

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Kathryn Fassnacht <kathrynfassnacht@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 11:51 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Senate Finance Committee

You don't often get email from kathrynfassnacht@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members, I am opposed to S 2546 which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546 which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Kathryn Fassnacht

Warwick, Rhode Island

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Karen Berg <1karenjberg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 10:34 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Please do not pass S 2546 !!

You don't often get email from 1karenjberg@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Karen Berg

Warwick RI

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Albert Bowers <afbowersjr@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 11:26 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Cc:** Nathan Cornell  
**Subject:** Written testimony opposing Senate Bill S- 2546,

You don't often get email from afbowersjr@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to S 2546, a bill to add 10 logging positions to the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), to support increased even-aged logging, including clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

DEM's destructive logging operations involve bulldozers which disturb the soil, crush native plants and trees, kill animals, and destroy underground root systems and mycorrhizal networks that help the trees in the forest fight pests and diseases.

DEM's logging increases the chance of wildfire because removing the tree canopy results in the landscape becoming dry from the increased sunlight, allows for underbrush to thrive, and leads to more wind blowing through the forest.

In my retirement I enjoy many hours of outdoor activities in the 4,000-acre George Washington Management Area. The 4,000-acre George Washington Management Area is the state's second-largest state-managed property. The area is a hidden gem for Rhode Island citizens enjoying outdoor activities and who strive for a healthy life style.

Over the recent past years I have witnessed the clearcutting of the management area, I see the devastation of the logging machinery on the forest ecosystem. I see the 'left behind' logging residue and the brush piles. My wife and I have noticed missing sings birds and small animals we use to enjoyed as we now hike thru the clear cut areas. Clearcutting does cause immediate and severe disruption to animals, often resulting in direct mortality or forced displacement.

I support Nathan Cornell - President of the Rhode Island Old Growth Tree Society in his one man's heroic and persistent effort to focus public interest on the critical cause in protecting our public state forests from deforestation and natural habitat destruction.

In addition, I support staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state. Please fund this program, Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Albert Bowers  
North Smithfield

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Barbara Bowers <barbaraebowers@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 11:39 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Cc:** ncornell.ogts@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony in opposition to Senate Bill S- 2546

You don't often get email from barbaraebowers@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to S 2546, a bill to add 10 logging positions to the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), to support increased even-aged logging, including clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

DEM's destructive logging operations involve bulldozers which disturb the soil, crush native plants and trees, kill animals, and destroy underground root systems and mycorrhizal networks that help the trees in the forest fight pests and diseases.

DEM's logging increases the chance of wildfire because removing the tree canopy results in the landscape becoming dry from the increased sunlight, allows for underbrush to thrive, and leads to more wind blowing through the forest.

In my retirement I enjoy many hours of outdoor activities in the 4,000-acre George Washington Management Area. The 4,000-acre George Washington Management Area is the state's second-largest state-managed property. The area is a hidden gem for Rhode Island citizens who enjoying outdoor actives and strive for a healthy life style.

Over the recent past years I have witnessed the clearcutting of the management area, I see the devastation of the logging machinery on the forest ecosystem. I see the 'left behind' logging residue and the brush piles. My husband and I have noticed missing sings birds and small animals we use to enjoyed as we now hike thru the clear cut areas. Clearcutting does cause immediate and severe disruption to animals, often resulting in direct mortality or forced displacement.

I support Nathan Cornell - President of the Rhode Island Old Growth Tree Society in his one man's heroic and persistent effort to focus public interest on the critical cause in protecting our public state forests from deforestation and natural habitat destruction.

In addition, I support staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state. Please fund this program, Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Barbara Bowers  
North Smithfield

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Pet Refuge Programs <programs@thepetrefuge.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 6:48 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S 2546 Bill - Written Testimony - Oppose

You don't often get email from programs@thepetrefuge.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

Pet Refuge is dedicated to the care and protection of all animals. In alignment with this mission, we oppose the addition of employees to RIDEM for the purpose of continuing clear-cutting and logging programs on our state's public lands.

Wildlife in our region already faces increasing pressure due to human encroachment. The continued loss of habitat places significant stress on local ecosystems, disrupts wildlife populations, and contributes to increased predation on companion animals as natural resources become scarce.

We believe RIDEM should prioritize the protection and responsible stewardship of our public lands. Old-growth forests and their ecosystems are irreplaceable; once they are lost, they cannot be restored to their original state.

We respectfully urge you to ensure that our state's natural resources are protected as you consider this proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Pet Refuge.

Jenna L Schmidt  
CEO  
Pet Refuge  
<https://thepetrefuge.org/>

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** DeShazo, 2028 Zachary <zdeshazo230@student.egsd.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 26, 2026 1:56 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Opposition to S 2546

You don't often get email from zdeshazo230@student.egsd.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Zachary D.

