

**Lou Mansolillo**

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**From:** Masino, Susan A. <Susan.Masino@trincoll.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 27, 2025 3:12 PM  
**To:** House Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
**Subject:** support for H 5294, the Old Growth Forest Protection Act.

To Rhode Island Legislators,

Please accept this as my strong support for protecting old and old-growth forests in Rhode Island. This is for many reasons, including that nature and people need places they can count on. This is not against anything or anyone – it is for everyone.

Right now only 20 acres in Rhode Island has an explicit intent as a nature preserve. This is untenable.

Rhode Island is beautiful, and historic, and needs more than 20 acres of land that is not open to farming, forestry, or other types of land manipulation or development.

I am a co-author on multiple papers and reports supporting this position, but this is also basic common sense.

Please heed a “first do no harm” position, not the special interests. Give some areas an approach where they are managed only “As needed” and allowed to be or become old-growth.

There is so much we don’t know about nature – we need to give natural systems room to breathe, and these areas to see our natural heritage should be public places for everyone.

Respectfully,

Susan A. Masino, PhD.  
Vernon D. Roosa Professor of Applied Science  
Trinity College