

Dear Representative Megan Cotter & Senator Chairman Lou DiPalma,
my name is David Kuma, I am a Central Falls resident as of the first of April 1. I had lived in Providence for 10 years but got priced out of housing. Rhode Island desperately needs \$17.5 million in additional conservation funding for the FY Green Economy Bond, especially \$10M for conservation programs. I was a farm owner and operator for nearly 10 years. I sold produce to some of Providence's most esteemed restaurants and farmers markets. Before that, I worked as a landscaper for 3 years. I now work as a conservation associate. I help Southside Community Land Trusts network of over 200 farmers and gardeners, 30+ community gardens, and anyone else I can reach in the state, apply for USDA funding addressing resource concerns to help sustain the precious land folk are working on.

Needless to say, I am passionate and concerned with the effects of the states diminishing open spaces and farm land! Also In the short time I've been working outdoors (nearly 15 year), I have noticed, tracked and felt the effects of climate change. From increasingly severe storms (rain, wind, snow) I've come to realize that the areas most impacted are overdeveloped neighborhoods with poor conservation plans and minimal green spaces. Nature takes care of itself in ways human beings cannot. But we as humans can certainly disrupt that! Leading to flooding neighborhoods, environmental pollutants that affect our states most vulnerable population, children. As a former food producer and current conservationist, farmers across the state are having issues acclimating quick enough to match the rate of climate change and loss of through development. Loss of forest land is also going to pollute our precious waterways and watersheds. We are the ocean state!
Also, with the loss of conservation jobs nationally to current federal administration decisions, Rhode Island has felt the full brunt of that. As a state, we have a green industry workforce of over 2,500 people to help protect what nature we have left.

One way to mitigate all those negative outcomes, is to include this list to the FY Green Economy Bond:
-\$17.5M to the Green Bond
-\$10M to conservation programs
-\$2M for farmland preservation
-\$3M of the State Open Space Program

Thank you for your time, mind and hearts.