



RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
235 Promenade Street, Room 425
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

February 27, 2025

The Honorable David A. Bennett
Chairman
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: H 5293 An Act Relating to Health and Safety

Dear Chairman Bennett,

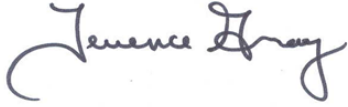
Thank you for providing the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) the opportunity to comment on H 5293, which is intended to enhance public knowledge of the proper ways to dispose of textiles. DEM supports this legislation.

H 5293 directs DEM and the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) to implement a public education and outreach campaign about how to properly dispose of textile waste such as clothing, towels, linens, and sheets. It would also require DEM to promulgate regulations related to textile waste collection and recycling no later than June 1, 2026, and requires private entities involved in textile collection to submit data to DEM annually. According to 2015 data from a [waste characterization study](#) completed by RIRRC, textiles comprise 5.5% of total municipal solid waste. Significantly, textiles comprised an even larger percentage of residential municipal solid waste at 7.3% or more than 22,000 tons.

DEM regulations governing municipal solid waste ([250-RICR-140-20-2](#)) currently define textiles as a recyclable material which must be segregated from other solid waste and kept in a condition which meets minimum market standards. RIRRC's online A-Z database which provides information about the proper disposal methods for different types of waste also recommends that textiles be brought to one of several private organizations. Despite this, the data referenced above indicates that there is substantial lack of public awareness about these requirements and the proper disposal methods for textiles. This legislation aims to increase public awareness of the requirements which will help to divert recyclable material from the Central Landfill and thereby extend its useable life.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on this legislation and would be pleased to make ourselves available as needed. Please feel free to contact Ryan Mulcahey, DEM Director of Legislative Affairs, at ryan.mulcahey@dem.ri.gov should you have any additional questions or wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Terrence Gray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

Terrence Gray, P.E.
Director

cc: Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
The Honorable Raymond A. Hull
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, House Policy Director