

CLEMENTS' MARKETPLACE

March 24, 2026

Hon. Robert Britto, Chair
Senate Commerce Committee
The State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Opposition to Senate Bill 2342

Dear Members of the Senate Commerce Committee:

I am writing to you to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 2342, regarding self-checkouts. I am the third generation of a family that has operated grocery stores in Rhode Island since 1980. My grandparents founded Clements' Marketplace in Portsmouth, which has now grown to two Rhode Island locations under the ownership of my mother. Starting employment at our Portsmouth store in 2007, I have truly grown up in the grocery industry, and I have worked in nearly all areas of our stores. One universal point from my experience is that, as an independent operator, the quality of the products we offer, and the service we provide, need to be paramount in every aspect of our business. Every decision we make is geared toward improving one of, if not both of those areas. It is what gives our stores a competitive advantage over larger chain stores with immense buying power.

When we made the decision to install Fast Lanes (self-checkouts), we viewed them as a tool for our Front End to help improve our service levels. They were not designed to be, and have never been, a replacement for our staff. We weighed every aspect of their implementation heavily and decided to always have a staff member operating the four lanes. With smaller orders often causing backups across the Front End, the Fast Lanes have helped to maintain a steady pace and take care of our customers more efficiently. It has been a success for both customers and staff. Our industry has always been one that tries to go above and beyond for their customers. Our store operations should not be forcibly hindered based on an interaction at a different type of retail establishment. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose Senate Bill 2342.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,
Charles Anthony IV
Director of Operations, Clements' Marketplace