

March 25, 2026

The Honorable Mary Ann Shallcross Smith
Chair, House Small Business Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Shallcross Smith and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ryan Moot, and I serve as Manager of Government Affairs for the RI Hospitality Association. I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to H 7493.

While we strongly support Rhode Island's craft beverage manufacturers and recognize the important role they play in our economy and tourism industry, this legislation creates a fundamentally uneven playing field between breweries and traditional bars and restaurants.

As drafted, H 7493 significantly expands the privileges of brewery license holders by allowing them to purchase and resell other Rhode Island-produced alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption. In effect, this allows breweries to operate in a manner nearly indistinguishable from full-service bars, without being subject to the same regulatory framework, licensing requirements, and costs.


Traditional bars and restaurants are required to:


- Obtain more expensive Class B liquor licenses, often through a limited and competitive municipal process;
- Comply with strict zoning, seating, and operational requirements;
- Meet extensive food service obligations;
- Pay significantly higher fees and taxes tied to their licensure and operations.

By contrast, this bill would allow breweries to expand into full-service alcohol offerings while continuing to operate under a manufacturer's license with substantially fewer barriers to entry and lower costs. This creates an inequitable regulatory environment that disadvantages existing small businesses that have made significant investments to comply with current law.

Additionally, Rhode Island's three-tier system has long provided structure and fairness within the alcohol marketplace. Incrementally eroding that system—particularly in ways that allow one license type to assume the privileges of another—risks unintended consequences for competition, compliance, and enforcement. We are not opposed to thoughtful, balanced policies that support the growth of our craft beverage industry. However, those policies must not come at the expense of fairness or undermine existing businesses that play by a different, more stringent set of rules.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to oppose H 7493.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
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