

To: Chairman Louis DiPalma, Senate Finance Committee
From: Elise Torello, South Kingstown
Re: **SUPPORT** Senate Bill No. **3231**
Date: April 26, 2026

Dear Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elise Torello and I live in South Kingstown. I strongly believe that there is a critical need for \$17.5 Million in additional funding in the FY 2027 Green Economy Bond, especially \$10 Million for conservation programs. Therefore, I SUPPORT Senate Bill 3231.

I wholeheartedly believe that open spaces are incredibly important to everyone's mental and physical health. I am a hiker, paddler, birder, amateur botanist and mycologist, and lifelong wildlife enthusiast. Having open spaces where I can pursue these activities, alone and with friends and family, is absolutely critical to my mental and physical well-being. Having wonderful protected areas, whether land trust-owned properties like Duval, Browning Woods, and Alewife Trails in South Kingstown, Wahaneeta Preserve in Westerly, Pratt in West Greenwich, and Mill Pond Preserve in Charlestown; Nature Conservancy properties like Francis Carter Preserve; Audubon properties like Parker Woodland and Fisherville Brook Preserve; and state properties like Tillinghast and the Great Swamp benefits ALL of us, whether we recreate there or not, by protecting clean air and water and storing carbon. I am fortunate to live near large tracts of protected land (South Kingstown Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and Audubon) and have multiple trail cameras deployed near my home. I see an amazing abundance of wildlife including bobcats, coyotes, mink, river otters, deer, songbirds, raptors, and even a bear, thanks to the availability of ample connected forest habitat and clean water (look for my YouTube channel!). Having these habitats and animals here in Rhode Island makes us all richer. And I haven't even mentioned the importance of preserving agricultural land to not just our local farmers, but to all of us who value locally-grown food! Conservation is a great investment on behalf of ALL Rhode Islanders!

Thank you so much for reading my letter! I am urgently asking that you include \$17.5 Million to the FY2027 Green Economy Bond to provide funding to conserve our important Rhode Island habitats, farmlands, and outdoor recreational opportunities.

Best wishes,

Elise Torello
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South Kingstown