



Via Electronic Mail

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
Room 35, State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: CLF **Supports** House Bill No. 8144 – 2026 Bond Referenda

Dear Chair Abney:

The Conservation Law Foundation (“CLF”) appreciates the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 8144, which adds a total of \$17.5 million to the existing Green Bond as written in the Governor’s budget. We offer our strong support for this bill.

Founded in 1966, CLF is a member-supported non-profit advocacy organization working to protect public health and the environment and build healthy communities in Rhode Island and throughout New England. CLF supports policies that increase the state’s capacity for environmentally beneficial economic growth while also providing for necessary climate resilience, brownfield remediation, and open space/land conservation.

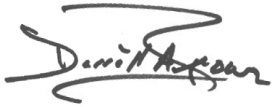
H-8144 would fund programs that have been historically funded by the green economy bonds, including agricultural land preservation, open space land acquisition, local open space grants, and outdoor recreation efforts. Our land trust and conservation partners within the environmental movement are able to leverage these state appropriations to bring in additional millions of dollars in matching funds from the federal government to support our economy and maintain funding of popular programs that provide a direct and immediate benefit to Rhode Islanders.

The land acquired through these programs is a public benefit enjoyed by Rhode Islanders from all walks of life. It is available to the public for boating, fishing, swimming, hiking, hunting, biking, and simply enjoying all the salutary effects that nature has to offer. By promoting outdoor recreation, we connect our kids to nature and expand our understanding of the interconnection of our health, our environment, and our prosperity. These programs protect our farmlands from uncontrolled development and provide a lifeline to our struggling agriculture sector. They also protect vulnerable habitats for Rhode Island’s wildlife and conserve our precious natural resources—not for financial gain, but for long-term public use.

Whether we look at land conservation as a way to address a changing climate or to give kids a place to run around after school, we all benefit by maintaining funding for these programs. It is critical that the Finance Committee supports the bond package funding proposed in H-8144.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



Darrèll Brown
Vice President, Rhode Island
Conservation Law Foundation

cc: Members of the Finance Committee
Representative Megan L. Cotter
Representative Lauren Carson
Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy
House Minority Leader Michael W. Chippendale
Representative Michelle McGaw
Representative Jennifer Boylan
Representative Arthur Handy
Representative Marie A. Hopkins
Representative June Speakman
Representative Tina Spears