

Dear Representative Mihaly and Committee Members,

I am writing to share my perspective as the General Manager of a lakeside inn and restaurant in Vermont, which includes both indoor dining operations and a seasonal, open-air bar (our Pier Bar).

While I fully support the goal of keeping employees safe, I must express **strong opposition to this proposal as currently written**, as it does not reflect how hospitality operations function in real-world conditions.

About Our Operation:

Our business operates across multiple environments daily — including indoor dining rooms, kitchens, outdoor service areas, and an open-sided bar directly on the water. Staff regularly move between these areas depending on service needs, guest flow, and weather conditions.

Key Concerns:

- **Applies to Normal Vermont Conditions**
The proposed temperature thresholds (below 35°F and above 80°F) are not extreme — they are routine in Vermont. This would place constant regulatory pressure on day-to-day operations rather than addressing truly hazardous conditions.
- **Incompatibility with Open-Air Hospitality Spaces**
Our Pier Bar is intentionally designed as an open-air, waterfront experience. Requiring temperature control measures in such a space is not feasible and could **create unintended safety risks**. Attempting to enclose or artificially condition an open-sided structure could compromise airflow, structural integrity, and guest safety.
- **Significant and Costly Infrastructure Changes**
The bill would likely require **major kitchen and facility modifications** that are not practical within our existing footprint. These are not minor upgrades—they would involve substantial capital investment with unclear benefit to actual safety outcomes.
- **Kitchen Ventilation & Energy Impact**
Commercial kitchens rely on powerful hood exhaust systems that continuously pull air out of the building for safety and code compliance. This process also removes any cooled air almost immediately.
As a result, maintaining temperature thresholds such as those proposed would require **constant overcompensation from HVAC systems**, dramatically increasing energy consumption, operational costs, and reliance on fossil fuels. In practice, this requirement is not only inefficient but **environmentally counterproductive**.
- **Operational Impracticality**
Hospitality is dynamic. Staff move between environments constantly, and conditions change throughout a shift. Requirements based on fixed temperature thresholds, monitoring, and site-specific plans do not align with how service operations function in practice.

- **Burden on Small and Seasonal Businesses**

The administrative requirements—monitoring, documentation, training, and compliance—would add ongoing complexity and cost, particularly for seasonal businesses already operating on tight margins.

In its current form, this proposal risks placing **significant operational and financial strain** on Vermont businesses without meaningfully improving worker safety.

I respectfully urge the Committee to **reconsider this approach** and instead engage with employers across industries to develop guidance that is flexible, practical, and reflective of real working conditions.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how this proposal would impact hospitality operations like ours.

Sincerely,

Melissa Moore
General Manager
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