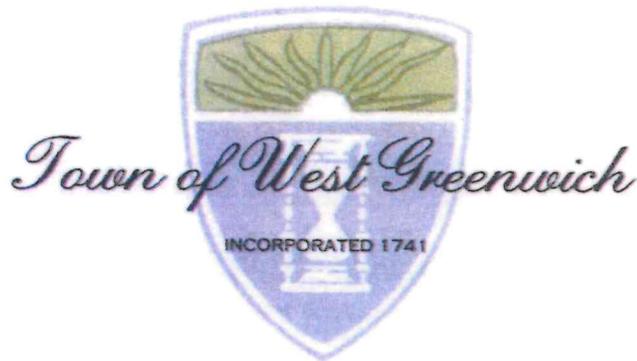


TEL: 401-392-3800
FAX: 401-392-3805



MAILING ADDRESS
280 VICTORY HIGHWAY
WEST GREENWICH
RHODE ISLAND 02817-2113

**TOWN OF WEST GREENWICH, RHODE ISLAND
TOWN COUNCIL
2026-2**

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2026—H7127, SECTION 6,
ENACTMENT OF R.I. GENERAL LAWS § 42-17.1-47 TRANSFER OF
MANAGEMENT OF BIG RIVER RESERVOIR LANDS TO THE RHODE
ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FOR USE
AS OPEN SPACE**

WHEREAS, the Big River Reservoir project was established under Section 23 of Chapter 133 of the Public Laws of 1964, and pursuant thereto, substantial tracts of land within the Town of West Greenwich were acquired by the State of Rhode Island for the purpose of developing a public water supply reservoir; and

WHEREAS, the Big River Reservoir as originally envisioned has not been constructed, leaving these lands largely undeveloped and unused for their original intended purpose; and

WHEREAS, these lands possess significant environmental, ecological, recreational, and scenic value and represent an important opportunity for permanent conservation and open space protection; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 2026—H7127 (the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Bill), Section 6, proposes the enactment of Rhode Island General Laws § 42-17.1-47, which would transfer the management of lands acquired for the Big River Reservoir to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM); and

WHEREAS, RIDEM has the expertise, statutory authority, and mission to manage such lands for conservation, maximizing forest sustainability in a proactive manner, environmental stewardship, passive recreation, and public access consistent with open space purposes; and

WHEREAS, transferring management of these lands to RIDEM would provide long-term protection of natural resources, sustainable support responsible public use, and align with statewide and local goals for land conservation and environmental sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the Town of West Greenwich has a strong interest in ensuring that lands within its boundaries are managed in a manner that preserves rural character, protects natural resources, and benefits current and future residents; and

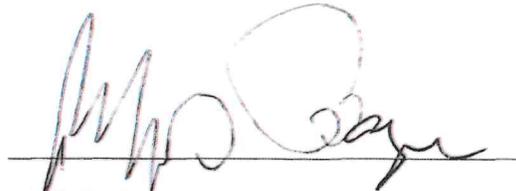
WHEREAS, the Town of West Greenwich strongly encourages the State of Rhode Island to further protect the Big River Management Area with a permanent conservation easement and declare it a State Forest, reserving the right of the Water Resources Board to develop wells for future water needs, and transferring management to RIDEM is a positive step in this direction;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of West Greenwich that the Town Council hereby expresses its support for House Bill 2026—H7127, Section 6, and the enactment of Rhode Island General Laws § 42-17.1-47; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council supports the transfer of management of the Big River Reservoir lands to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management for use and preservation as open space; and

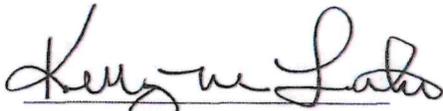
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, the President of the Rhode Island Senate, the Town's delegation to the Rhode Island General Assembly, and the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.

Adopted by the West Greenwich Town Council on this 4th day of February, 2026.



Mark D. Boyer
West Greenwich Town Council President

ATTEST:



Kelly M. Laiho, Town Clerk

