



M E M O R A N D U M

To: Rhode Island General Assembly
 From: The Rhode Island Food Policy Council
 Date: June 3, 2022

Subject: Support for “Cottage Food Bill” (S2673 and H7909)

The Rhode Island Food Policy Council is an independent network of food systems stakeholders with a mission to build a more socially equitable, economically vibrant, and environmentally sustainable food system in Rhode Island. We support the proposed ‘cottage food bill’ (S2673 and H7909) as an important step forward for our state in empowering beginning and small food entrepreneurs. We are also in support of the proposed changes to the bill to increase the revenue cap to \$50,000/year and to remove “baked” from the description of allowable items.

The proposed legislation offers an on-ramp for beginning and small food entrepreneurs to establish their businesses which are an important source of income and support for their livelihoods, and an important part of the vibrance of their communities and local economies. We know that the current restrictions on home food production disproportionately affect communities of color - Black communities, Latin communities, Asian communities, Indigenous and immigrant communities alike - and that they also have disproportionate negative effects on women and people with disabilities. The bill can also help those with disabilities that limit their outside contact gain access to a form of financial independence. Folks on SSI and SSDI who can supplement their income with this will be empowered.

We recognize that the bill also makes important provisions to maintain and improve public health and safety concerns. We support the labeling requirements proposed in the bill. We would also ask to see increased resources and funding resources provided to the RI Department of Health to increase their capacity for handling the new business and activity associated with the passage of the bill.

In summary, we believe passing this bill would greatly contribute to the growth of a more equitable, vibrant, and sustainable food system in Rhode Island and we ask our legislators to vote to approve it.

Members of the Rhode Island Food Policy Council

Jazandra Barros, Co-chair	Raul Figueroa	Piedade Lemos	Lisa Primiano
Thea Upham, Co-chair	Rose Forrest	Bevan Linsley	Esteban Quijada Link
Diane Lynch, Board President	Meghan Grady	Adena Marcelino	V. Raffini
Denisse Abreu	Alice Howard	Angel Mendez	Sarah Rejouis
Steven J. Arthurs	Amber Jackson	Andrew Morley	Dana Siles
Tara Lynn Cimini	Ella Kilpatrick Kotner	Jair Pérez	Patch Tseng-Putterman
	Joan Kwiatkowski	Deborah Perry	