

2014 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ENVIRONMENT

- Lawmakers approved the creation of the Climate Change Council charged with coordinating efforts to ensure the state is doing everything in its power to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions while advancing the public's understanding of changes in sea level, severe weather events and critical infrastructure vulnerability.
- Legislators expanded the distributed generation program, which will encourage the development of small-scale commercial and residential renewable energy projects around the state.
- Under legislation passed this year, beginning in 2016, institutions that are large producers of food scraps will be required to dispose of them by composting onsite, sending them to be used agriculturally, such as for as animal feed, or by having them processed by a composting or anaerobic digesting facility, if such a facility is available within 15 miles.
- Rhode Island can participate in regional efforts to address electric price volatility and reliability and to pursue energy infrastructure expansion projects for electricity and natural gas, as well as clean energy resources, under a bill sought by Governor Chafee and approved by lawmakers.
- A new law encourages job creation in the renewable energy sector, specifically in the realm of solar thermal installations, by offering new licenses for renewable energy professionals and solar thermal professionals.
- The Assembly approved legislation to increase littering fines and as well as legislation allowing cities and towns to keep 30 percent of those fines.