



The Retail REVIEW

Pictured: The iconic Williamsburg General Store, founded in 1876, has been owned and operated by the Majercik family for four decades. A longtime member of RAM, the general store is a must-see destination in Western Mass.



RETAILERS ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS

FOR RAM, GRAND BARGAIN WAS ABOUT COST MITIGATION; FUTURE CHALLENGES NEED BROADER BUSINESS COMMUNITY SUPPORT

by Jon Hurst, President

The Retail Review

July/August 2018

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The so-called “Grand Bargain” was signed into law in late June, and with its’ passage, three initiatives were kept off the November ballot. One question was RAM’s rollback of the sales tax; and the other two were the \$15 minimum wage and the paid family and medical leave payroll mandates.

Make no mistake about it—without the existence of RAM’s sales tax initiative, the political pressure to remove these two costly labor mandates from the ballot would never have occurred. The sales tax ballot initiative created the environment and the leverage to move closer to middle ground through compromise, rather than facing near certain voter passage of the labor initiatives. Neither the Legislature nor the advocates pressing the labor mandates wanted to see a sales tax rollback with a \$1 Billion price tag.

Many factors contributed to RAM’s decision to agree to pull our sales tax ballot initiative in exchange for the agreement. First, two major court decisions in June rendered our sales tax proposal a much tougher sell with voters. They included a MA SJC decision eliminating the so-called “Millionaires Tax” from the November ballot, and a U.S. Supreme Court decision on internet sales tax in the SD vs. Wayfair case. While both decisions were arguably good for our industry and the state, they also made the case for a sales tax cut more difficult without funding a multi-million dollar advertising campaign.

The more important factor leading us to the seek agreement was our ability to mitigate the effects of what would have been a near certain passage of the two payroll mandate initiatives through negotiations. More reasonable and less costly requirements, with longer phase-in periods were vital objectives. Movement to the public policy center on phasing out the antiquated, only in Massachusetts retail Sunday/holiday premium pay requirement; more affordable restaurant tip wages; no annual inflation increases and a slower phase-in of the minimum wage; a paid leave law which set fairer wage replacement rates and better distributed costs between employers and employees; and establishment of a permanent sales tax holiday as an important incentive for our consumers to invest their discretionary dollars in our local economy, all weighed in favor of striking a deal.

The reactions directed at RAM on the Grand Bargain ranged from support and appreciation to accusations from the “Left” and “Right” wings of the political spectrum. Some on the “Left” characterized the threat of our sales tax initiative as “extortion” and accused RAM of holding the Legislature “hostage.” Yet such political grandstanding ignored the fact that the special interests on the other side of the table had in previous years sponsored ballot initiatives for a \$11 minimum wage, and mandated paid sick leave; and in this election cycle were the sponsors of the \$15 minimum wage, the paid family and medical leave mandate, and the 4% income tax surcharge for those earning \$1 Million or more. We were hardly unreasonable in any way. Rather we took a page out of the playbook of the left wing advocates, and simply forced everyone to the table for an important discussion and a more reasonable, negotiated outcome.

Some reactions from the “Right” end of the political spectrum were also sharp, accusing RAM of being “Machiavellian” when we pulled the sales tax reduction measure from the ballot. Yet, we weighed the benefits of that tax rollback initiative—along with the decreased possibility of success at the ballot in light of the aforementioned court tax cases—with the reality of facing an economically disastrous one, two punch in the minimum wage and paid leave initiatives that we were destined to lose due to the lack of resources necessary to fight them.

In the end, we did what we thought was best for the future of our members. But even given the mitigation that we were able to obtain, there is no question there will be wide spread small employer pain and job loss due to dramatic payroll mandate increases. Many Main Street employers are both angry and fearful about the costs that lie ahead.

The “Grand Bargain” was a learning process. RAM and the larger employer community must now look forward. In August of 2019, the process will start again for ballot initiatives for November of 2020. Interest groups pushing these labor mandate ballot initiatives generally come from the public and health care union sectors, as well as from those political activist groups looking to move public policy agendas further and further to the left. These costly agendas would never pass in Congress; nor would they pass in the vast majorities of state legislatures.

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In short, they have found a formula through the ballot initiative process to pass their progressive agenda; with objectives of raising public union contract floors, as well as promoting liberal national political policies and progressive candidate elections. Ballot initiatives in Massachusetts and other more liberal states are proving to be their path of least resistance to advancing national political agendas.

