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From: Charles Polanco <charles.polanco888@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2026 2:06 PM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: Written Testimony in Support of H7914 Natural Forest Protection Act

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Hello, the following is written testimony I would like to read in person in front of the committee tomorrow, 4:00pm in Room 135.

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Charles Polanco of Cranston, and today I am voicing my support for the Natural Forest Protection Act H7914. As an ecologist who specializes in pollination ecology, we understand that in-tact, multi-aged forests contain the most resources for forest-dwelling pollinators. Contrary to popular belief, the majority of pollination that occurs on forest tree flowers are performed by wild bees, wasps, moths, and flies that do not produce honey or have a hive and queen. These animals are essential for the functioning of our ecosystems that keep people fed, housed, and free from illness and pollution. From personal experience in clearcut forest parcels in Rhode Island and throughout New England, we know that clear-cut forests do NOT grow back the same. Even-aged stands do not provide the same diversity of habitat and vegetation that old growth does, and the vehicles used to log forests often unintentionally introduce invasive plants that homogenize the understory and push out pollinators that specialize on rarer, native plants. The Natural Forest Protection Act lays down an excellent legal framework on which to preserve our forests, and the essential critters that call them home. I urge the chairman and the committee to pass this bill, and continue to advocate against the destruction of the natural resources that allow us to thrive in this great state. In a political system where the president can call environmentalists seeking the betterment of our landscapes “terrorists”, it behooves the committee to stand against the explicit sale of our natural resources and public lands, and therefore our heritage. So I ask the committee to help me do my job of conserving wild pollinators, who work completely free of charge by-the-way, by passing this legislation. All of our neighboring states have similar legislation: it just makes sense to stand with them, and to give this land which bears the scars of 400 years of human exploitation some well-deserved respect. Please pass this act, so all Rhode Islanders can enjoy the benefits. Thank you for your time.

Warm regards,
Charlie P