

April 9, 2025

The Honorable David A. Bennett, Chair  
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-6108 – A N A C T RELATING TO AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY -- RIGHT TO FARM

Chair Bennett and Honorable Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding House Bill 6108, An Act Relating to Agriculture and Forestry – Right to Farm.

The League represents all 39 cities and towns across the state, and we recognize that no single solution can appropriately fit the diverse needs and character of every Rhode Island community. Issues related to land use and public health, particularly those affecting residential neighborhoods, are best addressed at the local level, where officials are most familiar with their community's unique circumstances.

We appreciate the sponsor's thoughtful inclusion of language in subsection (m), which affirms the authority of individual municipalities to establish limits on the keeping of chickens by ordinance. This provision strikes an appropriate balance between promoting personal agricultural practices and preserving local authority to protect quality of life, public health, and safety.

By explicitly allowing municipalities to tailor their regulations in accordance with local needs and conditions, this legislation respects the principle of local control while acknowledging the growing interest among Rhode Islanders in backyard poultry keeping.

The League supports this approach and encourages the Committee to maintain this critical local authority provision in the final version of the bill.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued partnership in supporting policies that benefit and strengthen Rhode Island's municipalities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Environment and Natural Resources Committee