

Testimony in support of H5294: Old Growth Forest Protection Act; Date of Hearing: February 27, 2025

Barbara Walsh, 62 Frederick Street, Warwick, RI 02888

To Chair Bennett and the honorable Members of the House Environment and Natural

Resources Committee:

I ask that you support and finally pass this bill. It has been introduced for several years and though it may contain a lot of what sounds like complex issues, I believe the importance of this bill comes down to two major points. First, it is estimated that only 1% of old growth trees remain in our forests. These are unique ecosystems providing for very specialized creatures and plants who rely upon them for their very survival. They are reminders to us that living organisms can survive many years if we don't destroy them, so shouldn't we be protecting the 1% that remain of these survivors? Second, I do not believe there is adequate mapping of where threatened or endangered species live or where the migratory routes of birds are. They may indeed exist within old growth forests areas. It makes no sense to allow logging, clear cutting, or any destruction of the old growth without knowing what habitats are necessary for their protection. These two points are sufficiently adequate to justify the passage of this bill. If we do not protect the old growth it is a moot point to proclaim the need to protect any species.

Barbara Walsh
62 Frederick Street
Warwick, RI 02888