

**Testimony in support of House Bill 7423, House committee on environment and natural resources, February 26, 2026, by Peter Trafton, Providence, Rhode Island**

Dear Chair Bennett and Honorable members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I write with strong support for Rep Speakman's important bill requiring a statewide study to help coordinate wastewater management.

With 19 separate wastewater management facilities under the care of individual municipalities, 65% of its homes attached to sewer lines, and serious concerns about the management of wastewater sludge as well as increasing challenges of maintaining sufficient resilience to the threats of climate change, Rhode Island must undertake regional statewide planning.

The Department of Environmental Management Has Overall Supervision of Wastewater Issues. Their 2017 study concerning climate change threats is helpful and meshes with work by the regional NEIWPC.

<https://neiwpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/12-5-2025-RI-state-summary.pdf> .

These and other resources will provide excellent support for the bill's statewide study. Given our 35% rate of OWTS septic systems, I'm glad to see that they are included in this important study.

Please support this essential work.

Thanks for considering my input.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PTrafton". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Peter Trafton