



March 26, 2026

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

OPPOSE S 2642

Dear Chairman Britto and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Retail Federation and our members across the state, I write to respectfully express **our opposition to S 2642, the proposed “Price Tags Act.”**

Retailers share the General Assembly’s goal of ensuring fairness, transparency, and affordability for Rhode Island consumers. However, S 2642 would impose rigid pricing mandates that risk unintended consequences for competition, supply chains, and ultimately the prices paid by Rhode Island families at the checkout counter.

The bill requires suppliers to extend the “same terms of sale” to retailers purchasing on the same volume unit basis and creates significant new disclosure and litigation mechanisms. While framed as a fairness measure, this approach oversimplifies the realities of modern grocery supply chains. Pricing arrangements are influenced by a range of legitimate factors — including distribution efficiencies, logistics investments, long-term contractual commitments, promotional programs, self-distribution models, and marketing support — many of which reduce costs and drive consumer savings.

By limiting the ability of suppliers and retailers to negotiate flexible, performance-based agreements, S 2642 risks eliminating efficiencies that help keep grocery prices competitive. If suppliers are constrained in how they structure pricing, the likely result will be upward price adjustments or reduced promotional activity across the board — outcomes that directly impact consumers.

The bill also introduces significant legal exposure. It authorizes private rights of action and pricing differential damages, creating the potential for costly and complex litigation over contract terms and negotiations that are commonplace in the retail marketplace. For businesses already operating in a high-cost environment — facing rising labor costs, insurance expenses, and supply chain volatility — additional regulatory uncertainty may discourage investment and innovation.

Importantly, federal law already addresses discriminatory pricing practices through established antitrust frameworks. Layering a new state-specific pricing regime on top of those laws risks creating compliance conflicts and administrative burdens, particularly for retailers operating across multiple states.

Rhode Island retailers are committed to serving their communities and delivering value to consumers. This bill, while well-intentioned, would disrupt competitive dynamics rather than strengthen them. For these reasons, the Rhode Island Retail Federation respectfully urges the Committee to decline to advance the legislation in its current form.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of Rhode Island's retail community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laurie White
President
Rhode Island Retail Federation