



April 13, 2026

Chairman Marvin L. Abney
House Finance Committee
RI State House, 82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903
Submitted to Housefinance@rilegislature.gov

RE: Support House Bill H8144

Dear Chairman Abney and House Finance Committee members,

On behalf of the Aquidneck Island Land Trust, a Rhode Island non-profit that has preserved nearly 2,900 acres of open space on Aquidneck Island across the towns of Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth, we respectfully ask you to support House Bill 8144. This bill adds funds to the Green Bond to improve public recreation and ensure funding to conserve important forests, farmlands, and open spaces across Rhode Island.

Importantly, this bill includes:

- \$3 million for outdoor recreation grants to create playgrounds, conserve important parks and improve access to outdoor recreational opportunities.
- \$3 Million for the State Open Space Program to acquire and conserve lands of statewide interest and significance.
- \$2 Million in Local Open Space Matching Grants to preserve valuable open space in local communities across RI.
- \$2 Million for farmland preservation to preserve some of the most important farms in the state.

The Aquidneck Island Land Trust, along with other land trusts, DEM, and municipalities, have time and time again leveraged Green Bond funds with private dollars to protect our drinking waters, provide places to play for families, and preserve farmland across the state. In the last 25 years, the Land Trust has utilized land protection funds from the open space and farmland programs in the Green Bond to help save 19 different conservation properties totaling 476 acres in Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth. These lands contribute to our community well-being, our local economy, and make Rhode Island the special place it is today.

I urge you to support House Bill H8144. It is an investment in the economic, environmental, and social fabric of our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Sullivan".

Terry Sullivan
Executive Director