

HOUSE BILL NO. H5099- RELATING TO HIGHWAYS -- CONSTRUCTION AND  
MAINTENANCE OF STATE ROADS

**Support/**For this bill

I work for the Pawtucket-based non-profit organization Groundwork Rhode Island, helping to increase tree canopy to improve air quality, reduce extreme heat, and absorb stormwater. Mowing is an enemy for many reasons. It's refreshing to see a bill that would reduce the use of fossil fuel emissions landscaping areas people are literally speeding past. I think that it's particularly essential that the bill includes the planting of carefully selected native species. It's critical to include this, as otherwise the bill's passage would most certainly cause more harm than good. Natives will additionally support the biodiversity that is increasingly threatened. I hope, too, that beyond the planting, there are funds allocated to properly watering and stewarding these new plantings. Especially for any new trees, which need at least 2-3 years of proper establishment care. I appreciate the bill also includes using expertise to implement the funds' planting plans.

In sum, I am grateful to see a bill like this come to this committee and truly hope you can all fight for its passage. Our planet is in a gravely dangerous time, made exponentially and unnecessarily more dangerous with the new federal administration.

Please fight for us all and get this bill passed!

Thank you,

Currie Touloumtzis

North Providence, RI