

Lou Mansolillo

From: Susan Lepore <susanlepore@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 8:34 PM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee; Rep. Quattrocchi, Robert J.
Subject: Supporting H7071

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TO: Chair Bennett and members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Email: HouseEnvironmentandNaturalResources@rilegislature.gov
CC: Robert Quattrocchi
FROM: Susan Lepore RE: Support for H7071
DATE: January 20, 2026

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

My name is Susan Lepore and I live in Scituate. I am writing to urge you to support H7071, which would prohibit the importation, transportation, disbursement, distribution, sale, or purchase of any species of non-native (exotic) invasive plants.

When we moved onto our property in Scituate, there were areas of the property that you could not even walk through due to the wild rose, asian honeysuckle, garlic mustard, and oriental bittersweet. A few years later, I bought Japanese barberry which I was told was sterile. It and the burning bush the neighbor planted joined the other invasives and I spend days every year trimming, and digging them and planting natives. My problem is aggravated by the fact that my property borders the Providence Reservoir property and these plants are very happy on their property too.

A major problem with these plants is they take over and the native plants that support our native insects, birds and mammals are crowded out of the landscape. Studies show that environments with Japanese barberry have more deer ticks and more Lyme disease. We all know Lyme is a major problem in Rhode Island. While it would not be fair to force home owners to pull up all their invasive plants, we should make it more difficult for them to add more.

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. 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,
Susan Lepore
Scituate

Susan Lepore
susanlepore@gmail.com

The impeded stream is the one that sings - Wendell Berry