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## S2353 - support

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**From** Carrie Drake <cdrake@blackstoneparksconservancy.org>

**Date** Wed 4/8/2026 2:02 PM

**To** SLegislation <slegislation@rilegislature.gov>

**Cc** Sen. Zurier, Samuel <sen-zurier@rilegislature.gov>; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M. <rep-kislak@rilegislature.gov>

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**TO:** Chair Sosnowski and honorable members of the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee

[Email:SLegislation@rilegislature.gov](mailto:SLegislation@rilegislature.gov)

**CC:** Senator Sam Zurier [sen-zurier@rilegislature.gov](mailto:sen-zurier@rilegislature.gov), Representative Rebecca Kislak [Rep-kislak@rilegislature.gov](mailto:Rep-kislak@rilegislature.gov)

April 7, 2026

Chair and honorable members of the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee:

My name is Carrie Drake and I live in Providence. I'm writing on behalf of the board of the Blackstone Parks Conservancy.

I am writing to urge you to pass S2353, (McKenney), which would prohibit the importation, transportation, disbursement, distribution, sale, or purchase of any species of non-native (exotic) invasive plants.

Our park friends group co-stewards, with the Providence Parks Department, two parks on Providence's East Side. One of the parks is a 45-acre designated Conservation District, a City zoning category to protect valuable natural spaces.

Our volunteers spend considerable time and resources removing invasive plants that threaten valuable habitat. In some cases we see evidence that the invasive plants have traveled from neighboring yards or inappropriately disposed-of yard waste. In others, seeds carried in by birds or other animals were likely the source of the invasive plants.

In addition to threatening the native ecosystems within the park, some of the invasive plants are noxious or detrimental to humans. For example, Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is a highly invasive shrub known to host increased numbers of blacklegged (deer) ticks.\* It is sold in Rhode Island, we remove it every year from the woods, and dealing with its abundant thorns brings new resonance to the phrase "blood, sweat, and tears."

Please pass this bill out of committee and to the Senate floor with a recommendation for passage.

Sincerely,

Carrie Drake, President

Blackstone Parks Conservancy

\*Williams, SC, and Wood, JS *Environmental Entomology* 2010 Dec:39(6) 1911-21

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*Carrie Drake, President*