

Testimony of Frances and Peter Trafton, Providence Rhode Island, in support of Support of S3231, Senate Finance Committee, April 28, 2026.

Dear Chair DiPalma and Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

We are Frances and Peter Trafton of Providence Rhode Island. We write because there is, yet again, a critical need for additional conservation support in the FY 2027 Green Economy Bond. Regrettably, such specifically designated funds are again missing from the proposed budget. We believe that you and your committee, as you have previously, should support these programs.

We have lived in Rhode Island since 1984. We raised 3 children here. We treasure the outdoors, typically in public spaces, thanks to land trusts and otherwise conserved properties. We still hike, walk, and bicycle and happily share these activities with our 2 young grandsons and their parents. When we lived there, Fran was President of the East Providence Land Conservation Trust. We support the Sakonnet Preservation Association, the Ag Trust and other organizations in Little Compton where we now spend much of our time. We depend upon several local farmers, both urban and rural. We appreciate their many contributions to the state, the fact that preserved farmland has been crucial for their presence, and that it is both rare and costly. Rhode Island needs more local farms. The state needs more land that is preserved for public access, open space, plants and wildlife. Private and organization funds, often shared with the state, have been crucial for land preservation. We are well aware that available funding is often the difference between land preservation and housing developments that will permanently limit the extent of our shared natural lands.

For these reasons, we urge you to help all Rhode Islanders have and share the forests, fields, farms, paths and trails that our state needs for good health and pleasure. An additional \$10 million devoted to land conservation as your 3231 provides, a small fraction of the state's budget would be a very significant step in the right direction, supporting outdoor recreation grants, the state open space program, matching programs, and farmland preservation.

Thank you very much for considering our input and personal support. We hope that you will be able to increase the available resources with another biennial investment in the environment.

Respectfully,

Frances & Peter Trafton