

April 14, 2026
House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Abney, First Vice Chair Slater, Second Vice Chair Marszalkowski, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is David Brunetti, I am from Burrillville, RI, and I oppose House Bill 7243 for "State Forests and Forestry Projects.

While I, and many others, have held the position for many years that the Department of Environmental Management is woefully understaffed and underfunded, I can think of many other areas in this Department for which additional staffing could be used to address pressing issue, including for an invasive plants removal program to address the ongoing insect apocalypse and the massive decline of birds. Additionally, funding for re-establishment of the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state would be more appropriate.

To add to this is the issue that this legislation is woefully non-specific; severely lacking in detail for description of what these employees would be doing in such a program, as well as what extent of line-item funding would be needed for personnel and for what types of equipment and supplies.

External to the needs of the Department for increased personnel and funding is the need of funding for many programs to address the programs related to climate change mandates, housing for the homeless, etc.

Therefore, I urge you to oppose H 7243.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with my comments.

Sincerely,

David A. Brunetti
Burrillville, RI