

To the Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

I am writing in support of H7293, The Old Growth Protection Act,

I am speaking to this bill as someone with a background in ecology and climate science communications.

I couldn't agree more with the legislative purpose of this bill. The findings are well laid out, and provide all the evidence that is needed to support moving forward to protect some of our State's most valuable natural assets - that one percent of Rhode Island's forests that are over one hundred (100) years old.

When I discovered that not one single acre of public land is protected, I was surprised. But what surprised me even more is that everyone who cares about conservation wouldn't get behind this bill, and work together through the etymological tricky spots, so that we could all come out on the other side and begin the long overdue process of protecting the few patches of mature forests that we have in this state.

I would urge anyone who values conservation to support this bill, and if there is language that doesn't work for you, find solutions that are in character with the purpose of this bill. It is hard for me to understand why we can't come together to protect that one percent of forests on public lands that are over one hundred (100) years old.

Respectfully,
Diana Kushner
Hope Valley