Will they continue this pattern for the next election cycle? Some believe they won't stop until they are stopped. So who can stop them? Beacon Hill leaders certainly can. The same special interests have countless legislative, regulatory and contractual priorities, which could be put at risk if our elected officials, for the good of the Commonwealth, sent the message to these groups that they are simply being too greedy and in turn are putting our economy and small businesses at risk.

Short of that level of leadership from Beacon Hill, it falls to the collective business community to draw a line in the sand and agree to fight the costly agendas. It can come in the form of adequately funding and opposing the ballot measures—which can easily cost up to \$10 million per measure. Or they can also do what RAM did with the sales tax reduction, and file a measure which those special interests on the left end of the political spectrum won't like. Most likely the ballot measures designed to benefit taxpayers, either in the level of taxation, or in the manner of the expenditures of their tax dollars.

The RAM sales tax cut ballot initiative clearly showed that the existence of employer sponsored measures can help create a more level playing field for bargaining, and an incentive for competing special interests and Beacon Hill leadership to negotiate more affordable and moderate public policy. The entire business community must be more willing in the future to engage, invest, and lead to ensure common sense prevails, and that the Commonwealth remains attractive to employers of all types and sizes.

Welcome 51 New Members

420 Hartford Turnpike Marlborough	Crabby Joe's Bar & Grill Southwick	Lapels Hanover	Robin's Nest Winthrop
A to Z Lettering Pittsfield	Eastham Superette Eastham	Lapels Brighton	Rose & Dove Specialty Gift Shop North Andover
Allegra Print Image Marketing Franklin	Ed's Mini Mart Gloucester	Lively Kids Newburyport	Royal Motor Enterprises, Inc. Brockton
Backstage Bistro Manchester	Floral Fantasy by Ayers, Inc. Stoughton	Marblehead Collision LLC Marblehead	Subway Burlington
Binienda's Wholesale Florist, Inc. Worcester	Flowers and Festivities Scituate	Millis Collision, Inc. Millis	Swanton Street Diner LLC Winchester
Boathouse Restaurant South Hadley	French Bouquet Florist Worcester	Napa Auto Parts Northampton	The Barn Amesbury
Bread Euphoria, Inc. Haydenville	GoBerry LLC Northampton	New England Meat Market Peabody	The Garage Salem
C & C Auto Corporation North Andover	Great2bHome Southwick	One Up Games Plainville	The Smoke Shop Boston
Cerra's Market Saugus	Honey Dew Donuts Abington	Pedego Boston Belmont	Total Care Accident Repair Servicing Raynham
Chickadee LLC Boston	Honey Dew Donuts & Mr. Frank's Food Mart Norwood	Pion, Inc. Billerica	Union Street Bistro Easthampton
Coffey Ice Cream Marblehead	Jacquier Auctions, Inc. Southwick	Reasons to be Cheerful Concord	Waterfront Mary 1 LLC Webster
Conrad's Drive In, Inc. Lunenburg	Jaiden Auto, Inc. Newbury	Revival Cambridge	Woods Hole Market Woods Hole
Cooper Jewelers, Inc. Woburn	Krazy Jake's and KJ Catering Wilbraham	Rick's Auto Collision, Inc. Revere	

Proposed 2018 Ballot Initiatives vs. “Grand Bargain” (Chapter 121 of the Acts of 2018)

