

## Clements' Marketplace

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Bristol, RI 02809

March 2026

### **Rhode Island Senate Bill 2342**

To The Distinguished Members of the Senate Commerce Committee:

I am writing to you with regards to my opposition of Senate Bill 2342, self-checkouts. I am a second-generation family business owner. My parents opened Clements' Marketplace in 1980 and we recently expanded to a second Rhode Island location in Bristol two years ago. Since starting in the business in 1983, I have seen many changes throughout the years, but nothing compared to how COVID changed our workforce. In my early days as a cashier, we rang every item by hand with price and department. In 1994, we improved our service and speed at our registers by adding scanning units to our checkouts. We have always tried to innovate and create a great shopping experience for our community and an exceptional workplace for our staff. We offer competitive wages and great benefits to our team members; however, since 2020 we have struggled to hire staff to run our stores. As a small, independent business, we have always placed our emphasis on quality and service because we are not able to get the pricing that the large companies can. We added Fast Lanes (self-checkouts) in an effort to service our customers well. Prior to implementation, I had customers asking why we did not have them for some time. It was widely conveyed that self-checkout added an increased level of convenience and efficiency as a way to get them in-and-out quickly. They effectively reduce the likelihood of customers being slowed down by large orders processing ahead them. We have always listened to our customers and tried to satisfy their needs. We have offered home delivery and pick-up since 1998. This segment of our business has grown significantly over time, which has created even more jobs for our checkout service. Since installing the Fast Lanes, we have not decreased our checkout staff. We have added to our service desk team to help manage the Fast Lanes and always have checkouts with manned cashiers. What this bill will do to our industry, and our stores in particular, is create an atmosphere of inadequate service levels often. We get many more sick calls now and, although we have more staff on our rosters, are often unable to get coverage for the shifts. This law will create chaos in our checkout areas because we will not be able to efficiently service customers. They will be left to wait because Fast Lanes will have to be shut down to follow the law. There is no need to have two clerks manage four Fast Lanes when many of the transactions are five items or less. We are in agreement that Fast Lanes must have a clerk for assisting customers. No lanes should be left unmanned. We care about service levels and always have another clerk available in the event the Fast Lane clerk is assisting another. This ensures no customer has to wait. Our industry, as a whole, has always cared about service. One segment of retail should not be singled out by a law. If there is a real concern with self-checkouts then a law should pertain to all self-checkouts and not one group. I urge you to vote no on passing this bill into law. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Tracy Anthony

President  
Clements' Marketplace, Inc.  
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