

No: 2026-21

TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RHODE ISLAND HOUSE BILL H7071

RELATING TO THE PROHIBITION ON THE SALE OF INVASIVE PLANTS

WHEREAS, invasive plant species pose significant environmental, ecological, and economic risks to municipalities across the State of Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, invasive species displace native vegetation, degrade wildlife habitat, and create long-term maintenance and remediation costs for municipalities, land trusts, and private property owners; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Middletown has experienced persistent and well-documented challenges associated with invasive plant species, including Japanese Knotweed and invasive phragmites, which are prevalent within the community and difficult and costly to control once established; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Middletown has previously undertaken public education efforts through its Conservation Commission, including informational sessions and fact sheets, to raise awareness about invasive plants and their impacts on local ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Middletown has previously undertaken efforts to protect local beaches and sand dunes by planting native beach grasses to counter the growth of invasive beach grasses; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Middletown has included plans to reduce invasive species in its updated Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, these efforts demonstrate that invasive plants are a recognized and ongoing concern within the Town, affecting public lands, private properties, and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, many residents unknowingly introduce invasive plants through lawful retail purchases, resulting in unintended consequences that extend beyond individual properties; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island House Bill H7071 would prohibit the sale and distribution of designated non-native invasive plants, aligning Rhode Island with other New England states and emphasizing prevention as a cost-effective strategy; and

WHEREAS, reducing the introduction of invasive plants at the point of sale would complement local education and management efforts already undertaken by municipalities such as Middletown;

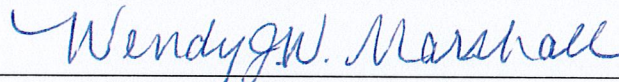
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Middletown Town Council hereby expresses its support for Rhode Island House Bill H7071 as a reasonable and proactive measure to limit the spread of invasive plant species; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council encourages the General Assembly and the Department of Environmental Management to implement the legislation in a manner that is practical, enforceable, and coordinated with existing municipal inspection and education efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Town's legislative delegation, the Speaker of the House, and the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.

FEBRUARY 17, 2026

READ AND PASSED IN COUNCIL



Wendy J. W. Marshall, MMC
Town Clerk

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