

March 7, 2023

Via E-Mail

House Committee on Small Business
State House
Providence, RI 02903
Attention: The Honorable Carol Hagen McEntee

Re: *Written Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 5974 – An Act Relating to Alcoholic Beverages – Manufacturing and Wholesale Licenses, and House Bill 5232 – An Act Relating to Alcoholic Beverages – Manufacturing and Wholesale Licenses*

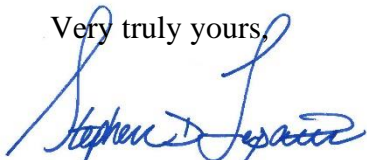
Dear Chairwoman McEntee and Committee Members:

We are writing on behalf of McLaughlin and Moran to express its opposition to H 5974, which would allow farmer-winery license holders to sell their products at retail locations off the licensed premises at up to five separate locations, provided they obtain a license from the local municipality prior to the sale, and H 5232, which would allow manufacturer-wineries to sell up to three (3) drinks of wine for on-site consumption or three (3) bottles of wine for off-site consumption.

H 5974 and H 5232 would impact nearly all areas of business operations. Passing H 5974 and H 5232 would allow farmer-winery license holders and manufacturer-wineries to bypass the three-tier system in Rhode Island and send product directly to Rhode Island retailers and consumers. The practical effect of these bills would result in the continued erosion of the industry's three-tier system and ultimately devalue wholesaler licenses. Moreover, H 5974 and H 5232 would jeopardize the jobs of individuals at all levels of the three-tier system as well as the jobs of individuals who deliver product to retailers. Farmer-winery license holders have the ability to sell their product at their winery locations. An expansion of that violates the three-tier system.

Passing this bill would cause significant harm to McLaughlin and Moran's business operations. As always, McLaughlin and Moran appreciates your consideration of its input and perspective.

Very truly yours,



STEPHEN D. LAPATIN
RICHARD R. BERETTA, JR.