

February 26, 2026

RE: Support H 7222-Rodenticide Ban and Municipal Pilot Program

Dear Representative Stephan Casey and Members of the House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing,

I urge you to pass H-7222, a phased-in ban on a class of rat poisons killing raptors, poisoning waterways, and wreaking havoc on our ecosystem when more effective alternatives exist and are used elsewhere.

During a recent visit to my husband's fire station in Warwick, Rhode Island, he showed me their new neighbors: a pair of majestic bald eagles nesting in an osprey's nest atop a communications tower. He often spots them perched high above the City Center as his truck returns from calls. These eagles, like many creatures, seek a safe home and a healthy food supply, free from pesticides and rodenticides that could harm and kill them.

Mice and rats are overwhelming Rhode Island communities *despite the widespread use of anticoagulant rat poisons*, which harm and kill predators such as owls, hawks, and eagles. These raptors can consume up to 1,000 rodents a year, but just 1-2 poisoned rats can be lethal to them. Rodents take 5-10 days to die after ingesting poison, making them vulnerable to predators. House Bill 7222 offers a practical solution for rodent control while safeguarding the environment by phasing out these poisons and supporting municipalities in developing wildlife-safe alternatives. This important further restricts poison sales and sets a ban for January 1, 2029, with important exemptions for agriculture, breweries, and municipalities in the event of health crises.

This legislation is the solution we need. I urge you to support H-7222 to stop the rodents taking over communities while protecting the environment, our ecosystem, and our children.

Our home shares its landscape with vibrant community trails and open spaces, forming a valuable habitat for countless wildlife species. We are fortunate to coexist with red-tailed and Cooper's hawks, great horned and barred owls, deer, foxes, coyotes, skunks, and opossums. Recently, while walking our dogs, I discovered a young opossum deceased in our street. It wasn't hit by a car; rather, I suspect it fell victim to rodenticide poisoning from the black boxes still used by some neighbors, despite our calls for safer alternatives. Starving from the harsh winter, this young opossum (that could have easily been a domesticated animal or curious child) couldn't resist the toxic bait and paid the ultimate price for its hunger. **By supporting and passing H-7222, you're taking a crucial step towards ensuring the safety of our environment, our ecosystems, and our children.**

Thank you for your consideration and support,

Catherine Hughes-Fury

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