



March 21, 2024

Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.  
Chair, House Committee on Corporations  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02908

**Re: The Nature Conservancy Supports House Bill 7616 to Establish the Renewable Ready Program**

Dear Chair Solomon,

The Nature Conservancy is grateful for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 7616 and thanks Representatives Speakman, Carson, Cortvriend, Cotter, and McGaw for sponsoring it.

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Here in Rhode Island, The Nature Conservancy protects more than 14,000 acres of land and has partnered on the permanent conservation of more than 35,000 acres of land with partner organizations. As the state's largest land trust, The Nature Conservancy recognizes the need to protect forests and other open spaces that are essential to the state's biodiversity and Rhode Islander's quality of life. We also recognize the urgency of the climate crisis and the need to rapidly decarbonize our economy and meet the mandates of the 2021 Act on Climate.

The Renewable Ready program as described in House Bill 7616, would allow the state to identify and assess feasibility for "preferred" sites for renewable energy development, including contaminated sites, rooftops, or otherwise previously developed areas. The Nature Conservancy strongly supports removing barriers to both renewable energy development and protection of forestland – and this legislation would enable development on these preferred sites.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony and are available for any questions.

Sincerely,

Angela Tuoni  
RI Climate Programs Manager  
The Nature Conservancy  
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