

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,

On behalf of our members across Rhode Island, I am writing in strong support of H 7664.

This legislation addresses a clear and longstanding inequity in Rhode Island law. Currently, caterers holding a Class P license are required to purchase alcoholic beverages at retail prices, while virtually every other segment of the hospitality industry, including restaurants, bars, and other licensed establishments, has access to wholesale pricing.

This disparity places caterers at a significant competitive disadvantage. They are operating under the same regulatory framework, adhering to strict service requirements, and providing the same hospitality experience as other license holders, yet they are forced to absorb higher input costs simply because of how the statute is currently structured.

H 7664 corrects this imbalance by allowing caterers to purchase alcohol from wholesalers, just like their industry counterparts. This is not a special privilege; it is a matter of fairness. Equal access to wholesale pricing ensures a level playing field across the hospitality sector.


Importantly, this bill maintains appropriate safeguards. Wholesalers retain the ability to set minimum order quantities or decline orders, ensuring that the existing distribution system remains stable and intact. Additionally, all existing service, training, and safety requirements for caterers remain unchanged.

By passing H 7664, the General Assembly will support small businesses across Rhode Island, many of which are caterers who rely on thin margins and seasonal demand. This change will help them remain competitive, grow their businesses, and continue contributing to the state's economy.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support H 7664.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ryan Moot
Manager of Government Affairs
Rhode Island Hospitality Association

 94 Sabra Street
Cranston, RI 02910

 401-223-1120

 401-223-1123

 www.RIHospitality.org