



**Champion Advocacy
Associates**

March 5, 2024

The Honorable Arthur Corvese
Chairman, House Labor Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Chairman Corvese and Committee Members:

The Northern RI Chamber of Commerce (NRICC) represents businesses in the communities of Burrillville, Central Falls, Cumberland, Foster, Glocester, Johnston, Lincoln, North Providence, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Scituate, Smithfield and Woonsocket. We write to respectfully oppose the passage of 7319, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Healthy and Safe Families and Workplaces Act.

H.7319 creates a new definition of “workweek” for employers with more than 500 employees. Any employee of a large employer must be paid time and a half if that employee works more than thirty-two hours in a week. The employer must also pay the same amount to the employee for the thirty-two hours as the employee received for forty hours prior to the passage of the bill.

After seeming to create an exemption for businesses with less than 500 employees, H.7319 goes on to specifically define the work week as thirty-two hours for employees in food establishments, individuals under the age of 18, employees paid on a biweekly basis, employees of a national voluntary health nonprofit, mechanics, and vehicle and farm equipment salespersons.

In essence, H.7319 requires most employers to give Rhode Island employees 52 additional days of paid vacation or be subject to overtime premium payments.

CNBC released a ranking entitled “America’s Top States for Business 2023. It applied 86 metrics across 10 broad categories. Rhode Island ranked 45th overall, 46th for the cost of doing business. (*CNBC America’s Top States for Business 2023 The Full Rankings* <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/07/11/americas-top-states-for-business-2023-the-full-rankings.html>) We believe the passage of H.7319 will definitely move Rhode Island further down the list, perhaps to the bottom

For these reasons, the Northern RI Chamber of Commerce urges this committee to reject the passage of H.7319.

Respectfully,

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