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.

Mice and rats continue to overwhelm our Rhode Island communities, despite hundreds of black boxes containing anti-coagulant rat poisons littering our cities and towns. Anti-coagulant rat poisons aren't working; instead, they accumulate in predators like owls, hawks, and eagles and kill them. These raptors are part of the solution. One Eastern Screech Owl can eat up to around 1,000 rodents a year, but it may only take 1-2 rodents with rat poisoning to kill them. Since these rat poisons take 5-10 days to kill a rodent and slow them down in the process, they become easy prey for any predator who consumes them. These first - and - second generation anti-coagulant rat poisons are unnecessary; not only do less harmful rat poisons exist, but effective, wildlife-safe alternatives are used elsewhere, such as rat and mouse sterilization.

House Bill 7222 provides a commonsense approach to rodent control, while also protecting the environment. The bill immediately establishes support for municipalities to develop wildlife-safe rodent control alternatives with no impact to the state budget. It then restricts the sale of the poisons away from consumer hands and bans them on January 1st, 2029. Important exemptions still exist, such as for agriculture, breweries, and municipalities in the event of a declared public health crisis.

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

Sincerely,

Rob Bower
Chair, Scituate Land Trust