



**RHODE ISLAND WORKING FAMILIES PARTY**

Representative Arthur Corvese, Chair  
House Committee on Labor

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

### **Support for H-7650, Relating to Extreme Temperature Employee Protection**

Chair Corvese and Members of the Committee,

The RI Working Families Party (RIWFP) wishes to express its support for H-7650, a critical piece of legislation aimed at safeguarding our workforce from the dangers of extreme temperatures. This bill, introduced by Representative Morales, exemplifies RIWFP's long-standing commitment to advancing the health, safety, and well-being of Rhode Island's working families.

The necessity of such legislation has never been more apparent. As we face increasingly unpredictable weather patterns due to climate change, the risks associated with working in extreme temperatures—both high and low—are escalating. These conditions not only pose immediate health risks but also significantly impact productivity and the economic security of our workforce.

H-7650 proposes comprehensive measures to mitigate these risks, including access to adequate shade, rest breaks, and protective equipment, which are fundamental to ensuring a safe working environment. These measures are not luxuries but essential rights that every worker deserves, aligning with RIWFP's vision for a just and equitable workplace.

Moreover, the inclusion of mandatory training for recognizing the signs of temperature-related illnesses and the emphasis on maintaining functional heating and cooling equipment demonstrate a proactive approach to employee health. This bill acknowledges the varied environments Rhode Island's workforce operates in—from vehicles to warehouses to outdoor settings—ensuring tailored protections that address the specific needs of each workplace.

The bill's provisions for non-discrimination against employees affected by extreme temperatures also reflects RIWFP's stance on fair employment practices and the importance of upholding workers' rights under all conditions.

As with similar causes RIWFP has championed in the past, such as fair pay and the expansion of paid family leave, we recognize the importance of evolving our labor laws to meet the changing needs of our workforce. H-7650 represents a critical step forward in this ongoing journey, addressing a pressing and often overlooked issue that affects thousands of Rhode Island workers. We stand in solidarity with the sponsors of H-7650 and with every Rhode Island worker who deserves a safe and humane working environment.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Zachary Mezera  
RI Organizing Director  
Working Families Party