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Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2026 4:13 PM
To: House Corporations Committee
Subject: Bill H7334

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Dear House Corporations Committee,

I am writing to you to emphatically request your support of House Bill 7734, which would protect parrots and reduce the strain on overburdened animal rescue organizations throughout our state.

Ten years ago, I did not have a comprehensive understanding of the complex social, physical and emotional needs of parrots. I may have had empathy for breeders and pet stores arguing that their sales were required to help animals find a home and keep local businesses operational.

However, since 2017 I have worked directly with both of Rhode Island's parrot rescue organizations, RI Parrot Rescue and Foster Parrots, become a bird guardian myself, and helped run adoption education programs.

I have been the recipient of frantic texts and emails asking for emergency rehoming of birds, or and seen people express buyers' remorse within days of purchasing even the most quiet cockatiel or conure from the pet store.

The intellect, social skills, and beauty of parrots make them alluring to humans. This also makes them highly valuable to breeders, who can charge varied prices based on the "rarity" of the bird. Practices like hand-feeding birds are used to promote more "desirable" companions, and assure buyers that these efforts result in a more "family-friendly" companion. Limited education on natural, wild behaviors is provided.

Unfortunately, parrots truly belong in the wild - so even breeders who provide comprehensive education are likely to have unhappy customers within months or years of the sale as the reality of having a highly vocal, destructive and complex pet kick in.

For example: did you know cockatoos have a call that can be heard from 5 miles away? Or that a small conure can cause permanent hearing loss if they vocalize too close to your eardrum? That if you pet a bird's back, you're indicating that you want to be their mate, and they may attack other family members out of jealousy. People with underlying respiratory issues may even develop "bird keep's lung," forcing them to rehome their parrots for their own survival.

In a vacuum, this could be addressed through rehoming programs. Unfortunately, breeders use the breeding season to encourage the laying of as many eggs as possible. Parrots rehomed or sold by organizations may even boast about how many eggs a bird will lay in a year.

Each new hatchling has the chance to live 8-80+ years depending on their breed. This means that even a well-intentioned, educated owner is likely to be outlived by their macaw, African Grey, Cockatoo or Amazon. Heck, I adopted birds older than me 5 years ago at the age of 30 - and I'm likely to be in my 60s when they pass.

I've heard opponents of this bill mention the detriment this could do to business and to families, preventing children from the joy of avian companionship and helping line the pockets of rescues while harming businesses.

Anyone who has been to a local animal shelter or bird rescue knows this isn't true - the vetting of an individual bird without health issues runs \$300 on the low end. Foster Parrots has a \$200 adoption fee, and runs primarily through volunteer work. This means they take a financial loss on each parrot rehomed, which they make up for through extensive fundraising.

A child can still have a loving 20+ year relationship with a rescued bird visited at a pet store; but what this bill prevents is an influx of abandoned parrots in parks, threats to euthanize an animal if a shelter can't make room, and a lack of understanding about what it takes to successfully bring a bird into the home environment.

Since learning about the parrot trade, I have seen every form of failed home integration a parrot can have. I have also watched breeders who promised to take birds back if their home wasn't a fit suddenly stop answering the phone for adopters once the check clears.

Foster parrots received 700+ surrender requests last year alone, and only had the room for around 100 birds to come into our program. We had less than 100 adoptions. The "supply" of these living creatures is outpacing the demand, and we need to act now.

This bill does not require a financial lift from the state, and allows the non-profit organizations assisting in these efforts to get some relief. If not for the sake of animal rights, this should be passed to prevent an increasingly untenable situation down the road.

Respectfully,
Ashley Nutini
Cranston Resident