



RHODE ISLAND LIQUOR OPERATORS COLLABORATIVE

REPRESENTING RHODE ISLAND'S INDEPENDENT LIQUOR RETAILERS

H5974 Against

7 March 2023

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
RI House Committee on Small Business
RI State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman McEntee and Committee Members:

The Rhode Island Liquor Operators Collaborative strongly opposes House Bill 5974.

This piece of legislation is a direct violation of the three-tier system. The three-tier system exists to get alcoholic beverages to the general public in the safest manner possible. It regulates quality checks and prevents one manufacturer from dominating the marketplace over another. H5974 would allow for manufacturers to open up retail outlets in all corners of our state, cutting out the wholesale and retail tier of business. With over 230 off-premise alcohol retail licensees in the state, there is no need for additional retail outlets such as the ones that are being proposed in this legislation.

Farmer-winery licensees, without the provisions that H5974 is attempting, have copious rites when it comes to retail sales. As already written, visitors to our state's farmer-wineries can buy bottles for purchase on site to later be enjoyed in their own homes. It is the hope that once those products are enjoyed, consumers will then go purchase them at local liquor stores.

In Rhode Island, we pride ourselves on our homegrown products. The Rhode Island alcohol retail community supports our local brands and features them in our stores. In our industry, partnership is an important word that we all take seriously. The steps that H5974 is attempting to take completely disregards partnership and united growth as an industry.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at (401) 219-6695 or RILiquorOperatorsCollaborative@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Nicholas A. Fede, Jr.
Director
Rhode Island Liquor Operators Collaborative