



PO Box 633
Saunderstown, RI 02874
401-932-4667

May 25, 2021

Chairman Bennett and Members
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: House Bill 6281 – Management of Invasive Plants

Dear Chairman Bennett and members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

The RI Land Trust Council supports H 6281 and respectfully requests your approval.

This legislation gives RI Department of Environmental Management the authority to manage invasive plants in Rhode Island as they are managed in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

When Rhode Island's land trusts and other non-profit conservation organizations conserve properties, they are responsible for stewardship to protect the habitats and other conservation values of those properties. One of their most challenging stewardship issues is managing invasive species so that they do not push out our native plants and degrade wildlife habitat. Land trusts, other landowners and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service spend hundreds of thousands of dollars and many hours pulling out and otherwise managing invasive plants.

Connecticut and Massachusetts have laws and programs to prevent the propagation and sale of invasive plants. The absence of this legislation in Rhode Island creates a gap in the management of these pests and allows propagation and sale while the state and federal agencies and land trusts invest many hours and dollars trying to manage their growth and prevent expansion of their populations to the detriment of native plants and animals and their habitats.

We thank Representative Serpa for sponsoring this legislation and strongly encourage your approval.

Rupert Friday

Director

Rhode Island Land Trust Council is a coalition of over 45 land trusts throughout the state that are working to protect the open space and special places that define the character of our communities.