emerging forms of fraud, and helps ensure the law keeps pace with technological change.

As this committee is well aware, the harm from impersonation and identity fraud extends beyond immediate financial loss. Victims often face prolonged disruptions, reputational damage, emotional distress, and significant time spent resolving fraudulent activity. Small businesses can suffer disproportionate harm when operating funds are diverted, sometimes threatening their continued operation.

H 8060 is an appropriate response to a clear and growing threat. It equips law enforcement with necessary tools, protects Rhode Islanders from emerging forms of fraud, and helps ensure the law keeps pace with technological change. We thank you for this legislation.

Sincerely,



Laurie White, President

Rhode Island Retail Federation