

Subject: written testimony of support for H 7783

Dear Rep. Rebecca Kisiak,

My name is Linda Gardrel and I live in South Kingstown, RI

I am writing to express my support for H 7783 which would ban second generation anticoagulation rodenticides in Rhode Island and hope that the Environment and Natural Resources Committee approve this bill. And I thank you for your support of this bill.

I am writing to indicate my support for this ban on ARs as I, a birdwatcher and nature lover, have learned of the death of a barn owl on Block Island due to these rodenticides. I know people on the island with farms and animals use these poisons to rid barns of mice and rats and I understand their need to eradicate these animal pests. However, as collateral damage, these rodenticides kill innocent animals and birds, such as the barn owl I would take the ferry out to see from the beaches of Clay Head. It was always a thrill to see its heart shaped face in the burrow below the cliff. Barn owls have a difficult enough time trying to survive due to decreasing farms and dilapidated buildings being removed in the interest of progress and new development, as well as a decreasing food supply. And barn owls are only one species of bird this poison effects. Many other raptors and small mammals are also affected as unintended victims. And ultimately, I, as a birdwatcher am affected as well for now it is almost impossible to see a barn owl in the state.

Rodenticides have been proven to have negative impacts on local wildlife as well as degrading water, soil and plant health, and reducing local and regional biodiversity. In this era of greening America, these poisons do the opposite and contribute to poor water and soil health impacting the food we eat and ground water. Science has contributed safer, more sustainable methods of rodent control than these poisons and it is these methods that should be adopted. We have a great resource in higher education, namely University of Rhode Island's College of Environment and Life Sciences and would be a great partner with DEM, CRMC, and Audubon of Rhode Island. Safer practices and products should be adopted to halt the death of innocent birds and wildlife as well as provide a cleaner and safer environment for all. Isn't that the goal of conservation efforts across the state? Let's make this a giant step forward to accomplish this goal by banning anticoagulation rodenticides in Rhode Island.

Therefore, I urge the council to support H 7783 to ban second generation anticoagulant rodenticides in Rhode Island. I appreciate you hearing my concerns and hope the bill passes as we need to speak up for those animals who are at risk and cannot speak for themselves.

Sincerely,
Linda Gardrel