



Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr, Chair
House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903
RE: Support Forest Conservation Act S 470

April 5, 2021

Dear Chair Solomon and Committee Members

I support H 6169 with amendments as detailed below. This bill has some good intentions. However, Rhode Island still desperately needs reforms to their renewable energy siting programs to encourage the siting of renewable energy to be concentrated in developed and disturbed locations and avoid the further loss and fragmentation of forests. **This bill will not prevent further forest loss.** The need to prevent forest conversion to other uses is critical. Trees are the best technology for carbon removal and according to the New England Forestry Foundation, the forests in New England have the potential to achieve 33% of our necessary carbon reductions to comply with our climate change targets. Continuing to encourage forest loss for solar development is counterproductive and will impede Rhode Island from complying with the Act on Climate.

The following is my proposed amendment. The current language in the bill would still allow developers to build projects larger than 10MW by circumventing the contiguous parcel language in the bill.

(6) It is prohibited to co-locate multiple renewable energy resources (~~delete: on one or more contiguous parcels,~~ and add [within a half mile radius](#)) unless the total capacity of the co-located projects is less than ten megawatts 24 (10MW) in aggregate. This prohibition does not apply to projects that are wholly sited in preferred 25 siting locations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Sincerely,

Scott Millar, Director Community Assistance and Conservation
Grow Smart Rhode Island