

Testimony by Peter Trafton, Providence, RI, in support of H 5781, May 13, 2025.

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance

Rhode Island is fortunate to have significant forest lands, but we are not providing the care these lands need, even for those which are owned and managed by the state.

A particular source of concern has been the increasing growth of Rhode Island's urban areas to encroach upon forest land. The zone where urban growth meets and intermingles with forests is called the wildland – urban interface (WUI). It is now a legendary and growing space where wildfires meet homes and businesses.

With global warming, Rhode Island's forests are more for prone to wildfires. We need our forests and need to protect them, not just leave them alone completely unmanaged. We need people to do this.

Rep Cotter's request – H 5781 will help to replenish the number of forest workers the DEM used to have, edit time that was less challenging.

Please help us protect our forests and our people and homes.

Please support 5781.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PTrafton". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Peter Trafton