East Greenwich, Rhode Island

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Gomez Rodriguez, 2027 Isabella <igomezrodriguez660@student.egsd.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 26, 2026 1:00 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Opposition to S 2546

You don't often get email from igomezrodriguez660@student.egsd.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Sincerely,

Isabella Gomez  
(East Greenwich)

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Willis, 2027 Olive <owillis655@student.egsd.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 26, 2026 12:19 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S 2546 Bill Opposition

You don't often get email from owillis655@student.egsd.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am a young citizen of East Greenwich, and wanted to submit formal opposition on behalf of East Greenwich High School's Environmental Club to the S 2546 Bill. As an aspiring environmental activist, I strongly believe in the protection and conservation of local ecosystems and passionately against environmental exploitation. I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program. This would benefit our local forests, and in turn, the citizens of Rhode Island in the long run.

Sincerely,

Olive Willis

East Greenwich

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**Jamie Plume**

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**From:** burridge@cox.net  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 25, 2026 1:35 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** NO! on 2546

You don't often get email from burridge@cox.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**We need to preserve our trees! Please vote NO on S 2546.**

John Burrige  
East Providence

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Nick Deubert <ndeubert@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 25, 2026 4:49 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Oppose S2546 and logging

You don't often get email from ndeubert@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members, I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Nick Deubert  
Cumberland, RI

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** barry schiller <bschillert358@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 4:50 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** opposition to S2546 from Barry Schiller

Dear Senate Finance Committee

I am writing to oppose bill S2546 that would fund an open ended amount of money for 10 additional forestry positions at DEM and their expensive equipment too. This is a bad idea for budgetary reasons, and also for our woodlands. There are indications of too much logging on state lands, a failure to protect our limited number of old growth woodlands, and the crashing biodiversity as habitat is lost. At this point, at the least we need an inventory of woodland resources and consideration of protecting some natural areas before DEM is given a mostly free hand to log them.

Thank you for considering this viewpoint.

Barry Schiller,  
North Providence

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** L T <thuotte57@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 5:16 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Bill S 2546, to add 10 positions for logging operations

You don't often get email from thuotte57@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to S 2546, a bill that would add 10 positions for forest operations that include the culling of old growth trees, clearcutting.

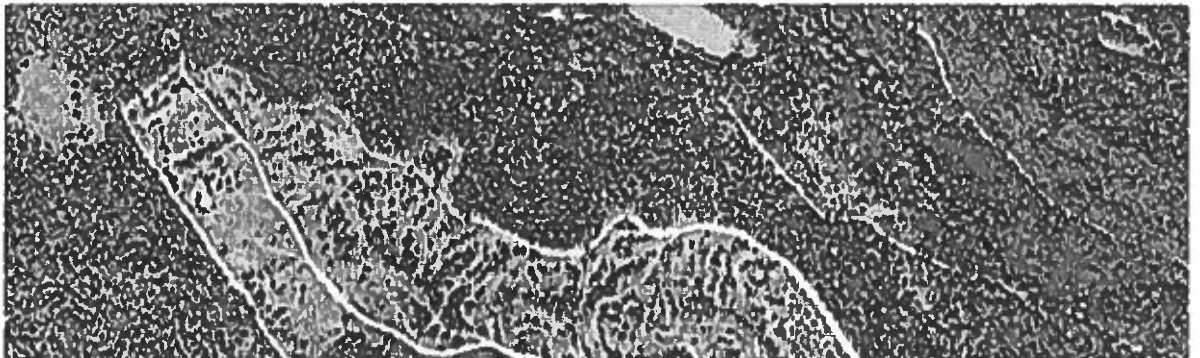
There should be an investigative committee investigating exactly what is going on in Rhode Island's forests. Example; Arcadia Management Area( see attached photos ).

The logging industry, often working alongside state agencies like RIDEM and advocates for " Active Forest Management, " promotes culling of trees in Rhode Island under the guise of creating young forest habitats and improving resilience. These actions, driven by industry interest and state-supported, destroy old-growth forests (the old growth trees are worth more money), damage ecosystems, and threaten biodiversity. It is important that our elected leaders know that Old Growth Trees seed the forest and that they should be left alone. Any culling that needs to taken place should strictly be for Secondary Growth Trees and not Old Growth Trees! Also there are stands of diseased trees they could cull and get those out of our forests.

**DEM Logging Clearcut in the state-owned Arcadia Management Area**



**Aerial photo of 195-acre DEM Logging Clearcut in the state-owned A  
from 2020**



Also any positions that are to be added to DEM Forest Management should be for removal of the tons of dead and diseased trees that litter state land - like along the west section of the Washington Secondary Bike path.

