

Deirdre Jannerelli  
335 Pleasant Street  
Rumford, RI 02916

April 2, 2024

Dear members of the House Municipal Government & Housing Committee,

My name is Deirdre Jannerelli and I reside at 335 Pleasant Street in Rumford, East Providence. I am writing in support of Rhode Island House Bill H-7658 which would place weight limits on commercial trucks on a section of Route 114A (Pleasant Street) in East Providence. My husband and I, along with our two young children, have lived on Pleasant Street since 2015. Over the past 9 years, we have witnessed an increase in the number of large semi-trucks seemingly using the road as a cut-through to avoid parts of I-195 and I-95. Semi-truck volume on this road has been exacerbated by the recent closure of the westbound side of the Washington Bridge. I support this bill because Pleasant Street is not currently conducive to heavy trucks.

This part of Route 114A is completely residential, with not a single business or commercial building. It is a single lane in each direction, and there are currently no sidewalks or crosswalks (it's worth noting that the RI DOT did put up signage for a crosswalk last year, but still has not painted the actual crosswalk, creating an even greater safety hazard as pedestrians may think they are able to cross there, and drivers may think they don't have to stop). This stretch of road is frequented by many pedestrians, school children, joggers, and bicyclists. It is home to the Turner Reservoir Loop Trailhead hiking trails, as well as the Hunts Mills Picnic and Recreational Area, and the corner of Sylvan Road and Pleasant Street is a school bus stop for a large number of elementary and middle school students, many of whom must cross the road or walk alongside it to get there. There is also a RIPTA bus stop right around the corner of the Pleasant Street and Pawtucket Avenue intersection, and throughout the day (in all four seasons) pedestrians walk along this part of 114A to get to that RIPTA stop.

This section of Route 114A is also part of the National Register of Historic Places, with homes dating back to the late 1700s. The vibrations caused by heavy commercial trucks put these historic homes at risk – especially considering how close to the road they are situated. To my knowledge, the safety study that was recently conducted did not look into how these historic structures are impacted by semi-truck traffic. I can't speak to every home on this road, but my own home (built in 1900) has suffered two large cracks in its foundation since 2015, as well as cracks in its walls and floor tiles. Our front-facing double-paned window has also had to be replaced twice since 2015, due to truck vibrations damaging its seals.

The pollution caused by these semi-trucks is another concern. These trucks leave behind excessive amounts of diesel particulate matter, compromising the health of not only those who live here, but also the large number of East Providence residents that bike, jog, and walk along Route 114A. Take into consideration this quote from the Environmental Defense Fund's September 2020 article on truck emissions: *"While the delivery trucks and tractor trailers that distribute goods and cargo make up only 4% of vehicles on U.S. roads, they are responsible for nearly half of the nitrogen oxide emissions and nearly 60% of the fine particulates from all vehicles."*  
(Source: <https://www.edf.org/blog/2020/09/16/100-zero-emissions-trucks-how-close-are-we>)

Thank you for your time and for considering my support of bill H-7658 to ban heavy commercial trucks from Route 114A in the Rumford Historic District.

Sincerely,



Deirdre Jannerelli