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WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS ASSOCIATION OF RHODE ISLAND D.B.A. WILDLIFE CLINIC OF RHODE ISLAND

Date: April 4, 2024

House Bill 7562

Referred to House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Deletes subsection (b) of this section which lists the furbearing mammals in the state and requires DEM to promulgate by rule, a list of "furbearers" for this chapter.

Submitted by:

Arianna Mouradjian, Operations Director for WRARI and the Wildlife Clinic of Rhode Island.

Distinguished Members of the Committee,

We submit this testimony in opposition to Bill 7562 which proposes to delete subsection (b) of RIGL S 20-16-1 for the following reasons:

1. RI DEM acts as an agent of the State and is entrusted with the management of the listed protected species *on behalf of the people of Rhode Island*. Removing these species from protected status as a matter of statute materially alters the protections that should be afforded to them, and that could be afforded to them under the alternative regulatory scheme being proposed.
2. The current language of the statute does not prohibit RI DEM from enacting rules and regulations concerning the hunting and management of these species and so any change to this statute should be viewed critically.

We appreciate the Committee's time and efforts, and encourage you to oppose the enactment of this legislation.