

**Resolution Supporting H 7071 and S2352, the Rhode Island Invasive Plant Management Act of 2026,
and Supporting H 7074 and S2425, Requiring the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to Utilize
Pollinator Friendly Native Species For Roadside Plantings**

WHEREAS, invasive plant species pose a significant threat to Rhode Island's ecosystems, biodiversity, agriculture, and economic productivity by outcompeting native plants, altering habitats, and degrading natural resources; and

WHEREAS, invasive plants are a subset of nonnative species that spread aggressively, causing environmental harm, economic loss, and, in some cases, risks to human health; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is currently the only New England state and one of only four states nationwide that does not regulate the propagation, import, and sale of harmful invasive terrestrial plants, despite the USDA Forest Service identifying invasive plants as one of four major threats to the nation's forests and grasslands; and

WHEREAS, neighboring states including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire have successfully implemented prohibited plant lists to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, thereby protecting biodiversity and reducing long-term management costs; and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Invasive Plant Management Act of 2026 seeks to broaden the State's existing list of prohibited invasive aquatic plants to include invasive terrestrial plants, with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) charged with creating and maintaining this list using existing resources and scientific guidance; and

WHEREAS, preventing the introduction of invasive plants through regulation of sale and distribution is widely recognized as the most effective and cost-efficient management strategy, safeguarding critical ecosystem services such as clean water, air purification, pollination, and climate resilience; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of prohibited plant lists will not affect existing plantings but will provide essential public education and encourage voluntary replacement of invasive species with native alternatives, while allowing nurseries a reasonable phase-out period to mitigate economic impact; and

WHEREAS, separate legislation known as H 7074 would require the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to utilize pollinator friendly native species for roadside plantings, where appropriate; and

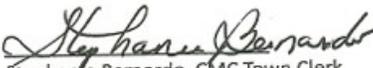
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Barrington, RI hereby expresses its strong support for H 7071 and S2352, the Rhode Island Invasive Plant Management Act of 2026, as well as H 7074 and S2425, and urges the Rhode Island General Assembly to adopt this legislation to protect the State's natural resources, biodiversity, and economic stability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk shall forward a copy of this resolution to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Rhode Island Invasive Species Council, and the members of the Rhode Island General Assembly representing this municipality.

Adopted February 2, 2026, by the Barrington Town Council.



Braxton Cloutier, Town Council President


Stephanie Bernardo, CMC Town Clerk

