



February 1, 2024

Representative Robert Craven, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

**LETTER OF SUPPORT - HB 7056 AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS --
FORCE-FED POULTRY PRODUCTS**

Dear Chairman Craven:

On behalf of The Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association, I submit this letter in support of HB7056.

The RIVMA supports HB 7056 to prevent the inhumane treatment of poultry. RIVMA supports the continued advocacy of animal welfare organizations on this issue. Force-fed poultry products constitute cruel and inhumane treatment of animals with confinement of birds in small cages, force-fed multiple times a day through tubes forcefully inserted into their stomachs and the resultant difficulty walking and potential for death from this treatment. Specific complaints include livers swollen to more than ten times their normal size, impaired liver function, expansion of the abdomen making it difficult for birds to walk, death if the force feeding is continued, and scarring of the esophagus.

While the AVMA, in 2004 and 2005, has declined to take a position, indicating that "Limited peer-reviewed, scientific information is available dealing with the animal welfare concerns associated with foie gras production, but the observations and practical experience shared by HOD members indicate a minimum of adverse effects on the birds involved", the RIVMA respectfully stands in support of the ban. Several countries presently ban the practice. The report of the European Union's Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare, *Welfare Aspects of the Production of Foie Gras in Ducks and Geese*,^[18] adopted on December 16, 1998, is an 89-page review of studies from several producing countries. It examines several indicators of animal welfare, including physiological indicators, liver pathology, and mortality rate. It strongly concludes that "force feeding, as currently practiced, is detrimental to the welfare of the birds."

Thank you for your consideration and contact me with any questions (401) 533-4872.

Sincerely,

Leonard Lopes

Cc: Members of the committee