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Committee Members-

H5469 is a bill which will exacerbate the problems on the coast not solve them. Instead of one constant line to demarc where coastal walkers can be, this bill uses a line which will be different twice a day and drastically different from week to week. As a member and past Chair of the Portsmouth Harbor Commission I can tell you that it will make resolving disputes (which we do weekly during the summer) virtually impossible. We use the CRMC map of the coast line to great effect in solving these disputes. Once people know the line (which can easily be judged from satellite picture reference points) everyone knows where the line is and only someone intent on ignoring the law is a problem.

Furthermore when storms or high winds create waves, the dislodged seaweed make wrack lines which are 50 feet or more from the any high tide line. Many people, including Rep Cortvriend when she testified before you earlier, mistake that as a recent high tide line. This bill needs to address that appearance in order to be clear.

Finally, this bill needs to address liability issues. If a coastal walker is hurt on private land, the present law requires permission by the land owner (not the RI Legislature) to be given to the potential trespassers in order to avoid liability if he is hurt on private property. In the case of this bill the property owner would not even know the trespasser is there.

For the above reasons, please do not vote for this flawed legislation as written.

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