

2026 -- S 3004

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -- LICENSES GENERALLY

Introduced By: Senator Gordon E. Rogers

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 3-5-16 of the General Laws in Chapter 3-5 entitled "Licenses
2 Generally" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **3-5-16. Maximum number of licenses.**

4 (a)(1) The department of business regulation shall have the right and power to limit the
5 number of licenses of each class. The limit shall not exceed the maximum number, if any, of any
6 class of license that is fixed by the licensing boards within their respective towns or cities.

7 (2) The number of Class C licenses in any town or city shall not exceed one for each one
8 thousand (1,000) of its inhabitants.

9 (3) Every city and town may grant in any year renewals of any license of Class A in
10 operation prior to April 28, 1969, except when renewal of that license is refused for cause, but no
11 further new and original licenses of Class A shall be granted until the number of licenses of Class
12 A outstanding in any city or town has been reduced to less than one for each six thousand (6,000)
13 of its inhabitants (one for each four thousand (4,000) of its inhabitants in any city or town with less
14 than twenty thousand (20,000) inhabitants), as determined by the last census taken under the
15 authority of the United States or the state, by cancellation, revocation, or the failure of holders of
16 those licenses to apply for renewals. After that reduction to less than one for each six thousand
17 (6,000) inhabitants (one for each four thousand (4,000) inhabitants in any town or city with less
18 than twenty thousand (20,000) inhabitants), licenses of Class A may be granted in any year by any
19 city or town only up to a total not exceeding one for each six thousand (6,000) of its inhabitants

1 (one for each four thousand (4,000) of its inhabitants in any town or city with less than twenty
2 thousand (20,000) inhabitants) as determined by census as required in this subsection. However,
3 two (2) Class A licenses may be issued by every city or town of the state irrespective of population
4 and, until the qualified electors of any city or town shall vote to the contrary, one Class A license
5 may be issued in every city or town in this state unless otherwise ordered by the city or town
6 council.

7 Any Class A license issued to or held by a Class E licensee pursuant to the provisions of §
8 3-7-5 shall be included in the total of, and subject to the limit upon the number of, Class A licenses
9 which may be granted by any city or town under this section.

10 (b) The transfer of any existing license from the holder of this license to another person
11 shall not be considered as the issuance of a new license under this section.

12 (c) The several cities and towns, except those cities and towns that had in effect on June 1,
13 1971, a limit on the number of retailers' Class B or D licenses, shall not issue any new retailers'
14 Class B or D licenses until May 1, 1972. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any
15 application filed on or before May 30, 1971.

16 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, irrespective of the
17 population of the town of Smithfield, it is expressly authorized to issue a total of five (5) Class A
18 liquor licenses.

19 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, irrespective of the
20 population of the town of Scituate, it is expressly authorized to issue a total of three (3) Class A
21 liquor licenses.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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- 1 This act would authorize the town of Scituate to issue a total of three (3) Class A liquor
- 2 licenses.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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