



## RHODE ISLAND

### DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

#### OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

235 Promenade Street, Room 425  
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

March 20, 2025

The Honorable David A. Bennett  
Chairman  
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

#### **RE: H 5492 An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Microplastics Reduction Act**

Dear Chairman Bennett,

Thank you for providing the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) the opportunity to comment on H 5492, which is intended to address microplastics pollution. DEM cannot implement the requirements of this legislation without additional resources.

Although the full impacts of microplastics on the environment and human health are not yet understood, there is an increasing body of research to suggest that the impacts are numerous. H 5492 would direct DEM and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) to adopt a microplastics testing plan by July 1, 2028, which outlines the available analytical methods and the appropriateness of conducting regular testing for microplastics in water, soil, and other environmental media. It also requires DEM and RIDOH to develop and publish a statewide microplastics strategy plan to include an assessment of the environmental and health impacts of microplastics using the best available science, a summary of existing scientific research on reducing the introduction of microplastics into environmental media, and recommendations for policy changes to address microplastics no later than January 1, 2029.

DEM notes that at present there is no standardized testing methodology for microplastics, and this hinders the ability of the state to require regular testing. Furthermore, there is extremely limited laboratory capacity with the ability to test for microplastics. California has been at the forefront of developing a standardized testing methodology, but these methods have not yet been adopted at the national level. As additional research is conducted by public and private entities it is our hope that national standardized testing methodologies will be adopted soon which can be used in Rhode Island. We also note that the bill doesn't provide any details about how and by whom the prohibition on the sale of products containing intentionally added synthetic polymer microparticles would be enforced.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on this legislation and would be pleased to make ourselves available as needed. Please feel free to contact Susan Forcier, DEM Deputy Director for Environmental Protection, at [susan.forcier@dem.ri.gov](mailto:susan.forcier@dem.ri.gov) should you have any additional questions or wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Terrence Gray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Terrence" being more prominent than the last name "Gray".

Terrence Gray, P.E.  
Director

cc: Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
The Honorable Jennifer Boylan  
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House  
Lynne Urbani, House Policy Director