Issue	Ballot Initiative Proposals	“Grand Bargain” Legislation
Sales Tax Rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current rate 6.25% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 1/1/19, rate reduced to 5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change in rate, remains at 6.25%
Sales Tax Holiday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not in law, previous holidays established only as one-time events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent annual sales tax holiday weekend established in August, date set by July 15th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent annual sales tax holiday weekend established in August, date set by July 1st
Minimum Wage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently \$11 per hour • Not indexed to inflation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 1/1/19 - \$12.00 per hour • 1/1/20 - \$13.00 per hour • 1/1/21 - \$14.00 per hour • 1/1/22 - \$15.00 per hour • Then annually increased indexed to inflation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 1/1/19 - \$12.00 per hour • 1/1/20 - \$12.75 per hour • 1/1/21 - \$13.50 per hour • 1/1/22 - \$14.25 per hour • 1/1/23 - \$15.00 per hour • Not indexed
Sunday/Holiday Premium Pay Requirement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently time and one half (1.5 multiplier) pay required for most retail workers on Sundays/holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5X premium pay phased out • Effective 1/1/19 – 1.4 multiplier • 1/1/20 – 1.3 multiplier • 1/1/21 – 1.2 multiplier • 1/1/22 – 1.1 multiplier • 1/1/23 – repeal complete, no multiplier
Tip Credit for tipped employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently \$3.75 per hour • Not indexed to inflation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 1/1/19 - \$5.05 per hour • 1/1/20 - \$6.35 per hour • 1/1/21 - \$7.64 per hour • 1/1/22 - \$9.00 per hour • Then annually increased indexed to inflation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 1/1/19 - \$4.35 per hour • 1/1/20 - \$4.95 per hour • 1/1/21 - \$5.55 per hour • 1/1/22 - \$6.15 per hour • 1/1/23 - \$6.75 per hour • Not indexed

Grand Bargain Briefing for Small Business

RAM has partnered with the NFIB/ MA and local chambers around the state to provide an opportunity for small business owners to learn about what was included in the final “Grand Bargain” legislative package. This legislation bundled parts from three ballot questions slated for the November 2018 ballot: 1) \$15 Minimum Wage, 2) Paid Family and Medical Leave and 3) Sales Tax Rollback.

This is your opportunity to learn about the final package and how it will impact your business. Following the presentation, there will be time for questions on how best to prepare your business for the new law, some of which goes into effect on January 1, 2019.

Visit the RAM website at www.retailersma.org for dates and locations. Contact Andi Shea, RAM Membership Director to RSVP at 617.523.1900 or at ashea@retailersma.org.

Issue	Ballot Initiative Proposals	“Grand Bargain” Legislation
<p>Paid Family & Medical Leave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently no program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits: paid job protected leave to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Receive treatment for a serious medical condition ○ Bond with a newborn or newly adopted child ○ Care for family member with serious medical condition ○ Care for family member injured while serving in the armed forces ○ Handle matters arising from a family member’s active duty service in the armed forces or call for deployment • Duration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 16 weeks family leave ○ 26 weeks medical leave ○ 26 weeks aggregate/military • Wage Replacement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 90% of employee’s weekly wage up to cap ○ Weekly benefit capped at \$1,000 • Contributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Payroll tax of .63%, adjusted annually ○ Employers cover 50% of premium ○ No small business exemption • Employer Opt-Out: none • Effective Dates: January 1, 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits: paid, job protected leave to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Receive treatment for a serious medical condition ○ Bond with a newborn or newly adopted child ○ Care for family member with serious medical condition ○ Care for family member injured while serving in the armed forces ○ Handle matters arising from a family member’s active duty service in the armed forces or call for deployment • Duration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12 weeks family leave ○ 20 weeks medical leave ○ 26 weeks aggregate/military • Wage Replacement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 80% of employee’s wage up to 50% of the State Avg. Weekly Wage (\$669.03) ○ Then 50% of wages exceeding 50% of SAWW up to cap ○ Weekly benefit capped at \$850 • Contributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Payroll tax of .63%, adjusted annually ○ Employees cover 100% of family leave and 40% of medical leave contribution ○ Employers cover at least 60% for medical leave ○ Employers with less than 25 employees are not required to cover employer portion of contributions BUT are required to remit employee portion • Employer Opt-Out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business has option to provide private benefits program meeting requirements of the law. ○ Private plan must be certified by the state • Effective Dates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Leave: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For care of child: 1/1/21 ▪ For family member with serious health condition: 7/1/21 ○ Medical Leave: 1/1/21 ○ Military Family Leave: 1/1/21 <p>Collections begin 7/1/19</p>



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 Massachusetts



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MA Legislature Concludes 2017/18 Formal Session

The MA House of Representatives and Senate adjourned shortly after 1:00 AM on August 1st, concluding their formal business for the 2017-2018 legislative session. The Legislature will continue to meet in informal session until the end of the year, where typically only non-controversial matters are handled, as there are no roll call votes taken and the objection of any one member can block the further progress of any bill. While the last few days of the session saw action on hundreds of budget veto overrides, land takings and local bills, the Legislature also moved on a number of important, high profile issues, such as economic development and energy. Other big bills involving health care and education funding failed to garner a consensus prior to the end of session deadline. The following is a brief update on issues of interest to the retail industry that saw attention at the close of formal sessions.



