



Rhode Island Forest Conservator's Organization, Inc.

April 14, 2026

Honorable Marvin Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
RI State House
Providence, RI 02908

Re: H-8144 - Green Bond - FOR

Dear Mr. Abney and the Committee,

The RI Forest Conservators Organization, Inc. (RIFCO) is a statewide non-profit volunteer organization that represents forest landowners and other forest conservationists. Our mission is the protection and wise use of Rhode Island's woodland resources through education and advocacy.

We are writing to support the passage of the proposed inclusion of \$17.5 million to the Green Bond, especially \$10 Million for conservation programs to ensure that there is funding to conserve important forests, farmlands, and open spaces across Rhode Island.

Rhode Island's green economy requires the long-term conservation of forest lands and farms. Passage of this Act will help assure that there is a viable land base that will be there in the future to support working farms and forests, which are an important part of the rural economy, and existing businesses will remain viable and provide jobs in a rural, working landscape. This is in addition to the open space values that support tourism, provide clean water, clean air, recreational resources, wildlife habitat, and the sequestration and storage of atmospheric carbon.

We urge the committee to include extra funding in the Green Bond to replenish the existing programs that protect farms, forestland, and open space/recreational projects around the state.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Respectfully,

William Fortune, President