

Megan F. Jackson
34 Champlin Avenue
Narragansett, RI 02879

June 10, 2025

House Small Business Committee
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: House Bill No. 6392

Entitled, An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Outdoor Dining Act

Chairwoman McEntee and Members of the House Small Business Committee,

I am writing as a homeowner in the village of Jerusalem to express my strong support for HB6392, which would allow restaurants closed due to fire or other disasters to temporarily operate outdoor dining spaces. This bill is both sensible and urgently needed.

The recent fire that forced the closure of Matunuck Oyster Bar has had a deep impact on our neighborhood. As one of the top 44 restaurants in America¹ and a beloved Rhode Island institution, Matunuck Oyster Bar is far more than just a place to eat. It is a cornerstone of our local economy, a gathering place for residents and visitors, and a vital part of what makes summer in South County so special.

Perry Raso, the proprietor, has invested not only in his business but in our community. He has supported local causes, created jobs, and fostered a sense of pride in sustainable oyster farming and hospitality. When COVID shut the world down, Perry donated thousands of free meals to students and the elderly. In the wake of the fire, hundreds of employees have been displaced, and the state has lost a cherished space for connection and celebration.

This bill would offer a lifeline—not just to Perry and his team, but to all of us who benefit from having vibrant, resilient local businesses. Allowing a temporary outdoor operation would create employment opportunities and offer a sense of hope as the rebuilding process begins. The bill is a reasonable response to a devastating event.

Thank you, Chairwoman, for introducing HB6392. I urge the committee to recommend passage.

¹ Ciampa, Gail. “Rhode Island’s pond-to-plate restaurant named one of best by USA Today,” The Providence Journal, Feb. 12, 2025, accessible at: https://res.cloudinary.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1739981926/clients/southcountyrri/South_Kingstown_restaurant_named_one_of_best_by_USA_TODAY_a85b05f7-935b-4a40-8e09-2376a35218a6.pdf, (last accessed June 10, 2025).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Megan F. Jackson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Megan F. Jackson

Homeowner, Village of Jerusalem