



March 24, 2026

Chairman Robert Britto
Senate Commerce Committee
Rhode Island Senate
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Britto and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today to share the **opposition of the Rhode Island Retail Federation to S-2342, “An Act Relating to Commercial Law—General Regulatory Provisions—Grocery Stores.”** This legislation seeks to regulate the number and operation of self-checkout stations in grocery and other retail establishments.

The bill would cap the number of self-checkouts at eight, require a staffed register for every two self-checkouts in use, and restrict the responsibilities of employees overseeing those stations. These mandates represent an unnecessary intrusion into day-to-day business operations and would reduce flexibility for retailers trying to manage staffing shortages, control costs, and meet customer demand.

In practice, these requirements would lead to longer lines, higher labor costs, and ultimately higher prices for consumers. The bill’s broad definition of “grocery stores” would also sweep in pharmacies and other retailers that were not the intended focus, creating unintended consequences across the retail sector.

At a time when businesses are navigating inflation, workforce challenges, and the need to keep neighborhood stores open and accessible, imposing rigid operational mandates would only make it harder for retailers to serve their communities effectively.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie White". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and a decorative flourish at the end.

Laurie White,

President
Rhode Island Retail Federation