



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

April 4, 2024

TO: The House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
RE: Opposition to H 7562, An Act Related to Fish and Wildlife – Furbearing Animals

Chair Bennett, First Vice Chair Phillips, Second Vice Chair Carson, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of our Rhode Island members and supporters, the Humane Society of the United States submits its opposition to H 7562, regarding the DEM's authority to promulgate a list of "furbearers" to be hunted and trapped in Rhode Island.

If passed, the DEM could keep some of the animals on the current list of furbearers, and maintain hunting and trapping seasons on them. But any species removed from that list by the DEM would be subjected to unlimited and unregulated hunting and trapping.

We oppose this measure because the DEM already has the authority to, and currently does, regulate the hunting and trapping of these species through established seasons, bag limits, size limits, and methods of take. There is simply no need to remove any species from the statute. And for any species not currently on the list, the DEM has the authority under R.I. Gen. Laws § 20-1-12 to establish regulations around them.

Further, removing such protections for a species would be an abrogation of the solemn duty of the DEM to manage the public's wildlife according to the best available science, and to ensure that all of the public's wildlife is protected from random and unregulated killing.

For the reasons stated above, the HSUS asks you to reject H 7562. Thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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