

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you today to issue my full hearted support for HB 7964/SB 2744. I feel strongly that this bill would be an improvement for our state. As a resident of Providence, I often visit employee owned co-ops such as Small Format and White Electric. In these establishments, I don't just feel like a customer. I feel like a community member who is appreciated and considered. Any concerns or questions I have can be answered directly by employees who take an initiative in the business as co-owners. In other businesses, I've issued similar complaints or questions only to be told that some faceless owner I've never met made the decision, and the employees have no power to change it. Places like Small Format are great, because rather than simply being a one off business, they foster community growth and small businesses. They often host events such as artists markets or open mics that allow for residents of Providence to meet and find other businesses to support. Employees of a business are what make that business great, and if a group of employees has the tenacity and gumption to form an employee co-op then I think the state should foster and help those formations be successful. I hope that you will consider supporting the passing of this bill.

Thank you,
Samantha Richter