

Lou Mansolillo

From: J. Eric Scherer <j.eric.scherer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 11:41 AM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: SUPPORT FOR HB 5342

Dear Mr. Mansolillo:

Dear House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Rep. Chippendale's bill, HB5342, which would allow the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to recycle money that is collected from our farming community back to our farming community.

I have worked supporting the Rhode Island agricultural community for over 25 years as a professional in both private and public sector capacities. Agriculture is the second leading industry in Rhode Island behind tourism and it does not get the support it needs by the State of Rhode Island - we have seen funding of staff and programs at the state reduced over and over again.

Our small but strong farming sector continues to provide our state with jobs and revenues, fresh foods, environmental benefits, scenic beauty and cultural enrichment. Rep. Chippendale's bill does not add any costs or new taxes to our state budget but ensures that our farming community receives at least as much financial support as it gives to the state in annual fees.

This bill is especially important now, with the freezing of many of the federal funding programs that have been supporting our farms. Estimates of the amount of federal funding that is now at risk for RI farmers is in the millions.

Respectfully yours,

J. Eric Scherer

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