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Testimony of

Christopher Carlozzi, State Director, National Federation of Independent Business
In Opposition to House Bill No. 7650
Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Extreme Temperature Employee Protection
Before the House Committee on Labor
March 5, 2024

Chairman Corvese and Members of the House Committee on Labor:

My name is Christopher Carlozzi. I am the Rhode Island State Director of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). A non-profit, non-partisan organization, NFIB is the nations and Rhode Island's largest small business advocacy group. In Rhode Island, NFIB represents hundreds of small and independent business owners involved in all types of industry, including manufacturing, retail, wholesale, service, and agriculture. The average NFIB member has five employees and annual gross revenues of about \$450,000. In short, NFIB represents the small Main Street business owners from across the state. On behalf of those small and independent business employers in Rhode Island, I urge you to oppose House Bill No. 7650, regarding work requirements in various temperatures.

This bill unfairly assumes small businesses are not already working with their employees in hot and cold temperatures. This legislation has a fairly low threshold for the definition of cold temperature at 32 degrees, as the average temperature in Providence for January and February is 29 degrees. This bill mandates additional paid breaks and imposes other requirements on small businesses, including those businesses with workers in vehicles and warehouses. House Bill No. 7650 also demands additional training for supervisors with workers who work in hot and cold temperatures.

Businesses in Rhode Island are already subjected to both state and federal labor laws to keep workers safe in a wide range of conditions. Would the provisions of this bill also apply to public employees? Those state workers in parks and pools during the summer? Bus drivers in cities in towns or municipal work crews? Even workers in the sweltering State House in June when the building reaches extremely hot temperatures in some corners of the building.

I strongly urge you to reject House Bill No. 7650 which seems excessive. Small businesses work with their employees to keep them safe and are already subjected to both state and federal safety laws. Thank you.