

## Chris O'Brien

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**From:** Maggi Smith-Dalton <ssm@singingstring.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 6:17 PM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Cc:** en-tikoian@rilegislature.gov; Rep. Rea, Brian J.  
**Subject:** RE: RI H7495 2025 Battery-Powered Leaf Blower Pilot Rebate and Education Program.

TO: House Finance Committee  
RE: RI H7495. WE SUPPORT THIS BILL

It was a buttery soft autumn day, one of the first days in our new RI home.  
We were reveling in the natural quiet beauty of our semi-rural neighborhood, enjoying the lake that bordered our property, listening to birdsong.

Suddenly we were assaulted. Birds fled, small animals scattered, and we were jerked into a far different experience.

We were assaulted by the roar of what seemed to be a jet landing next door, or was it an army tank?  
I picked up my phone ready to report an invasion.

But then I saw. It was just a small platoon of landscapers, manned with huge gas-powered leaf blowers. The soft autumn air suddenly smelled like an auto body shop.

They swarmed over the yard next door. Then another yard. Then another...in the following days and weeks, serving those who wanted yards so manicured they looked like astroturf, who cannot abide the sight of a leaf from the many trees which filled our neighborhood, the small armies marched.

The mini-mob marched with backpacks fueling their gas-powered cannons. Morning, noon, night, spring, summer, and fall, never seems to end.

These things assault our environment on every level.

The air is assaulted by the particles blown into it, and we have to breathe that air. One of us is a lung cancer survivor, so we are additionally burdened with stress and worry.

Nature itself is assaulted, since the wind cannons blow animal and insect habitats apart indiscriminately. They have to. There's no subtlety to them at all. They just blast away.

Our ears are assaulted and our nerves are shattered by the roar. No kidding, it's unbearably loud even with windows closed. In addition to the nerve-jangling stress it causes, this noise is torturous to us as musicians, who rely on our ears to perform.

We work from home often, and need to have the quiet to write books, make zoom calls, attend conferences, and again, as we are musicians, to record. Hard to do when, without any warning, there is a jet landing next door.

The fuel is dirty in every sense of the word, and we need to stop filling our environment with the stuff. Rakes work well, and for the large amounts of leaves that need to be blown into piles, an electric/battery powered blower serves us just fine on our property. In fact, all our tools are either battery powered or the kind of manual tools people have used for many years to tidy, prune, and care for their yards.

Please, please, please pass legislation to outlaw gas powered leaf blowers, and end the assaults on our human and natural environments.

Beannachtaí,  
Maggi Smith-Dalton  
Jim Dalton

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