

Lou Mansolillo

From: Lisa Tener <Lisa@lisatener.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2026 8:48 PM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: In support of HB7422

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Dear Mr. Mansolillo and Members of the Committee,

I urge you to advance HB7422 out of committee **with immediate revisions to its enforcement provisions.**

As someone who has followed this issue and testified repeatedly, I can say with confidence that the current civil penalty of *up to \$5,000* is entirely inadequate. It would be trivial for any organization to absorb as a routine business expense, and it undermines the core protective purpose of this legislation.

When states like Florida are advancing legislation that treats unauthorized atmospheric releases as a felony with fines up to \$100,000, and Pennsylvania's proposals contemplate civil penalties **starting at \$500,000**, Rhode Island's proposal looks weak by comparison. More broadly, in other environmental enforcement contexts, courts and agencies regularly impose penalties reaching into the **millions of dollars** for serious violations because **that is what it takes to ensure compliance** and accountability. In this case, that seems essential.

If Rhode Island intends this bill to provide genuine protection, the penalties must be proportional to the potential risks. I urge this committee to amend HB7422 to include a significantly higher fine and meaningful criminal penalties.

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