

Candace Clavin

Water Way Farm

Barrington Rhode Island 02806

Re: House Finance in support of **H8144** — Farmland Preservation

As we tend seedlings and plan for the growing season, the Green Bond is before you for consideration. We urge your strong support for farmland preservation.

Look no further than the Barrington Farm School to understand what is at stake. This working farm — the last piece of commercial farmland in Barrington — exists only because of the state's prior conservation vision. Today it serves residents from age 2 to 90, offering education, nutrition programming, and community health outreach. It stands as proof that preserved farmland delivers lasting, measurable returns to Rhode Island communities.

The benefits extend well beyond any single farm. Local farmland sustains local jobs, local restaurants, local food producers, and local food programs. It provides open space for physical and mental wellness. It keeps our food economy rooted in Rhode Island. And critically — farmland loss is permanent. Once it is gone, it cannot be recovered.

These parcels also protect us from climate risk. Their trees, hedgerows, stream banks, and soil absorb floodwater and stormwater. Preserving farmland is, in part, flood protection for your hometowns.

We should not be strangers to the fields that feed us. A meaningful share of our food supply should be produced locally — where we can see it, shape it, and trust it. Food produced far away is beyond Rhode Island's regulatory oversight. Local food is not.

Rhode Islanders deserve food justice, healthy local food, and the open space to grow it. The Green Bond is an opportunity to deliver that for this generation and the next. We ask for your vote in support.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace Clavin, Farmer Founder

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