

Rhode Island Land Trust Council

2025 Legislative Round-Up



Major Victory! Housing & Conservation Trust Fund Act Passes

The Rhode Island Land Trust Council is celebrating a landmark win for land conservation! The Rhode Island General Assembly passed the Housing & Conservation Trust Fund Act (H 5310 / S 711), the Council's top policy priority for 2025.

This legislation amends a 1990 law to revive the Housing & Conservation Board, and expands and diversifies its membership. While no money was allocated to the fund this year, the law creates the foundation for future investment in projects

that integrate land conservation with affordable housing. The passage of this bill ensures that we don't have to choose between protecting open space and meeting housing needs.

We're grateful to Senator Bissaillon and Representative June Speakman for championing this important legislation, and to all of our partners who helped make this happen.

Other Key Bills We Tracked in 2025

We tracked **147 bills** this session in the RI Land Trust Council [Bill Tracker](#), and weighed in on several key pieces of legislation affecting land conservation, the environment, transportation, and access to farmland. Here are a few highlights:

Urban and Small Farms Success Act

This act would have provided tax exemptions for small and urban farmers under 5 acres, and defined both urban and small farms in state law.

→ *Did not pass*

Rodenticides Pilot Program

Rodenticides negatively impact local wildlife populations like raptors, degrade soil and plant communities, and reduce biodiversity. This bill would have created integrated pest management pilots in interested municipalities.

→ *Passed the Senate, but did not move in the House*

Green Amendment to the State Constitution

This bill proposed a constitutional amendment to Article 1, providing for a right to clean air, soil, climate, and the environment's natural values.

→ *Passed the Senate, but did not move in the House*

Bottle Bill

After the 2024 Bottle Bill Study Commission released their comprehensive report earlier this year, three bottle bills were introduced in the general assembly- an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)/Bottle Bill combination bill, a stand alone bottle bill, and a stand alone EPR bill. The Council strongly supported the comprehensive bottle bill with EPR. Unfortunately, what passed this session was a completely gutted version that directs DEM to do a needs assessment on what it would take to implement a Bottle Bill in Rhode Island.

→ *Stripped-down version passed*

RIPTA & Transit Funding

This year, the Council joined the coalition supporting closing the \$32 Million RIPTA budget deficit. An increase to Public transit funding was included in the state budget, but it was not enough to close the gap, leaving an \$18 Million deficit that will result in layoffs and service cuts.

→ *Did not close the budget deficit*

Did you know: The RI Land Trust Council sends weekly legislative updates during the session through the RI Land Trust Google Group. [Join here!](#)

Federal Update: Major Threats to Conservation

While we celebrate the passing of our priority bill this session, we are deeply concerned by the direction of federal budget and policy proposals. The budget proposes sweeping cuts to core conservation, climate, and environmental programs, and includes troubling efforts to dismantle scientific research, regulatory protections, and programs that support environmental justice initiatives.

RILTC continues to advocate for a strong Farm Bill, robust conservation funding, and federal policies that center resilience, equity, and local leadership in protecting our shared resources.



Thank You for Your Support

Your volunteer advocacy and financial support make this work possible. Together, we're building a future where every Rhode Islander has access to clean air and water, open spaces for recreation, and healthy local food. Our success at the state house isn't possible without your support. Please consider making a meaningful contribution to the RI Land Trust Council today. [Donate here!](#)