H.4868, An Act relative to economic development in the commonwealth

Language establishing a 2018 Sales Tax Holiday was included in the final version of the Economic Development legislation, H.4868, which was one of the final bills to receive approval before the Legislature adjourned early in the morning on August 1st. The holiday weekend was held on August 11th and 12th. All RAM members who benefit from the holiday weekend are encouraged to thank their local legislators who voted in support of the holiday's passage.

The legislation also establishes new restrictions on the use of non-compete agreements in the Commonwealth, an issue the Legislature had struggled with over the past few sessions. The new law limits non-compete agreements to one year. Also included in the final bill were provisions to address the abusive practice of "patent trolling." Patent trolls file thousands of frivolous lawsuits based on false claims of patent infringement that entrap small businesses and try to force them into settling out of court to avoid a costly legal fight.

H.4857, An Act to Advance Clean Energy

A compromise energy bill was agreed to by the House and Senate in the final days that includes a call for utilities to increase their renewable portfolio standard, which governs the amount of clean energy they must purchase and integrate into the state's energy system. The standard will increase one percent by 2020, then by two percent each year until 2030, and then one percent annually thereafter.

The legislation also establishes an energy storage target, authorizes, but does not mandate, an additional procurement of 1,600 megawatts of offshore wind power, should the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) deem it feasible, and creates a "clean peak standard" for utilities, a first in the nation law intended to incentivize energy storage and deter the state's reliance on dirty sources of energy at times of peak usage. RAM was pleased that the costly Senate proposals calling for a carbon pricing system and a removal of the solar net metering cap were not included in the final bill.

H.4835, An Act promoting climate change adaptation, environmental and natural resource protection, and investment in recreational assets and opportunity

The \$2.4 billion Environmental Bond bill that passed at the end of the session was of interest to retailers primarily for what it did not include – a plastic bag ban. The final bill sent to the Governor dropped the Senate passed language that called for a ban on all plastic checkout bags. Under the Senate proposal, the only allowable options would have been recycled paper, or a reusable bag, which was defined as a sewn bag with stitched handles, made of cloth or other machine-washable fabric. With local bag ordinances in over 80 municipalities across the Commonwealth, this issue is not going away.

H.4806, An Act relative to consumer protection from security breaches

Legislation proposed in reaction to the 2017 Equifax data breach reached the Governor's desk for approval on July 25th. The legislation is designed to make it easier for consumers to monitor and protect their credit. Key provisions of the bill would (1) prohibit consumer reporting agencies from charging consumers fees for placing or removing a credit freeze, (2) require anyone pulling a consumer's credit report to first secure the consumer's consent and disclose to the consumer the reason for pulling the report—failure to do so is deemed an unfair practice under 93A, our consumer protection statute allowing for a private right of action and treble damages, and (3) require any company that experiences a data breach involving the disclosure of a consumer's social security number to provide free credit monitoring services for 18 months.

FY2019 State Budget – (H.4800)

Three and a half weeks into the new fiscal year, Governor Baker signed the Fiscal Year 2019 budget into law, authorizing a \$41.2 billion plan that does not raise taxes or fees. There were two positive inclusions in the budget for the retail industry. The first was language to delete all previous references in state law to "Real

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Time” sales tax collection with the repeal Sections 94, 95 and 142 of Chapter 47 of the Acts of 2017. This proposed theory was misguided from the start and we applaud this resolution.

The other budget provision of interest creates an EMAC Supplement Hardship Waiver, stating that the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) “shall develop and may approve a hardship waiver for an employer experiencing a financial hardship due to its liability under an increased (EMAC) contribution...” RAM will continue to work with the DUA as they prepare to issue regulations and guidance on how to implement this waiver application process.

Chapter 157 of the Acts of 2018, An Act Protecting Youth from the Health Risks of Tobacco and Nicotine Addiction

Chapter 157 of the Acts of 2018 is the new youth/tobacco prevention law. Signed by the Governor in July, the law is designed to reduce youth access to tobacco and nicotine products by increasing the purchase age of tobacco to 21, banning the sale of tobacco products in retail pharmacies and bringing vaping products within the existing legal framework regulating tobacco products.

