

Testimony in support of H7495: 2025 Battery-Powered Leaf Blower Pilot Rebate and Education Program

Dr. Hans Scholl, 71 Fales Avenue, Barrington, RI 02806

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To Chair Abney and the honorable Members of the House Finance Committee:

Currently, I don't know of any offering for Rhode Island residents who want their landscaping done with battery powered leaf blowers, to avoid the excessive noise and unhealthy pollution from gas-powered two-stroke leaf blowers.

As heard in their testimonies against previous years' leaf-blower bills, our landscapers hesitate to convert to quieter and cleaner electric alternatives and mostly are not willing to even try, out of fear to lose their business, or out of an assumption that the electric blowers would not be safe, reliable, or would be insufficient to get the job done. Other concerns were that there would be too many batteries needed to get through a workday. The advantages from savings on gas, or from having a healthier work place, were under-appreciated.

Electric alternatives have come a long way, and other states and towns have already enacted legislation and ordinances to phase out gas-powered leaf blowers to reduce noise, pollution and occupational and residential health impacts. There are more and more examples of early adaptors who run profitable landscaping businesses with electric equipment.

H7495 is designed to reduce the threshold for our landscapers for converting from gas-powered to electric leaf blowers by offering

- a pilot rebate program,
- professional education to address the financial, reliability and safety concerns expressed in the previous testimonies, and
- an outreach promoting the program.

I support the bill as as meaningful effort to allow our landscapers to build experience with a changing technology, to seize the opportunity to convert their business to quieter, safer and non-polluting methods, and to jump start electric landscaping offerings to our residents.

Please bring the bill to a vote in 2024.

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you to Representative Boylan for introducing this important bill.



Dr. Hans Scholl

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