Last year DEM stripped the goldenrod and other native grasses off of the 7-8 foot hills on both sides of the path. DEM made a moonscape out of these hills. The goldenrod and other native grasses that were once on the hills were havens for rodents which the woodland owls hunt. I've seen the owls hunting in these grasses. I still don't see these grasses coming back, so I'm wondering if DEM authorized the spraying of glyphosate on these hills. This would be horrifying if they did. They need to fix that policy! It couldn't be because of so called "fuel that feeds wildfires", because there are tons of dead dried out trees on both sides of the path along with a whole lot of underbrush. Also with hardly any growth on these hills it has made the the trees at the top of the hills more susceptible to falling over( loss of root systems). When I inquired about why they would do this in an email to DEM , DEM never gave me a reply back. Poor customer service at DEM!

Increased Access to Public Land: The timber industry has sought to increase logging in state forests. Concerns have been raised about the use of state funds for such projects in areas like the Great Swamp Management Area. Environmental Impact Concerns: Critics contend that these actions create a net-carbon loss, increase fire risks due to leftover debris, and remove important old-growth trees.

Please do not support the logging of Old Growth Trees on state land.

Thankyou for listening, Leo Thuotte 18 Great Oak Dr Warwick 02886. [Thuotte57@gmail.com](mailto:Thuotte57@gmail.com). 401 465 1970

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Jay Buckley <pbuckley6@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 6:22 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Please protect our planet

You don't often get email from pbuckley6@cox.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members, I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Thank you,

Phyllis Buckley

East Providence

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Pat Foley <patdafolee@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 7:25 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Testimony Opposing S 2546

You don't often get email from patdafolee@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to S 2546, a bill to add 10 logging positions to the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), to support increased even-aged logging, including clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

DEM's destructive logging operations involve bulldozers which disturb the soil, crush native plants and trees, kill animals, and destroy underground root systems and mycorrhizal networks that help the trees in the forest fight pests and diseases.

DEM's logging increases the chance of wildfire because removing the tree canopy results in the landscape becoming dry from the increased sunlight, allows for underbrush to thrive, and leads to more wind blowing through the forest.

The dry wood slash left behind after the logging operation is also highly flammable.

It should be noted that when DEM conducts prescribed burns on state land to remove underbrush, it is often in areas they previously logged.

If DEM didn't log those forests, that underbrush wouldn't be there.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since DEM discontinued and defunded it in 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Thank you,  
Pat Foley  
Narragansett Blvd  
Cranston, RI 02905

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Regina Binda <rbinda23@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2026 9:21 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Testimony opposing S 2546.

Dear Committee members,

I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Regina Binda  
Warwick, RI

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Jacquelyn Kanis <bloomingwork@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 12:28 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S 2546

You don't often get email from bloomingwork@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my opposition to Senate Bill S 2546. I understand this bill would add 10 new logging positions to DEM for the purpose of supporting an increase in logging, likely including clear-cutting, on public state owned land. Our money would therefore be used towards the destruction of our state forests. A wiser use of our tax payer money would be to staff the now inoperative Rhode Island Heritage Program in order to identify, monitor and protect vital biodiversity. This program is necessary for the protection of our state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are threatened and destroyed by such logging.

For the benefit of the forests and the future generations of those who benefit from them, I urge you to please reject S 2546.

Respectfully,  
Jacquelyn Kanis  
South Kingstown

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Ron Seiden <rseiden85@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 9:35 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S 2546 Opposition

You don't often get email from rseiden85@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members, I am opposed to S 2546 which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Ron Seiden

East Providence

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Tim Faulkner <tcfaulkner5@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 9:56 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Please Oppose S2546

You don't often get email from tcfaulkner5@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee Members,

Please do not pass S2546. It expands deforestation in the second most densely populated state in the country. Instead, please support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

S2546 adds 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007 and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Tim Faulkner  
Barrington

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** DIANNA ODELL <domw84@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 10:31 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Oppose S 2546

You don't often get email from domw84@cox.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

Money could be better spent on staffing the RI Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Dianna Odell

Portsmouth, Ri

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Mike Norklun <mnorklun@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 10:36 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** s2546

You don't often get email from mnorklun@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear committee members,

Please oppose bill S2546 which would add 10 logging positions to DEM. This is not necessary and would also promote clear cutting of state property.