The Legislature was unable to reach consensus on a number of high profile bills in play at the deadline which all failed to advance, including omnibus bills on health care financing, education funding reform, and community benefit districts. RAM and other employer groups opposed any additional assessments included the health care bills that would increase the overall cost of health care in the Commonwealth. We also remain committed to seeking reforms in the MassHealth program, where ballooning costs lead to the temporary EMAC Supplement assessment on employers.

Thousands of bills did not make it across the finish line by midnight on the 31st, many of them detrimental to the retail industry. We will continue to monitor them to ensure that none move during the informal sessions, but you can also expect most to be back next session.

(As this newsletter went to print, a number of the matters discussed below were still pending before the Governor, unless otherwise indicated – please check the RAM website for final actions.)

{ www.retailersma.org }

Legal Reminder: Massachusetts Pay Equity Act

The Massachusetts Pay Equity Act, which amends the state’s existing Equal Pay Act, went into effect July 1, 2018. Signed into law by Governor Baker as Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2016, the law is designed to ensure that employees receive equal pay for comparable work regardless of gender.

In general, the law provides that “no employer shall discriminate in any way on the basis of gender in the payment of wages, or pay any person in its employ a salary or wage rate less than the rates paid to its employees of a different gender for comparable work.” An intent to discriminate is not required to establish liability under the law.

The law provides that differentials in pay for “comparable work” may only be based upon a (1) system that rewards seniority, (2) a merit system, (3) a system measuring earnings by quantity or quality of production, sales or revenue, (4) geographic location, education, training or experience reasonably related to the job in question, or (5) travel.

The law also establishes a list of unlawful employment practices. Employers may not prohibit employees from discussing wages; employers may not seek information about a prospective employee’s prior wage or salary history until after offer of employment with compensation is made or information is voluntarily offered by candidate; employers may not take adverse action against employees exercising rights under the law. The law creates a private right of action and allows for the recovery of double damages, attorney’s fees and court cost for violations.

The law does however provide a safe harbor provision which affords employers a three year affirmative defense against any claims arising from this law if the employer conducts a self-audit to determine the existence of gender pay disparities. The audit must be conducted in good faith and reasonable efforts must be made to address any findings of inequity.

The Massachusetts Attorney General has issued Guidance Materials in the form of Frequently Asked Questions and a Pay Calculation Tool designed to assist employers in conducting a self-audit. Additional guidance from may be found on RAM’s website www.retailers.org.

In light of these changes, RAM strongly urges all members to review their current employment policies and procedures and to conduct a self-audit of their payroll to take advantage of the affirmative defense provided for in the law. Members should also consider contacting independent legal counsel to ensure compliance.

Credit card declined: The three most unpopular words for retailer and customer

By JOHN MAYLEBEN

When “credit card declined” pops up during a transaction, what do you do?

There are many reasons a card will fail to get a successful approval code. It is helpful to understand the transaction flow so that you can understand what didn't work correctly when you don't successfully complete a transaction.

The transaction starts when you “dip”, “tap”, “swipe” or “key” a transaction into your terminal, your smart phone or a desktop computer. Once you have completed the entry of the needed fields, the system reaches out to the “processor”, who determines which card association's brand (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or someone else) is on the card and they reach out to that organization. Once the transaction arrives at the card brand's server, they determine which bank (if appropriate) issued the card and hand the transaction off to that bank (the “issuer”).

Once an issuer receives a request for the transaction they review the “open to buy” (aka, credit limit) and determine if there are funds available to hold for the amount requested. If there are funds available AND if the transaction passes whatever anti-fraud rules that particular issuer is applying to the specific card, then they provide an approval code and that code flows back through the system to the terminal, where a receipt is printed for the consumer's signature.

All of this happens in the 3-5 seconds between the dip, tap, swipe or key and the successful printing of the receipt.

Obviously there are a lot of “single points of failure” that could interrupt the transaction and return an unsuccessful transaction response.

Before reviewing these situations, you, as a merchant need to make sure that you have appropriate responses for your staff. Your safety, the safety of your employees, and your customer's safety is the primary goal. When in doubt, simply hand the card back to the consumer and indicate that they will have to provide a different form of payment.

