

March 18, 2025

Honorable Representative Arthur Corvese, Chair
House Labor Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support of H-5940, The Rhode Island Opportunity for Employee Ownership Act

Dear Chair Corvese,

I am proud to express our wholehearted support for **H-5940**, the Rhode Island Opportunity for Employee Ownership Act. This legislation creates opportunities for small business owners to transfer ownership of businesses to their employees when the owner decides to sell. If passed, it could generate ownership and wealth-building opportunities for tens of thousands of Rhode Islanders while providing a strategy for Rhode Island to meet the challenges of thousands of small business owners retiring in coming years (a.k.a. ‘Silver Tsunami’). According to data compiled by Project Equity, 56% of small business owners in Rhode Island are over the age of 55. As increasing numbers of our state’s locally-owned small businesses approach points of transition, we see conversion to employee ownership as an ideal outcome to preserve community character, safeguard local ownership, and provide economic mobility opportunities to working Rhode Islanders.

I am a passionate supporter of keeping small businesses in business in our fine state and am grateful for the opportunity to support such important legislation. Small businesses are what bring many visitors to our state each year, keep our hard earned dollars when spent in the state of Rhode Island and support our neighbors who own these small businesses. They keep our charming neighborhoods, cities and towns charming. No one wants to live next to a strip mall filled with big box

stores. We want to shop where our neighbors work and know our dollar will be kept in the community we live in.

Worker-owned cooperatives are sustainable business models that will help keep small businesses in operation here. We only have a few so far and could sorely use more in this state. House Bill 5940 is an important first step in creating more cooperatives in this state.

As such, I strongly urge the committee to move this bill forward. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly in response to this email.

Thank you for your attention on this,

Sam Radov
Providence, RI
02909