



March 27, 2024

The Honorable Arthur J Corvese
Chairman, House Committee on Labor
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Opposition to H 7531

Chairman Corvese and Members of the House Labor Committee,

As the owners of Snookers, Inc. located in Providence, we write to express our opposition to H 7531, which would eliminate the tipped wage.

Tipped restaurant jobs are currently an excellent way for people to earn money, and they allow the scheduling flexibility that many people need. These jobs allow people, even those without a college degree, to make a decent living. Many of our employees are students, single parents and others who without jobs like the ones we provide would not have a very high earning potential. The median full-service restaurant tipped worker makes nearly \$29.00/hour in Rhode Island. At Snookers, we see the average is even higher than that, and sometimes we see hourly wages as high as \$45/hour or more.

The impact on our business would be drastic if we were forced to pay tipped workers an extra \$10.11/hour. Layoffs would be inevitable, and prices would have to increase dramatically. Hospitality employees, standing to make significantly less in wages, would exit the industry in droves if this bill passes leaving us with a less qualified work force and leaving consumers with a less desirable product. The future of Snookers and the entire hospitality industry in Rhode Island would be in jeopardy. According to quite a few studies, the State of Rhode Island is currently ranked as the worst or very close to the worst state for small business. We need to change this to protect the economy of Rhode Island. Your opposition to this bill would be a step in that direction, so we respectfully ask that you oppose H 7531. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul & Erin Troxell