

RHODE ISLAND FOOD DEALERS ASSOCIATION

March 2013 Rhode Island Legislative Update - Save the Date RIFDA Annual Convention - Meetings and Event Calendar - Welcome New Member

March 2013 Rhode Island Legislative Update

As expected, based on promises made during November's election by Rhode Island's General Assembly members – including leadership, – we have seen a good number of bills submitted in both Chambers focused on developing a better climate for business in RI. This, of course, also serves the wishes of all voters as it would also serve to create or solidify jobs. The Senate has gone a step further and most recently has packaged a number of their bills – some 25 pieces of legislation – together as an all-encompassing program.

This was introduced by Senate President Paiva Weed on March 12th.

This pro-business legislation is generally focused in six areas including economic development, work force training, education, health, energy, and tax policy. Although the first few categories would have more impact in the longer term or near future – the tax bills would have an impact quickly. The majority of these tax bills focus on minimizing the impact on the corporate tax (some include eliminating it completely) and/or providing tax relief based on adding jobs.

The association is actively supporting all of these tax relief bills – particularly those that would seem to be more viable chance of passage than the others. The association is also working with the Small Business Administration and the House Committee on Small Business on other job creation and training bills. These efforts include those that are related to prospective legislation and others that have not been introduced as of yet, but would stimulate business development and/or expansion in the short term.

In addition to the positive pieces of legislation there are still a number of bills that have been proposed that are not in the best interest of our industry. These bills include some familiar areas with enhancements and a few new ones.

These “negative impact” bills introduced include a minimum wage increase bill -with subsequent COLA annual increases (H 5079) that would increase the minimum wage by .50 on Jan. 1st next year. This bill has already had a hearing and is being held for further study. As mentioned previously the Food Dealers has sent written testimony to the Chair of House Labor voicing our objections as we did during the committee hearing last year. A new point of objection would be that this is contrary to the legislator's commitment to add jobs in 2013. We expect a companion bill on the Senate side but as we are passed the bill introduction period any such effort would have to come from Senate leadership. We will continue to watch this closely. eVerification continues to an area of legislative interest. The positioning of these bills (H 5016 & H 5236) has changed and to be consistent with the popular theme this legislative session - to add jobs. **CONTINUED**



Member Focused; Results Driven

Mark your Calendars 2013 March - June Meetings and Annual Events

March 27, 2013 Legislative Committee Meeting (Pre Crossover)

April 17, 2013 Executive Committee Meeting @ 7:30am

April 24, 2013 Legislative Committee Meeting

April 25, 2013 WIC Committee Meeting (tentative)

May 15, 2013 BOD 2nd Quarter Meeting

May 22, 2013 Legislative Committee Meeting (Bill Tracking - Hearings)

May 27, 2013 Office Closed Memorial Day

June 21-24 RIFDA Annual Convention at the Red Jacket Resort Cape Cod South Yarmouth, MA

September 9, 2013 RIFDA Charity Golf Tournament Kirkbrae Country Club

September 11 or 18, 2013 Sen. Reed Business Leaders Day in Washington, DC

October 3, 2013 PAC Member Event

December 7, 2013 Annual Meeting & Holiday Gala

Welcome New Members

**Blount Fine Foods
RI Dairy Farms Cooperative**



Thank you

March Supplier of the Month

The Perfect Mixer



Voted Best Product Made in Rhode Island

www.autocrat.com/cart

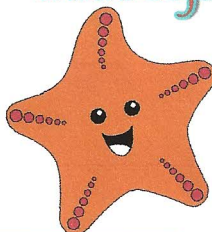
Save the Date Friday, June 21 - Monday,

Join the RI Food Dealers Association "on the Beach" at the

Red Jacket Beach Resort

1 South Shore Drive
South Yarmouth-Cape Cod, MA, 02664

www.redjacketresorts.com



Be on the look out... Special Offer coming soon!!



March 2013 Rhode Island Legislative Update (continuation)

It would require employers to run mandatory background checks and use only validated workers. This would, in theory, force illegal immigrants from the workforce and those jobs would be filled by legal employees. Although this type of legislation may have some merit it is unclear how efficient and expensive this could be for employers. During a time when the focus should be on making it easier for employers to hire it could add additional bureaucracy and costs to the process. H 5016 has also had a hearing and it was determined that this bill be held for further study.

A new bill that was formally introduced after our last legislative update that is a concern for all of us is a plastic bag ban (H 5402, Cimini). The association met with the sponsor prior to the bill filling in an attempt to have this held out – but with the various communities considering similar bans in their cities and towns and the strong backing this has from environmental groups it was inevitable that this would be introduced. This bill has not been scheduled for a hearing – but a companion bill was submitted on the Senate side (S 0404, Nesselbush). After recently meeting with a few leaders it would not seem that this bill has their backing. It is, however, another step forward for the proponents of a bag ban and not be going away anytime soon.

As reported last month we have seen introduced on the House side the 2013 session version of the beverage tax (H 5228). Similar to last year it would add a tax to distributors and bottlers of 1 cent per gallon (including mixes based on yield) to all sugared beverages. Unlike past bills this one is very specific as to where the revenue would go – basically to education type programs. There has not been a hearing on this and as of this writing there is no companion bill on the Senate side so this does not appear to in the forefront this session. **Please visit www.RIFDA for the complete update.**

RIFDA Trade Day 2013

The Annual RIFDA Trade Day continues to be a very popular event, despite the horrible weather the event was very successful. The events within the event went smoothly, they were welcoming, interesting, exciting, social and delicious. A big thank you to Bozzuto's Inc., C&S Wholesale Grocers and Stop & Shop for their major support. RIFDA would like to thank Jeff Antil, Bozzuto's Inc. for the great job he did with the Best Bagging Contest.

Industry Seminar

"Sustainability and the RI Food Industry"

Create a more sustainable world while working with partners to apply practical and useful systems to manage sustainability
thank you Peter Cooke, Manomet Center



Best Bagger Contest

The winner's are Catlin Richardson from Stop & Shop, 1st runner up Justin Gaffney, Brigido's Fresh Market and 3rd runner up Emily King, Dave's Fresh Marketplace.



Networking Legislative Cocktail, Dinner & Award Presentations



Major Event Sponsors



Welcome New Members "Info" Tables



Member Focused; Results Driven

Thank you
March Affiliate of the Month



metromedia energy

Simple Solutions. Powerful Results.

Helpful Industry Links

FMI National Legislative Update
<http://www.fmi.org/gr/>

RI Legislative Info
<http://www.rilin.state.us/genmenu>

RI Pending Bills & Calendar
<http://dirac.rilin.state.ri.us/billstatus>

RI News & Press Releases from
the House & Senate
<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/news/>

National Grocers Association
<http://www.nationalgrocers.org/>

RI WIC Program
<http://www.health.ri.gov/programs/wic/index.php>

Looking Forward

Encouraging new members to join is essential as well as increasing our member participation in our annual events. Invite potential members to join us at these events so we can showcase our association. New members and new ideas lead to greater funds. As well as an identifiable recognition that this association exists for the benefits of our members. Lets step above and beyond continuing the positive momentum of 2012. Membership is what will aid the RIFDA move into the future as a stronger and more vibrant representative of the RI Food Community. Please feel free to contact us at any time.