RI FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

February 26th, 2026

Dear Chairman Bennett and Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

I'm writing on behalf of the Rhode Island Food Policy Council and our members regarding **HB7622**. We strongly support this bill

The current system we have for waste in RI is **neither financially nor environmentally sustainable.** Municipalities currently pay an artificially low rate of nearly half the true cost of their waste and that of our neighbors - which will soon rise dramatically. Meanwhile the gas in the landfill, primarily from organics items is the third largest source of methane emissions in our country.

Recently the RIFPC finished a report on the existing compost laws here in RI. Our report compared and contrasted the effectiveness of similar laws to what we have here in Rhode island and we identified one of the key barriers to implementing the Food Waste Ban was the lack of regulatory authority given to any state agency.

While this change alone will not fix our food waste problems in the state, it is a necessary step in putting us in line with our neighboring states like Massachusetts which has shown in a recent economic analysis that not only will fighting food waste be good for our environment but also our economy.

As our landfill is slated to close in 2046 the question we have to ask is: *does the state of Rhode Island want to gradually take on that cost on its own terms, or be forced to do so later on?* Do we want to take the future in our hands and address the problem on our own terms, or do we wait and hope costs won't skyrocket out of control as we fight our neighbors for ever shrinking waste disposal options? Unfortunately, we all know that without action – they will.

Thank you for your consideration,

Isaac Bearg

Program Director - Food, Climate & Environment

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