

Judiciary Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5431 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING COOPERATIVE CORPORATIONS.

Vote Date: 3/23/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/16/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

To better reflect the governance needs of cooperatives in Connecticut, this bill reduces the default quorum requirement for member meetings from a majority of votes to “those present,” aligning the requirement with the Connecticut Nonstock Corporation Act, adopting balloting provisions from the Nonstock Corporation Act to apply to cooperatives, and implements technical updates to clarify and modernize the Cooperative Act.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Anonymous 824: Testimony submitted without attribution was submitted in support of the bill because they believe that it will allow Fiddleheads Natural Foods to aid its customers and community by increasing its capacity to receive support, especially via the creation of additional member shares. They believe this will have a positive impact on food cooperatives throughout the state as well as the state overall.

Erbin Crowell, Neighboring Food Co-Op Association: He submitted testimony in support of the bill because of its improvements of statutes affecting cooperatives as well as the language clarifying a quorum of active members in a given vote of the membership. He suggested and provided additional changes to the bill that he believes will benefit cooperatives to a larger extent.

Kathleen Krider: She supports the bill because the targeted amendments will better reflect the governance needs of cooperatives throughout the state. She provided additional language changes to the bill.

Susan Phillips, Fiddleheads Food Cooperative: She supports the bill because it will allow the Fiddleheads Food Cooperative to expand their membership, which would allow their stores to grow; this would improve service for members and the community at-large.

Patricia Smith, Willimantic Food Co-op: She supports the bill because it will align the governance rules regarding cooperatives with the realities of said organizations. Regarding Willimantic Food Co-op, she said it will allow the organization to have the option of distributing patronage funds to members. Finally, the bill will encourage the formation of more cooperative businesses in the state by removing unnecessary barriers regarding the governance procedures of cooperative businesses.

Keisha Barclay, Fiddleheads Food Co-op: She supports the bill because it represents an important step toward allowing the Fiddleheads Food Co-op to accept new members. She believes that the bill will encourage the formation of more cooperatives throughout the state; this will support local farmers, keep money in local economies, and connect more communities with one another.

Peter Kirk: He expresses support for passage of the bill.

Adam LaFaci, Farmington River Food Co-op: He supports the bill because (1) it will make the formation of cooperatives easier, (2) it will allow for more flexible board governance, (3) it will modernize voting provisions, and (4) it will remove obsolete requirements regarding franchise taxes and other administrative provisions relevant to cooperatives.

Brad Sheridan, Fiddleheads Food Cooperative: He supports this bill because food cooperatives provide a community-based solution to solving food insecurity in Connecticut and this will support the growth of food cooperatives, which will in turn help alleviate food insecurity. He stated that this will allow the Fiddleheads Food Cooperative to accept new members, expanding the cooperative's reach.

Joanne Todd, Willimantic Food Co-op: She supports the bill because it makes modest but meaningful changes to Connecticut's regulations regarding cooperatives. She provided suggestions for updating the bill's language.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Oliver Thompson

Date: March 26, 2026