

Julia F Landstreet: Westerly, RI
RE: Support for House Bill 8144
Attention: Chair of House Finance, Chairman Marvin Abney
Date: April 13, 2026

Dear Chairman Abney,

My name is Julia Landstreet, a resident of Westerly, writing to encourage you and your colleagues to include and support an additional \$17.5 Million in the FY 2027 Green Economy Bond, and most specifically the additional \$10 Million for conservation programs.

Protected open space and agricultural lands provide benefits to our communities that cannot be duplicated for less money. Investments in conservation projects provide the highest value and lowest cost contributions to the quality of life of our neighbors and the functionality of our communities

Water impacts all aspects of community growth and development. Stormwater mitigation and replenishing the aquifers are all natural results from protected open space. Frequent droughts and continued density have shown the importance of returning as much water as possible to the aquifers versus storm drains.

Agricultural Land and food security, COVID was recent enough that we all remember the value in access to food that was not supply-chain dependent.

Protected open space results in access to hiking trails, fishing ponds, pollinator meadows, educational programming, stable ecosystems, and delighted tourists who come to experience our scenic places.

Please include \$3 Million for the State Open Space Program to acquire and conserve lands of statewide interest and significance, including ecologically valuable land that enhances DEM's management areas, parks, and important forest lands.

Please include \$ 2 Million in Local Open Space Matching Grants to municipalities, land trusts, and non-profit conservation land organizations to preserve valuable habitats and open spaces in local communities across RI.

Please include \$2 Million for the farmland preservation is critical to preserving some of the last important farms in the state. RI DEM currently has a backlog of farms that are in various stages of appraisal or review. Leaving this program unfunded also leaves federal funding on the table.

H8144 also invests in community assets, including \$5 million for improvements at Fort Adams State Park and \$2.5 million to support Mariner Academy & Program Center at Camp Rocky Farm through the Girl Scouts of Southern New England.

I urge the committee to include \$17.5 Million in additional funding for the FY 2027 Green Economy Bond, including \$10 Million for conservation programs."

Thank you for consideration and support of this critical opportunity.

Sincerely,



Julia Landstreet
Westerly, RI