

RE: S 2795 – Rodenticide Ban and Municipal Pilot Program

Dear Chairwoman Sosnowski and Members of the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee,

I'm writing today to urge you to pass S-2795.

Nobody wants rats in their house or their neighborhood. It's important for public health to control them.

Right now, however, a primary means of attempting to kill rats is those ubiquitous black boxes of anti-coagulant poisons. Not only are these not managing to keep the rat populations at bay, they are killing raptors, poisoning waterways, and wreaking havoc on our ecosystem when more effective alternatives exist and are used elsewhere.

S-2795 calls for a phased-in ban on these anti-coagulant rat poisons.

What's the problem with them? In addition to not working, 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.

I learned this the hard way. I had a problem with voles and the pest control professionals put the black boxes on my property. I had no idea of the ramifications and profound harm of these pesticides to raptors. I was horrified to learn I could be responsible for poisoning the owls and hawks I frequently hear and see near my home. I had the traps pulled as soon as I learned of the tremendous harm they cause.

S-2795 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 1, 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 S-2795 to stop the rodents taking over our communities while protecting the environment, our ecosystem and our children.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hatch
301 Green End Avenue
Middletown, RI 02842