

H 7618

Dear Committee members, I am writing in opposition to H 7618, the Forestry and Forest Parity Act, which would make it more profitable to log forests in Rhode Island, including clearcutting forests for solar and other land development, as well as clearcutting forests on state-owned land.

H 7618 would remove the use and sales tax for forest product operational equipment including chainsaws, logging trucks, tree chippers, mulch grinders, chip screeners, sawdust blowers, conveyors, power generators , firewood processors, log skidders, wood splitters, disc cleaners, tumblers, shaving mills, loaders, forklifts, firewood kilns, pallet kilns, lumber kilns, sawdust dryers, forwarders, sawmills, resaws, edgers, planers, debarkers, live log decks, green chains, tractors, winches, tree harvesters, feller bunchers, log loaders, slashers, delimiters, grapples, bucket trucks, tree cranes, and stump grinders.

All of this forest product operational equipment is currently used for, and will continue to be used, for clearcutting forests in Rhode Island.

H 7618 would also expand the zoning of where logging can take place in Rhode Island to all zoning districts which includes clearcutting.

This bill will subsidize the timber industry at the cost of incentivising increased logging of our state's dwindling natural forests leading to deforestation as well as biodiversity loss, an increase in invasive species, water and soil degradation, a more fire prone landscape, and would release most of the stored carbon in our forests into the atmosphere as air pollution contributing to Climate Change.

Please oppose this un-environmental bill which could devastate Rhode Island's forests if it is passed.

H 7728

Dear Committee members, I am writing in opposition to H 7728, the Comprehensive Fire Safety Act, which could endanger private landowners living near forests rather than making them safe.

This bill would mandate all private landowners who own 500 or more acres of land in the state, including conservation organizations, to create a forest management plan for the alleged purpose of fire mitigation to be approved by DEM.

The vague language in H 7728 opens this bill up to any dangerous forestry practice currently being used for fire mitigation in Rhode Island.

Since DEM's fire mitigation plans almost always include logging and prescribed burning, if this bill is passed, it could force all private landowners who own 500 or more acres of land to log and burn their forests which creates a fire hazard since logging contributes to wildfires due to the flammable wood slash left behind after the logging operation, the underbrush that grows soon after due to the removal of the tree canopy, and the drier forest conditions from the tree canopy removal which also exposes the area to wind.

Prescribed burning can get out of control leading to a massive wildfire.

Please oppose H 7728 which could force private landowners to use bad forest management practices for fire mitigation on their land creating a fire hazard in the process.

H 7729

Dear Committee members, I am writing in opposition to H 7729, which would define Agricultural Land for DEM in RI General Laws 2-1-22 as "land used for forestry or timber production," and would remove the definition of farmer from this statute. The agricultural functions of the Department of Environmental Management shouldn't include the logging of natural forests. Logging of native, natural forests is not agriculture. By defining forestry and timber production as agricultural land instead of traditional farms where vegetables and fruit are grown, and animals graze, is not fair to farmers.

Please oppose H 7729 which is clearly just a bill to support the timber industry at the expense of our natural forests and does nothing for farmers.