

2025 -- S 0085 SUBSTITUTE A

LC000406/SUB A

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS --
GROCERY STORES

Introduced By: Senators Lawson, LaMountain, and Bissaillon

Date Introduced: January 31, 2025

Referred To: Senate Commerce

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 6 of the General Laws entitled "COMMERCIAL LAW — GENERAL
2 REGULATORY PROVISIONS" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 61

4 GROCERY STORES

5 **6-61-1. Definitions.**

6 As used in this chapter:

7 (1) "Grocery store" means a retail store in the State of Rhode Island that earns the majority
8 of its gross income from the retail sale of groceries and sells primarily household foodstuffs for off-
9 site consumption, including the sale of fresh produce, meats, poultry, fish, deli products, dairy
10 products, canned foods, dry foods, beverages, baked goods or prepared foods. Other household
11 supplies or other products shall be secondary to the primary purpose of food sales.

12 (2) "Manual checkout station" provides human assistance to shoppers, scanning, bagging
13 and accepting payment for their purchases.

14 (3) "Retail sale" means the sale of groceries to a consumer for use or consumption, and not
15 for the purpose of resale.

16 (4) "Self-service checkout" means an automated process that enable shoppers to scan, bag
17 and pay for their purchases without human assistance.

18 **6-61-2. Restriction on number of self-service checkouts in grocery stores.**

1 Grocery stores shall not have more than six (6) self-service checkout stations operating at
2 any one time per location.

3 **6-61-3. Minimum manual checkout.**

4 Grocery stores with self-checkout stations shall have a minimum of one operational manual
5 checkout station per two (2) self-service checkout stations.

6 **6-61-4. Enforcement.**

7 (a) The consumer protection unit of the department of attorney general ("CPU") shall have
8 primary authority to enforce the restrictions of this chapter.

9 (b) The CPU shall enact rules and regulations as necessary to implement this chapter. The
10 fine for the first and second violations shall be five hundred (\$500) dollars. The fine for third and
11 subsequent violations shall be one thousand (\$1,000) dollars.

12 (c) Any employee alleging retaliation by their employer for making a complaint alleging
13 violations of this chapter may bring a cause of action in superior court pursuant to chapter 50 of
14 title 28.

15 (d) Any Rhode Island consumer alleging a violation of this chapter may file a complaint
16 with the CPU.

17 **6-61-5. Severability.**

18 If any part, section or provision of this chapter is found unconstitutional, illegal or invalid,
19 such a finding will affect only that part, section or provision of this chapter and the remaining parts,
20 sections or provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

21 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

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1 This act would require grocery stores to specifically limit the number of self-service
2 checkout units to six (6) units per location. The consumer protection unit of the department of
3 attorney general would have authority to enforce these restrictions.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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