

Lou Mansolillo

From: Patrick McNiff <patspastured@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 9:48 AM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: Bill HB5342

Dear House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB5342, introduced by Rep. Chippendale, which would allow the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) to reinvest funds collected from our farming community back into the farming community.

Rhode Island's small but resilient agricultural sector provides our state with jobs, economic revenue, fresh food, environmental benefits, scenic landscapes, and cultural enrichment. HB5342 does not introduce new costs or taxes to the state budget but simply ensures that our farmers receive at least as much financial support as they contribute in annual fees.

This bill is especially critical now, as many federal funding programs that have historically supported our farms are frozen or at risk. Current estimates suggest that Rhode Island farmers could lose millions of dollars in federal support, making it even more urgent for the state to reinvest in local agriculture.

I urge you to support HB5342 and help sustain our farming community, which is essential to the health, economy, and character of our state.

Respectfully,

Pat McNiff

Farmer/Owner Pat's Pastured