

Testimony in support of H5534: Property Subject to Taxation—Sales Tax Small Farmers

Dr. Hans Scholl, 71 Fales Avenue, Barrington, RI 02806

Date of Hearing: May 13, 2025

To Chair Abney and the honorable Members of the House Finance Committee:

Almost all conventional store-bought vegetables and fruits have been transported over long distances within the US or even across continents, often come with an excessive amount of packaging, and have little nutritional value because they have frequently been harvested before ripeness, just to survive the transport. They also come with a large carbon footprint, which is inherent in much of the conventional agricultural methods, long-distance transportation, excessive plastic packaging, and product losses (about 30%) in the supply-chain.

Locally grown, and often certified organic products are a much better alternative. Everyone who has bought produce from local farms will readily agree that the freshness, taste and overall quality of locally grown fruits and vegetables is by far superior to store-bought, conventional produce. And, “nothing beats local”, visiting a farmers’ market and personally knowing the farmers who grow what we eat.

And yet, despite the benefits they provide for their customers and the environment, many small local farms are at the limit of financial viability. Many farm families worry about the long term survival of their farms, despite all of their hard work and ingenuity.

Bill H5534 provides much needed relief and support for organic farmers in Rhode Island with an exemption from sales taxes, real, tangible and personal property taxes and income taxes.

Please bring the bill to a vote in 2025.

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you to Representative McGaw for introducing this important bill.



Dr. Hans Scholl

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