

Good afternoon members of the commission. Thank you for having me and hearing my voice. My name is **Sula Prentiss-Garg**. I live in Barrington and I am fifteen years old. I have been a proud member of the ocean state my whole life. I have grown up swimming and kayaking in the waves. I have grown up building sand castles and chasing my friends on the beach. I have grown up with the ocean. And I have grown up watching that ocean being polluted. My love for the ocean is what inspired me to become an ocean rights activist. Together with my team, Ripples of Change, I want to bring attention and awareness to ocean conservation and ocean rights. We believe in action that creates change. And that includes passing this bottle bill. Last year, we were lucky enough to travel to Denmark for a summit on ocean wellness. Joining people from all over the world to address ocean health problems was incredible. There was so much innovation and drive. When I explained our goal to help pass the bottle bill in Rhode Island, I got a lot of surprised responses, saying "You guys don't already do that?" I have to admit that I felt embarrassed in those moments. So many countries and many of our neighboring states have already taken this step. And because they have, we KNOW, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it makes a positive difference. Putting a refundable deposit on nips bottles will unquestionably help keep those discarded bottles off our beaches and out of our ocean. We need accountability from the companies that manufacture and sell these products to begin with. We need accountability to come before convenience and profit. Enough is enough. The ocean is a living ecosystem that has rights. It deserves to be treated with respect and that means not allowing it to be used as a dumping ground for human garbage. We need to enact change. And today? That change is this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Here is our winning video that took us to Denmark

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gU4qPTIc084>

Sula Prentiss-Garg
Creating Ripples Of Change