

April 27, 2026

Chairman Louis DiPalma
Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Palma,

My name is Jonaliza D. Ceklic, and I am a resident of Richmond. I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 3231 and the inclusion of \$17.5 million in additional funding for the FY 2027 Green Economy Bond, especially \$10 million for conservation programs.

As a parent, RI's trails, forests, beaches, and open spaces mean a great deal to my family. We use them often for walks, fresh air, and time together, but also as a way to teach our daughter to appreciate nature and understand why these places matter. Some of our best family moments happen outside on a trail, exploring the shoreline, or simply being somewhere quiet and natural together. Access to these spaces gives families like ours a healthy, affordable way to connect with each other and with the environment around us.

Living in Richmond, I also understand how important it is to protect the landscapes that make Rhode Island special. Conserved lands help preserve wildlife habitat, support climate resilience, reduce development pressure, and maintain the character of our communities. They are not luxuries, they are part of the infrastructure that supports public health, recreation, and long-term quality of life.

I respectfully ask the Committee to support strong investments in conservation and recreation through this bond package, including funding for local open space grants, state land conservation, farmland preservation, and outdoor recreation improvements. These investments help ensure that families like mine, and future generations, continue to have access to the places that make Rhode Island such a wonderful place to live—the reason we moved here in the first place.

I urge the Committee to include \$17.5 million in additional funding for the FY 2027 Green Economy Bond, including \$10 million for conservation programs, and to support Senate Bill 3231. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jonaliza D. Ceklic
Richmond, RI