

Dear Environmental and Natural Resources Committee Members,

*This letter is to inform you of my **strong support** of bill number H. 5037. Oyster farms that hug the coast do so at the expense of public use and access to the water. Placing these oyster farms 1000 feet from the coast would preserve water activities such as fishing, swimming and kayaking for the public.*

In addition, landowners have paid handsomely for property along the Sakonnet and continue to pay large property taxes annually. These are taxes that support the state and town with no impact on public enjoyment of our coastal waters.

Having oyster farms close to shore diminishes property values and lowers the desirability of the area for residents and tourists that travel here for water activities. It diminishes Rhodes Island's best calling card – our coastline. We are, after all the Ocean State.

*Patricia Garber
101 Long Pasture Way
Tiverton, RI
02878
401 816 0072*