Consider supporting the RI Natural Heritage Program that has managed natural resources in our state since 2007

Thanks Mike Norklun. Wakefield

**Jamie Plume**

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**From:** p Edwards <pegpae@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 11:12 AM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S2546

You don't often get email from pegpae@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello Members of the Senate Finance Committee,  
Please oppose S2546. Logging by 10 additional employees will be a detriment to our RI woodlands.  
Thank you, peggy edwards

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Cindy Pierce <cindyleipierce@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 12:02 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Cc:** Sen. Lauria, Pamela J.  
**Subject:** S2546

You don't often get email from cindyleipierce@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

The money that would be used to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

The RI Natural Heritage Program hasn't existed since 2007, and Rhode Island needs this program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Cindy Pierce  
Barrington  
Sent from my iPhone

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** je ha <jenhindc@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 12:17 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** OPPOSE S2546

You don't often get email from jenhindc@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Chair DiMario and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I write to urge you to oppose Senate Bill 2546, which would direct the General Assembly to fund ten new full-time positions at the Department of Environmental Management for forestry and forestry projects in FY 2027.

I understand that wildfire risk is a genuine concern, and I support adequate staffing for genuine fire prevention and ecological stewardship. However, S2546 is written broadly enough to facilitate expanded commercial timber harvesting on Rhode Island's publicly owned state forests — land held in trust for all residents. I urge the committee to scrutinize what "forestry projects" actually means in practice before committing public funds to a significant staffing expansion.

Rhode Island's state forests provide irreplaceable ecological services: carbon sequestration, water filtration, wildlife habitat, and recreational access. Commercial logging operations, even when framed as "forest management," can fragment habitat, disrupt old-growth structures, increase erosion, and compromise biodiversity. These impacts are long-lasting and difficult to reverse.

My specific concerns are as follows:

First, the bill's language is vague. "Forestry projects" is undefined, and there is no explicit prohibition on using these new positions to plan, permit, or oversee commercial timber sales on state land. Rhode Island residents deserve clarity about what activities their tax dollars will fund.

Second, there has been no meaningful public process to assess whether expanded logging on state land has community support. The public lands of Rhode Island belong to all residents, and decisions about how they are managed — particularly irreversible ones like timber harvesting — should involve robust public input and environmental review.

Third, if the legislature's genuine goal is wildfire risk reduction, that objective would be better served by targeted funding for prescribed burns, invasive species removal, and fire break maintenance — not an open-ended staffing authorization that could equally serve commercial logging interests.

I respectfully ask the committee to either reject S2546 or substantially amend it to:

- Explicitly prohibit the use of these positions to facilitate commercial timber sales on state land
- Require a public comment period before any new logging or timber harvesting activity is undertaken
- Mandate an ecological impact assessment for any proposed forestry project on state-owned parcels

Rhode Island's forests are a public trust. I urge you to protect them.

Respectfully,  
Jennifer Haga with the help of Claude AI

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** Leslie Leister <lmeister2015@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 12:49 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S 2546

You don't often get email from lmeister2015@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Finance Committee Members,

I urge you to reject S 2546. Funds to increase deforestation and development of public/state land would be much better spent on staffing the RI Natural Heritage Program to protect the biodiversity we have in Rhode Island. Public lands in public hands.

Leslie M. Leister  
Cranston, RI

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** MARGARET PARSONS <mpkayak@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 2:40 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** S 2546

You don't often get email from mpkayak@cox.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I am a senior citizen who spends a great deal of time in the forests of Rhode Island. I am opposed to S 2546, which would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

I have seen the destruction to our State Management Areas including Arcadia and Big River and I believe that the slash wood left behind only increases the chance of forest fires in drought conditions. It also disrupts long established hiking trails which Rhode Islanders enjoy.

Where the logging has occurred is an eyesore.

The money for these new positions would increase this destruction and the money would be better spent on staffing the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for the state.

This program was scrapped in 2007 and should be revived. Rhode Island's forests are one of its greatest assets and should be treated as such.

Rhode Island needs the Natural Heritage Program program to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Margaret Parsons  
West Greenwich, RI 02817

## Jamie Plume

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**From:** evhillyer@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 2:33 PM  
**To:** Senate Finance  
**Subject:** Writing in opposition to S 2546

**Importance:** High

You don't often get email from evhillyer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee members,

I write in strong opposition to S 2546.

The bill would add 10 logging positions to the DEM to support increased logging, including likely clearcutting, on public state-owned land.

I believe that money would be better spent on staffing the **\*Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program\*** to identify, monitor, and protect biodiversity for our state.

Instead, the S 2546 designation would provide money to destroy our state forests through funding these logging operations.

The RI Natural Heritage Program, which hasn't existed since 2007, is needed to protect the state's rare and endangered species whose habitats are vulnerable to logging and development.

Please do not pass S 2546, which is just a deforestation bill, and instead support bringing back the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Hillyer, DVM, ELS, MWC

Newport, RI