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From: Pat Foley <patdafolee@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 10:58 AM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Cc: Rep. Handy, Arthur
Subject: Supporting H7071 Invasive Plant Management Bill

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Dear Chair Bennett and honorable members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Patrick Foley and I live in Cranston.

I am writing to strongly support H7071 (sponsored by Rep. Boylan), which would prohibit the importation, transportation, disbursement, distribution, sale, or purchase of any species of non-native (exotic) invasive plants.

I am involved in many activities in our cultivated and wild natural spaces and observe the significant deleterious effects caused by unwanted, introduced exotic plants, many of which are escapees from plant nurseries and other landscaped environments. These introduced plants have taken advantage of the lack of their natural predators to choke our rivers, estuaries and marshes, cutting off natural water flow and increasing the likelihood of flooding - as you know, a persistent problem in several areas of our state.

Our state parks, roadside edges and farm fields are also heavily colonized by these plants leaving fewer native plants to support the larval habitat our birds depend on to feed their young. Loss of bird population and diversity harms the recreational attractiveness of our state and reduces beneficial agricultural pollination.

Rhode Island is one of only five states without a prohibited plant sale list, a list that restricts the sale and distribution of invasive plants, and the only state in New England without one. Invasive plants are a specific category of non-native plant that have been shown to wreak havoc on local ecosystems by spreading exponentially and crowding out native plants species.

This bill would prohibit the sale of these plant species at nurseries, garden centers and anywhere plants are sold in the state.

Please pass this bill out of committee and to the House floor with a recommendation for passage.

Sincerely,

Pat Foley

Cranston, RI