

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** Zachary Paquette <seeds2trees@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 19, 2026 12:53 PM  
**To:** House Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
**Cc:** Rep. Boylan, Jennifer  
**Subject:** support for H7071

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

My name is Zachary Paquette and I live in East Providence.

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

This bill is important to me because I run ecological gardening business and have spent many years working with many gardens in an effort to help bring gardens back into balance with nature. One of the worst problems is trying to control invasive non-native plants. They crowd out our natives and that has a cumulative effect on the environment. Many insects are species specific and if the host plant is crowded out, the species struggles. A good example is monarch butterflies. Our native milkweeds are their host plant. As milkweeds have been killed by people due to misinformation, our monarchs head toward extinction. This puts our ecosystem out of balance. On the other side of the coin, we have the Tree of Heaven, an invasive non-native which is host to the spotted lantern fly. As 'Tree of heaven' is aggressively choking out our native trees, it is also making the spotted lantern fly (an invasive insect that destroys grape and fruit trees especially impacting our vineyards and orchards) population increase. There are many, many more examples of relationships like this which is why passing this bill is critical in helping to control this situation. It impacts the whole environment right up the food chain to humans.

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,

Zachary Paquette, East Providence

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Zach

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