



Member Focused; Results Driven

May 21, 2026

Oppose

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

RE: House Bill 8505: Workplace Psychological Safety Act

Dear Honorable Chairman:

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.

RIFDA and its membership strive to create professional, productive, and safe workspaces for its employees. Our membership has made considerable efforts to foster healthy and respectful retail environments. There are several state and federal regulations to protect employees from hostile work environments and address the concerns outlined in this bill. In addition to current regulations, voluntary in store policies have been curated to protect staff from workplace "bullying." While we believe H.8505 has the best intentions this bill could create significant difficulties for our members.

The subjective nature of the definitions around psychological safety allows for too much interpretation. The terminology singled out in the bill can be interpreted in many different ways and can mean different things depending on your point of view. Our members must be able to evaluate, supervise, and correct workplace performance without constant fear of litigation. Adding another layer of subjective law to a crowded field of workplace protections would create confusion and more hardships for our members than intended. The standards outlined would create increased administrative costs for our members, both large and small, including but not limited to legal fees and human resources. Our local small business members don't have the expansive human resources departments and attorney retainers, and it would be extremely costly.

RIFDA

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In summary, Rhode Island's food industry is one of the largest – and steadiest – employers in the state. This proposed bill would have a negative impact on our member stores, both large and small. We ask you to recognize their position when considering House Bill 8505.

Thank you for allowing our industry to weigh in on this bill.

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

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