

Testimony in support of H7071

Invasive Plant Management

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January 21, 2026

To: RI House Environment and Natural Resources Committee

I writing to voice my support of the bill H 7071, that prohibits the distribution and sale of invasive plants. It is an important step toward safeguarding Rhode Island's environment from degradation due the spread of non-native/invasive plants.

This legislation aligns RI with regional and national best practices:

- RI is the only New England state and one of only five states nationwide that does not regulate the sale of harmful invasive terrestrial plants.
- Clearly, the science of preserving and protecting our natural ecosystems by banning the sale of invasive plants has convinced the legislators across the United States to pass a bill banning them.

Invasive species reduce biodiversity, degrade soil health and water flow.

Invasives plants directly endanger our native species. They spread rapidly, displacing native plants that support pollinators, birds and healthy soil.

Invasives drive up the costs for towns, farmers and landowners who must manage them or remove them once established.

- Invasives like multiflora rose, Japanes bayberry and bittersweet dominated the property surrounding my house when I purchased it 6 years ago. I have spent enormous amounts of time removing invasives, making room for native plants which provide great benefits to my personal space as well as my community.
- Bittersweet is responsible for choking many of the native trees and overtaking the beautiful stone walls that are prevalent in Little Compton.

Please vote in favor of this bill's passage.

Sincerely,

Lavinia Gadsden

Michelle McGaw is my State Rep.