

Dear House Labor committee and Representative McNamara,

My name is Adelaide Dicken. I am a resident of Cranston, writing to voice my support for HB 7964, the RI Opportunity for Employee Ownership Act.

In my first three years living in Rhode Island, I've been able to connect with other eager potential business owners, and in January I helped incorporate a worker-owned cooperative bakery that will support small food businesses in our capital city.

Our work has been deeply supported by solidarity economy resources, so I can attest firsthand that strengthening opportunities for employee ownership will support Rhode Island's legacy businesses, first-time business owners, and the small business community overall.

I hope that you will pass this simple bill, providing notice and opportunity to employees of small businesses. When so many of our business owners across the state are approaching retirement, this is important timing to make sure that community institutions stay driven by their local character and don't fall into the hands of big developers. The simple measures in this bill to provide notice and to develop a list of technical assistance resources are beneficial to all.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Best,

Adelaide Dicken