

February 27, 2025

Representative David A. Bennett
Chair, House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02908

Re: The Nature Conservancy Supports H 5340 on Artificial Turf Chain of Custody

The Nature Conservancy supports House Bill 5340, which would reporting of the chain of custody of artificial turf installed in Rhode Island. We thank Representatives Boylan, Cortvriend, Fogarty, Carson, Kislak, McGaw, Speakman, Spears, Bennett, and Handy for sponsoring it.

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Here in Rhode Island, The Nature Conservancy protects more than 14,000 acres of land and has partnered on the permanent conservation of more than 35,000 acres.

Plastics are a growing pollution issue across Rhode Island, both regarding plastic trash and microplastics that are present in our waterways, bodies, and environment. The University of Rhode Island recently did a study of microplastics present in Narragansett Bay. The study found around 1,000 tons of microplastics in the top 2 inches of bottom sediment in the Bay, with higher levels in the upper Bay near the urban centers. TNC marine scientists study the fish populations in the upper Bay and the important role it plays for the marine life of the larger Bay. Microplastics are both a global and local issue, impacting human health, marine ecosystems, and quality of life in Rhode Island.

House Bill 5340 would require a chain of custody of artificial turf products installed in Rhode Island, giving the state insight into where sources of microplastics are located, and how it is handled when they are no longer in service. As a science-based, data-driven organization, The Nature Conservancy deeply understands the role of data in decision-making and how this is a first step in mitigating a source of plastic pollution. We respectfully request this bill moves forward.

Sincerely,



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