



Organization of Professional Aviculturists

February 10, 2026

Via Electronic Mail

Chair and Members
House Committee on Corporations
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: Opposition to H 7334 (2026) – Parrot Sale Restrictions

To the Honorable Members of the Rhode Island General Assembly:

The Organization of Professional Aviculturists (OPA) respectfully opposes H 7334 (2026), which would prohibit pet stores from selling parrots sourced from breeders or brokers while allowing transfers only through animal care facilities and rescue organizations. Although presented as an animal welfare measure, the bill functions as a retail sales ban without evidence of a corresponding welfare crisis or regulatory failure.

If enacted, H 7334 would eliminate the sale of responsibly bred parrots in transparent, regulated retail settings, affecting commonly kept companion birds such as parakeets, cockatiels, lovebirds, parrots, macaws, and cockatoos. Rather than improving welfare, the bill risks shifting transactions into less transparent channels and increasing reliance on largely unregulated rescue operations..

Make no mistake: measures of this kind are part of a broader effort to eliminate the keeping of pet birds in the United States and, ultimately, restrict the commercial availability of companion animals more broadly. That is government overreach unsupported by demonstrated public demand. Americans value their pets and do not want to see them regulated out of their lives.

Jurisdictions that have adopted similar retail sales bans have not experienced meaningful reductions in animal sales or surrenders. Instead, activity moves online or to less accountable intermediaries, reducing oversight rather than strengthening it. Rhode Island does not face a documented crisis of pet bird overpopulation or systemic enforcement failure. A categorical retail ban is neither targeted nor evidence-based.



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1) No Demonstrated Welfare Problem and Limited Rescue Capacity

H 7334 rests on the assumption that parrots sold through pet stores present heightened welfare risks. The bill cites no data, enforcement history, or documented pattern of harm to support that claim. Parrots sold through Rhode Island pet stores are overwhelmingly captive-bred and subject to existing federal and state oversight, including animal cruelty statutes, consumer protection laws, and, where applicable, the Animal Welfare Act and USDA inspection requirements. Existing law already provides mechanisms to address neglect, misrepresentation, or improper care. A categorical ban is neither targeted nor evidence-based.

The practical effect of the bill is further undermined by the limited capacity and restrictive practices of the rescue organizations supporting it. Foster Parrots, Ltd., one of the organizations named in the bill, listed only ten birds available for adoption on its website at the time this legislation was introduced, several of which were already pending placement. Rhode Island Parrot Rescue does not disclose how many birds it has available and maintains a highly restrictive adoption process.

According to its published policies, Rhode Island Parrot Rescue does not ship birds, limits placements primarily to the New England region, requires multiple in-person visits, prohibits placements with renters or homeowners who share walls, imposes minimum age requirements, prohibits placements as gifts, restricts households anticipating life changes, requires waiting periods between adoptions, and imposes additional volunteer requirements for certain species. These criteria exclude many otherwise capable and responsible adopters, including those outside the region.

Taken together, these facts raise a fundamental question. Is this the profile of organizations overwhelmed by an excess of unwanted parrots, or of organizations seeking to restrict lawful pet ownership and consolidate control over parrot placement?

These organizations are simply not positioned to meet existing consumer demand. OPA-affiliated breeders consistently observe that demand for companion parrots exceeds the limited supply available through rescues or otherwise. Eliminating lawful retail sales does not eliminate that demand. It shifts it.



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Reputable breeders and bird shops also provide ongoing support and frequently accept birds back if an owner cannot continue care. That practice reduces abandonment and surrender pressures. It is not consistently available in informal or online transactions.

2) Public Oversight and Transparency

Pet stores operate in a manner that allows for continuous public visibility and informal oversight. They are open during regular business hours, allowing consumers, veterinarians, advocates, and regulators to observe animal conditions, husbandry practices, and staff interactions in real time. This open-access model provides ongoing transparency and creates natural accountability through public exposure and routine observation.

By contrast, private rescue organizations operate with more limited public access. Rhode Island Parrot Rescue is open by appointment only, and Foster Parrots, Ltd. does not permit general public visits. Access to facilities is therefore controlled and selective rather than continuous and publicly observable. From an oversight standpoint, retail establishments provide greater transparency because their operations are visible to anyone who walks through the door during normal business hours.

Restricting lawful sales to entities that are less publicly accessible does not increase accountability. It reduces the opportunity for independent observation by consumers, professionals, and regulators, and substitutes a controlled-access model for an open and transparent one. Public visibility is a practical and meaningful component of animal welfare oversight, and H 7334 would diminish rather than strengthen that safeguard.

3) Expertise and Welfare Support Provided by Pet Stores

Owners and staff of specialty bird shops are typically knowledgeable about the species in their care. They routinely provide education to prospective owners regarding housing, nutrition, enrichment, veterinary needs, and long-term responsibilities. That point-of-sale education matters, particularly with complex species such as parrots.



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H 7334 increases the likelihood that consumers will turn to online or less formal sales channels where this guidance is absent. Those channels are more likely to result in uninformed ownership and avoidable placement problems.

4) Improper Delegation and Structural Governance Concerns

H 7334 also raises significant delegation concerns by creating an advisory committee composed exclusively of representatives from Foster Parrots, Ltd. and Rhode Island Parrot Rescue. The committee is tasked with assisting pet stores in compliance and confirming that parrots are no longer being sold at retail establishments.

This structure assigns a compliance-related role to private advocacy organizations that publicly support the elimination of retail parrot sales. The bill provides no neutral standards for how compliance confirmation is to occur, no balanced representation, and no procedural safeguards.

Even if labeled advisory, the committee's role creates the appearance of privatized oversight. Delegating enforcement-adjacent functions to entities with a direct policy interest in the outcome raises fairness concerns and undermines confidence in neutral administration. Decisions of this magnitude should remain within accountable public institutions subject to established procedural protections.

Conclusion

H 7334 is not a narrowly tailored animal welfare reform. It is a broad restructuring of a lawful and visible marketplace without evidence of systemic harm. The bill would reduce transparency, shift transactions into less accountable channels, privilege private advocacy organizations in the administration of state law, and limit consumer access without addressing a demonstrated crisis.

Rhode Island does not face a parrot overpopulation emergency. It does not face a documented failure of existing enforcement mechanisms. What it faces is a proposal that overreaches in search of a problem.

For these reasons, the Organization of Professional Aviculturists respectfully urges the General Assembly to reject H 7334.



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Respectfully submitted,
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Who is OPA

OPA is a registered 501(c)(6) non-profit national advocacy group protecting Americans' freedom to responsibly keep and breed birds. Our membership includes pet owners, breeders, scientists, veterinarians, and educators with a passion of our feather companions.

Please do not hesitate to contact OPA with any questions or requests for additional information. We stand ready to assist in any way we can.