Signs of fraud

If a customer attempts to swipe a chip card and the terminal is set up for chip processing, they will be told to dip the card. In this case, if the card that they are presenting doesn't have a chip, you as the merchant should be very concerned whether this is a counterfeit card. The mag stripe fallback on a chip card is coded to alert the terminal that there should be a chip present. If someone has a card that says this and they don't have a chip on the card, there is strong possibility that the card was skimmed at another retail location and a counterfeit card has been made.

The time it takes for a transaction – from dipping or swiping the card to successful printing of the receipt – takes only three to five seconds. It's helpful to understand the transaction flow in case a card is declined.

If a chip card is dipped and the terminal is not able to read the chip, you may have a card that has been damaged. In this case, you need to attempt to dip the card two more times before the terminal initiates the “fallback” procedures. After three unsuccessful dip attempts, the terminal will prompt you to swipe the card. If this fails three times, then the terminal will ask you to key in the card number.

In the case of a fallback failure, you should make sure that the last four digits of the card number match what is printed on the receipt. This will help insure that a bad guy didn't damage a card and code the mag stripe with a different card number as a way of committing fraud.

If all of the fallback procedures fail and you are keying a card number, or you have a mag stripe-only card that has a damaged mag stripe, you need to complete the transaction as you normally would but also get (and complete) a manually imprinted transaction receipt. This is normally done via the old-fashioned “knuckle buster” and a carbonless sales draft. This step in the transaction process will allow you to prove you had the card in your possession at the time of the sale, thereby minimizing the opportunity for a chargeback.

After all of this, you as the merchant still need to make sure that your staff understands the various responses that the terminal provides at the end of the transaction process.

If you attempt to process a sale and it receives a decline code, normally it means that the credit limit for a credit card or the checking account balance for a signature debit card is not large enough to cover the amount of the transaction. It is rare that rerunning the transaction for the same amount will generate a different response.

A decline may also be given if the issuer thinks that the card is being used fraudulently. This might happen if the cardholder is spending more than they usually do or is shopping outside of normal travel patterns. A decline in this situation simply means that the issuer is declining the transaction in an abundance of caution.

Scams on the rise

One of the scams we see on the rise involves a Decline or a Pick Up Card message. In the case of a Pick Up Card message, the card issuer is alerting you that a transaction is being attempted on a card that

the issuer would like to retrieve. If a cardholder has had his or her card stolen, lost the card, or the issuing bank has closed the account, any attempt to process a transaction will generate the Pick Up Card message. If you can do it safely, you are asked to keep the card.

If this is not possible or especially if the cardholder demands the card back, by all means return it to the customer. If you are able to keep the card, once the cardholder leaves you should call your voice authorization center for directions on submitting the card to the appropriate card brand.

For a Decline or Pick Up Card message, the cardholder uses his or her cell phone (or convinces the sales clerk to make the call) to contact someone at the issuing bank. In reality, the cardholder has called a friend who is impersonating the bank.

The fake bank employee then walks the clerk through the process to do a force transaction and provides a fake authorization code.

The clerk thinks everything is okay ... until a couple of days later when the transaction is returned as unauthorized. By then the merchandise is gone and the store is out the money. This is why staff training on fraud is so important.

The best advice is NEVER call the number on the back of the card or let the cardholder call "the bank." Use your voice authorization center for that call. That way you can be sure you are speaking to a legitimate source for your information.

And if the cardholder talks to "their bank" and is told that it is a legitimate transaction, the proper way to handle it at the sales counter is to rerun the card through the terminal in an attempt to get an approval code.



John Mayleben CPP, is the Michigan Retailer's Association's Retailer's Processing Network (RPN) senior vice president technology and new product development and a national expert on electronic payment processing. He is the first person in Michigan and among the first in the nation to receive the Certified Payments Professional designation from the national Electronic Transactions Association.

Sign up for one year membership to RAM's credit card processing program sponsored by the Michigan Retailers Association's Retailer's Processing Network, the largest non-profit credit card processing service in America and receive a \$50 credit on your account.

All quotes are FREE! Also, receive \$100,000 of FREE Data Breach Insurance coverage!

Contact us at 877-726.6580 or email Joe Barnes at jbarnes@retailersma.org for information about our cost saving Credit Card Processing.



