



Member Focused; Results Driven

March 18, 2026

OPPOSE

Representative Arthur J. Corvese
Chair, House Labor Committee
The State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: House Bills 7769, H7770, H7771: Minimum Wage

Dear Chair Corvese:

My name is Scott Bromberg, and I am the President & CEO of the Rhode Island Food Dealers Association, a trade association established in 1909 to serve the needs of the food industry in the State of Rhode Island. Our membership includes chain and independent grocery retailers, wholesalers, suppliers, distributors, food manufacturers, brokers, and other organizations affiliated with the food industry in our state. As an industry, we are among the state's largest employers and revenue generators.

On behalf of our association members, I would like to take this opportunity to register our opposition to the minimum wage increases proposed in House Bills 7769, 7770 and 7771.

Rhode Island already has a scheduled increase for January 1, 2027 at \$17.00, which was approved just last session. House Bill 7770 calls for percentage increases based on the northeast region's CPI-U. This is a regional calculation which includes other states and is not limited to just Rhode Island. If the CPI decreases from one year to the next, there is no mechanism to decrease the minimum wage. As a state, Rhode Island has now increased the minimum wage nine times over the past ten years, and our current wage is among the highest in the country. Is this sustainable for Rhode Island businesses?

If the minimum wage were raised to these levels, it would further increase labor costs for our members. These costs can be passed on to the consumers via price increases at the register for all Rhode Islanders. If not, it must be taken from elsewhere in operating budgets – most likely future planning and investing in Rhode Island. Increased labor cost could also lead to job reduction or reduced hours for current and future staffing. This does not bode well for one of the largest industries and job providers in the state.

Rhode Island's food industry is one of the largest – and steadiest – employers in the state. In a time when the State of Rhode Island needs to add jobs – one of the largest industries in the state would not be in any position to expand its labor force and could very well have the opposite effect.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our association's opposition to these additional minimum wage increases. We hope that you will consider our members in consideration of bills House Bills 7769, 7770, and 7771.

Sincerely,



Scott Bromberg
President & CEO
RI Food Dealers Association

CC: Hon. K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker
Rhode Island House of Representatives

Hon. Christopher R Blazewski, Majority Leader
Rhode Island House of Representatives

Margaret Hogan Sweeney, Esq.,
M. Teresa Paiva Weed, Esq. &
Jack Tear
F/S Capitol Consulting, LLC