

Subject: FOR S3231

Dear Chair and Esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Dr. Alison Tovar, and I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences at the Brown University School of Public Health. I write to express my strong support for S3231, the Green Bond, and to urge the Committee to ensure that this year's bond includes robust funding for farmland preservation, open space, and clean water protection.

My work focuses on food systems, nutrition, and the environmental determinants of health. Access to farmland, clean water, and healthy ecosystems are fundamental to population health they shape what people eat, the resilience of our local food economy, and the long-term sustainability of our communities. Protecting these resources is not only an environmental imperative, but a public health one.

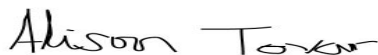
The Green Bond has historically been one of Rhode Island's most important tools for farmland preservation, open space protection, and conservation. Rhode Island is the second most densely populated state in the country, and once farmland is lost to development, it is effectively impossible to recover. Voters consistently approve these bonds because they understand the value of conservation—but those investments only reach the ballot when the legislature includes them.

As we confront climate change, growing pressures on local food systems, and increasing food insecurity, preserving working farmland and open space is a forward-looking investment in Rhode Island's environmental and public health infrastructure. I respectfully urge the Committee to ensure this year's Green Bond reflects that commitment.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued leadership on these critical issues.

Sincerely,

Alison Tovar, PhD (Providence, RI)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Tovar". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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