

March 5, 2025

The Honorable Arthur Corvese
House Committee on Labor
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Corvese and Committee Members,

The Northern RI Chamber of Commerce (NRICC) represents businesses in the communities of Burrillville, Central Falls, Cumberland, Foster, Gloucester, Johnston, Lincoln, North Providence, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Scituate, Smithfield and Woonsocket. The Chamber respectfully oppose the passage of H.5507, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Minimum Wages.

H.5507 proposes to increase the tipped wage (also referred to as cash wage) from the current \$3.89 per hour to \$6.95 per hour January 1, 2026; \$8.95 January 1, 2027; \$10.95 January 1, 2028; \$12.95 January 1, 2029, \$14.95 January 1, 2030 and equal to the state's minimum wage January 1, 2031.

It is important to understand that “tipped wage” does not equate to the hourly wage paid to the employee. Both federal and state law require an employee to be paid minimum wage. If the employee does not make minimum wage when the tipped wage and customer tips are added together, the employer must make up the difference. If they fail to do so, the employee can file a complaint with the Department of Labor and back wages will be paid and the employer will be penalized. It happens now. Tips are a part of the employee’s wage; tips are not windfalls over and above wages. H.5507 seeks to adopt the European model for restaurant wages. Those wages are higher for employees, but the model eliminates tipping. The result is a disincentive to provide good service as many who traveled have experienced.

The Chamber encourages this committee oppose the passage of H.5507.

Respectfully submitted,


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