Creating and Maintaining a Safety Policy

A well-crafted safety policy is essential to any business, and this includes an annual review with updates, if necessary. As technology, workflow, and processes evolve, your workplace safety policy must be adapted to meet changing needs. However, having a safety policy isn't enough - once yours has been drafted, reviewed, and approved, it also must be shared with and accessible to every employee at any time. Your policies should be a major component to your new employee orientation process.

The key to maintaining a safe workplace is to encourage a culture of safety; impress upon your employees that safety must always be the highest priority. By providing specific policies, plans, and procedures for how to prevent and handle hazardous circumstances, you can keep your employees safer. They also need to understand that policies must be followed, and you can put protocol in place to make sure that happens.

To learn how to create and enforce a safety policy in your workplace visit www.coverisk.com/about/news/creating-and-maintaining-a-safety-policy.

This information has been sent to you by Cove Risk Services, administrator of RAM's workers' compensation group. Additional safety related information can be found on the Cove Risk Services website www.coverisk.com. These FREE resources are provided to members only as part of the Safety Awareness for Everyone (S.A.F.E) program.

Retailers Association of Massachusetts Offers Group Life Insurance Policies

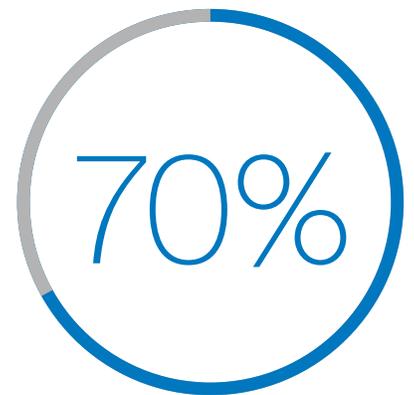
Effective October 1, 2018, Retailers Association of Massachusetts (RAM) is providing a \$10,000 group life insurance policy to all employees covered on RAM Blue Cross Blue Shield plans at no additional cost to you or your employees. This valuable benefit is offered in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and USABLE Life[®], an independent company that provides life insurance coverage

The Benefits of Group Life Insurance

Your employees devote their lives to providing for their families. But more than 20% of life insurance owners say they don't have enough coverage.¹ The financial stability of group life insurance gives employees assurance that their families will be protected, and is key to attracting and retaining top talent at your organization.

Healthier Employees and Better Bottom Lines

Since 2012, we've helped more than 4,800 RAM employees live healthier lives with health care plans that fit business and employee needs. Our plans cover annual preventive care, like well visits and immunizations, and feature programs that encourage employees to be active in managing their health, which helps you better manage costs.



of consumers say they need life insurance, yet only 59% own life insurance.

Questions?

Contact Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts inside sales at **1-888-723-4840** or **insidesales@bcbsma.com**.

Join Us for RAM's 100th Annual Board of Directors Meeting and Celebratory Reception

Thursday, November 15

Annual Board Meeting

12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

100 Year Anniversary Reception

4:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Omni Parker House,

60 School Street, Boston

Following the annual Board of Directors meeting, we will be hosting a special reception to celebrate RAM's 100 year anniversary. The reception will include a retail panel discussion, remarks by state officials and a video commemorating our past 100 years and a look to our future.

Members are invited to attend both the annual meeting and the reception that will take place in Boston at the Omni Parker House. Watch for more information on the agenda and how to register.

For RAM Members ONLY
ConnectPay is offering:

**ONE FREE
MONTH OF
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*when you sign up by August 31.

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*Approved by Mass Retail Workers' Compensation Group

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Hundreds of RAM members are saving on their health insurance premiums and taking advantage of additional money saving benefits by enrolling in coverage through the RAM Health Insurance Cooperative (RAMHIC).

RAMHIC offers a variety of plan options from Fallon Health and Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA (BCBSMA). All plans offered come with a 1% upfront premium discount and cooperative membership provides members with access to additional cost saving options not available in the open market.

To start taking advantage of these cost saving options members may contact their broker or our providers directly to request a quote.

RAM also works with Met Life for Dental and Vision. For more information, please call Ann Dickey at 800-456-8715.

For more information regarding these offerings as well as additional ancillary benefits please visit our webpage at

www.retailersma.org/
RAMHIC

or contact RAM's Insurance & Human Resources Director, Larry Mulrey, at (617) 523-1900 ext. 180.

