

Dear House Municipal Government and Housing Committee Members,

I am for bill H 7060. I write to you as a life-long Tiverton resident residing in the north end of town far from the Seapowet Marsh. I have used this area since early childhood for the purposes of boating, bathing, fishing as well as gathering shellfish. I grew up in a working class family like most of the families that access this area regularly who do not possess the means to afford the very high price of entry to Rhode Island's public and private parks and beaches. The reality of the public use of this area is far from the image the petitioners attempt to create by describing the users as an affluent, seasonal special interest group. The use of this recreational area over time in memoriam has created a prescriptive easement to gain access to beaches and other public areas. At a time when Rhode Island and other states are struggling with preserving public access to waterways, this project is at best, ill conceived, and the government should not revoke this right in the interest of private gain.

I value the open space, sensitive ecosystem, scenic vistas, and recreational use Sapowet provides for the public. The Sapowet Marsh Wildlife Management Area was established in 1956, using federal funds, to preserve the area's open spaces and critical habitat for hunting, fishing, scenic, and recreational use. We need the state legislature to protect one of Rhode Island's most valuable ecosystems where sensitive wildlife habitat and recreational use are being threatened by increased pressure from commercial development.

Thank you,

Paul Amaral

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