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Re: Support for House Bill 7783

Dear distinguished members of the Rhode Island House of Representatives,

As a resident of East Providence, I'm writing today to express my support for H-7783 to ban second generation anticoagulation rodenticides (SGARs), which science has proven to be incredibly toxic to non-target wildlife, pets and even children. If you take one thing away from my letter, let it be this:

Even when SGARs are used as directed, any bird, wildlife or pet that eats enough poisoned rodents will also die.

I learned about the dangers of SGARs when our Bowen Court condo association quietly placed 36 rodent bait stations on our property, which abuts the woods adjacent to Little Neck Cemetery and Bullock Cove. Our neighborhood is home to abundant wildlife, including great horned and barred owls, hawks, peregrine falcons, blue herons, great egrets, coyotes, fox and many other song birds and mammals.

As a mother to a young child who loves to explore, and an environmental advocate who is passionate about helping people connect to nature, I was sick to my stomach when I learned about the toxic nature of these pesticides. A simple Google search reveals the truth:

- 100% of red-tailed hawks tested at Tufts Wildlife Clinic were exposed to anticoagulant rodenticides
- 75% of barred owls, great horned owls and red-shouldered hawks tested in the U.S. contained anticoagulants rodenticides

How does this happen? **Once ingesting SGARs, it takes up to a week for a rodent to die, and during that time they become slow and weak, and easy targets for predators.**

Rhode Islanders are not being fully informed about the dangers of SGARs. Pest control companies are being told by manufacturers that SGARs are safe because they're placed in boxes that are child and pet proof. However, there's no discussion about the effect on predators who eat the poisoned rodents. if you look at every SGAR manufacturer's website, you'll find this info buried in their safety sheets:

Rodent poison is toxic to mammals, including domesticated animals, and birds if ingested. Exposure of non-target animals should be prevented.

Here's one example of poor communication: Budget Pest Control, hired by Peregrine Property Management, installed the rodent bait stations at my condo community. When asked about the toxicity to pets, Budget shared data from the manufacturer that cited studies published in 1979 and 1984 that could not be found online, even by the Clinical Assistant Professor/Veterinary Toxicologist I consulted from Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. This means that **Rhode Island pest control companies are using these poisons without fully understanding their impact. And they're also recommending them for Rhode Islanders as a one-size-fits-all solution**, even when safer and more effective options are available. Why did a property management and pest control company recommend that a condo community with 69 units install **outdoor** bait station when only 4 residents (5.79%) had an issue with a **few indoor mice**? This same property manager will support the 62,000-square-foot community center being built in East Providence—will they also pepper the area with this poison?

Rhode Island deserves better. Have we learned nothing from the effects of DDT? Do we once again wait until the birds stop singing? **Safer, more humane alternatives exist.** Please look at the science, talk to the experts, and vote to support H-7783 to ban SGARs across Rhode Island.*

Thank you,
Holly L. Jensen & Stella R. Jensen, age 6

*Research cited was provided or confirmed with experts in Rhode Island and across the country (ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, Cornell Wildlife Health Lab, Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory).