Testimony of John Flaherty, Deputy Director,
Grow Smart Rhode Island,
Submitted to the Senate Finance Committee in support of
Article 5, Bond Referendum Question 3
Project – Green Economy Bond ($48,500,000)
March 14, 2018

Grow Smart RI is a non-profit public interest group representing a broad coalition of groups and concerned citizens committed to strengthening Rhode Island’s economy in a sustainable and equitable way.

We promote such growth by advocating for best practices in compact mixed use development and redevelopment in revitalized urban, town and village centers, investment in multimodal transportation infrastructure and responsible stewardship of our natural resources, including our farmland, forests, coastline and the Bay.

That’s why Grow Smart RI strongly urges your committee’s passage of the Green Economy Bond of $48,500,000 proposed in the Governor’s budget for inclusion on the 2018 ballot. We encourage your support of all nine (9) components of this proposal which we believe are smart investments in Rhode Island’s future.

We’re particularly enthusiastic about the proposals to:

- Invest $5 million in the State Bikeway Development Program to advance completion of Rhode Island’s popular, but still disconnected network of bikepaths
- Invest $4 million in Brownfield Remediation and Economic Development to continue the state’s success incentivizing the redevelopment and productive reuse of polluted sites, and
- Invest $4 million in farmland and open space conservation which leverages significant private resources to preserve farmland and open space, both of which contribute to Rhode Island’s unique and valuable urban/rural balance.

Grow Smart respectfully encourages passage of the Green Economy Bond in its entirety as an investment in sustainable economic growth and quality of place.

Respectfully,

John Flaherty
Deputy Director
Grow Smart RI