

To the honorable members of the House Labor Committee:

Collette Travel Service, Inc, a large and long-standing RI based employer, strongly opposes H.7457 and H.7319 as currently proposed for the following reasons:

H.7457 – removes language that since 2013 has allowed for an exemption to be granted by the Director, provided certain conditions are met, to employers to pay non-exempt employees on a bi-weekly basis. Removing such exemptions puts RI based employers at a competitive disadvantage to its New England neighbors and indeed with the advent of hybrid workforce to competitors nationwide for no real benefit to the employee. In fact, many employees schedule their own financial planning around routine and periodic bi-weekly payments. Going back to weekly disrupts that schedule not to mention the added costs to administer weekly payroll which further erodes funds available to invest back into the employee. Collette has won many “Best Places to Work” awards in the state. Not being paid on a weekly basis clearly has no impact to how our employees believe Collette treats its most valuable asset – its employees.

H.7319 -reduces standard work week to 32 hours and provides for overtime pay based on 32 instead of 40 hours. This is a dramatic change to the cost of providing service in the state of RI. Such a move would add significant cost in a “business of pennies” and force large employers, such as Collette to seek employees from other states that retain the traditional 40-hour workweek as a standard. With hybrid and remote work becoming the norm, employers have nationwide pool of workers to pull from. Passage of this legislation would provide one more reason for RI employers to seek employees from non-RI locations. While the intention is noble, the end result would be less employment for RI non-exempt employees as their cost would simply be non-competitive.

Submitted with all due respect.

Sincerely,

*Bob*

**Robert Colucci**

*EVP & Chief Financial Officer*

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