



Epic Renewal
support@epicrenewal.org
23 Acorn Street, Unit 11C
Providence RI 02903

Dear Chairman McNamara and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Tess Feigenbaum, I'm a Pawtucket resident, and as co-founder of Epic Renewal, I urge you to support HB7342.

This bill represents a critical step in transforming Rhode Island's food system and addressing key environmental and social challenges. By requiring both school districts and food service companies to report on their compliance, HB7342 will ensure accountability and equitable access to composting and food recovery programs in schools.

RI schools discard over 300 tons of perfectly healthy, edible food every year - instead of providing food to our students in need, they're creating the emissions equivalent of 45.4 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year. This bill is crucial to reduce food insecurity by repurposing unused food, which is a key priority for our organization.

Furthermore, HB7342 moves from encouraging to requiring food service companies to compost food waste in all schools and necessitates that 10% of their vendors be Rhode Island-based, unlocking localized economic and environmental benefits. Composting extends the life of our landfill, reduces potent methane emissions, builds healthy soils for our agriculture, and allows for inclusive local job creation.

HB7342 is an all-around win: it strengthens compliance, diverts a resource from the waste stream, reduces food insecurity, and helps build a stronger, more sustainable food system that ensures no person goes hungry.

Sincerely,

Tess Feigenbaum
Pawtucket, RI