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NH Retail Association's 2018 Legislative Positions and Priorities

Retailers of all sizes operate on very slim margins, many times with a 3% or less profit margin. Any additional cost, whether through taxation or regulation, has the potential of affecting retail employment, particularly for New Hampshire's small, independent retailers.

Impediments to Hiring

Yes, this is a very broad area, but there are plenty of bills introduced for the 2018 session that fall under this category. Proposals that aim to protect and benefit employees may have the adverse effect of reducing employment, either by jobs or hours.

In particular, **scheduling requirements** would eliminate scheduling flexibility and force employers to deny last-minute time-off requests. This could result in lost hours and income for employees, ignores employees who choose retail for scheduling flexibility, and makes it impossible for retailers to adapt to changes. Notably, forced scheduling requirements would halt innovations in scheduling, for example apps that allow employees to see and ask for open shifts in real time, or making possible shift swapping between employees.

Government-stipulated reasons for dismissing an employee can only lead to a hesitancy to hire. New Hampshire already has anti-discrimination laws that prevent firing of employees based upon age, gender, race, religion, etc. But a statute that essentially prohibits dismissing employees doesn't recognize that business needs change, economies change, and markets change. We are unaware of any pattern of bad behavior on the part of employers and thus the New Hampshire Retail Association opposes changing New Hampshire's employment statutes in this fashion.

Another example is **one-size-fits-all benefits packages** that don't necessarily work for all businesses. The benefits offered to employees of businesses vary, depending on the resources of the employer, the type of employee the business is seeking and the input from employees. NH Retail Association members know that a benefit package must work for both employer and employee. Each employee has different needs and wants in a benefits package. A single person in their 20's may look for something different than does a married person in their 40s with three kids who might look for something different than an individual in their 60s with an empty nest. Requiring a benefit removes the flexibility which might be a detriment to some employees.

Product Responsibility

The NH Retail Association asks legislators to keep in mind that they sell what other people make. Making retailers "hold the bag" literally, by making them financially and physically responsible for items not allowed for sale is burdensome; retailers typically have very limited storage, and to make a retailer responsible for storage of items they cannot sell means less space for items they can sell, potentially inconveniencing customers. And any such requirement should apply equally to physical locations in New Hampshire as well as out-of-state businesses who arrange for delivery of product into New Hampshire. Also forcing retailers to collect fees to remit to an unregulated, unaudited third party is particularly onerous.