

April 1, 2025

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chairman, House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

RE: H-5575 – Relating to Public Utilities & Carriers – Procurement of Nuclear Power

Dear Chairman Solomon:

On behalf of Rhode Island Energy, I write in strong **support** of H-5575, which would allow the electric distribution company to procure nuclear electricity for the benefit of its customers through long-term contracts. This bill does not mandate the construction and/or siting of *new* nuclear generation facilities; rather, like recent offshore wind procurements, it would allow Rhode Island Energy to issue market-competitive requests for proposals (RFPs) – *on a state or multi-state basis* – to secure clean, reliable, and affordable baseload generation at scale. Indeed, timely consideration and adoption of this legislation will also **facilitate coordination with neighboring states**, including Connecticut and Massachusetts, where such authority already exists. Our Company respectfully urges the Committee to advance H-5575 and applauds Chairman Solomon and Representatives O'Brien, Lima, Kennedy, and Santucci for bringing this practical legislation forward on a bi-partisan basis.

Rhode Island Energy provides essential energy services to more than 770,000 customers across the Ocean State through the delivery of electricity and natural gas. Our team of 1,400 union and non-union employees is dedicated to helping Rhode Island customers and communities thrive, while supporting the transition to a cleaner energy future – in a safe, reliable, and affordable manner.

Because nuclear electricity is also clean electricity, **H-5575 fosters new opportunities to expand Rhode Island's portfolio of carbon-free energy, consistent with Act on Climate goals, *without* impacting existing programs supporting local renewable development.** Today, nuclear power is New England's only significant source of baseload (24/7/365), carbon-free electricity – vital to energy security, grid reliability, and resource diversification. The region's remaining nuclear generation facilities – located in Connecticut and New Hampshire – supplied nearly one-quarter of the region's electricity in 2024; across the U.S., nuclear provides nearly half of the nation's carbon-free electricity.

The benefits of H-5575 are clear:

- **Unlocks** new opportunities to secure clean, affordable, and reliable energy from domestic, non-fossil fuel-based generation resources;
- **Authorizes** procurement from existing nuclear facilities – not the siting of new plants;
- **Enables** multi-state competitive procurements for cost-effective, carbon-free energy;

- **Supports** electric reliability and energy resource diversification for Rhode Island;
- **Provides** a new tool to help manage energy market price volatility;
- **Ensures** independent, transparent regulatory review by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), as well as consultation with the state's Office of Energy Resources (OER) and Division of Public Utilities & Carriers (DPUC); and
- **Proposes** no changes or other adjustments to the state's existing renewable programs.

Importantly, Rhode Island Energy views nuclear generation as a strong complement to – *not a replacement for* – other clean or renewable energy resources. In fact, this bill does not propose any changes to the state's existing suite of renewable energy programs or infringe on the continued local development of solar, offshore wind, etc. However, we must acknowledge the headwinds coming out of Washington D.C. that have effectively stymied utility-scale renewable investments – particularly offshore wind. If Rhode Island is to achieve its Act on Climate goals while tempering utility bill impacts, it needs viable, near-term options to secure clean, affordable, and reliable electricity. H-5575 provides such an opportunity and does so while encouraging competitive outcomes and ensuring thorough regulation and oversight by expert state agencies.

In closing, Rhode Island Energy truly appreciates the leadership shown by Chairman Solomon and the bill's co-sponsors in bringing this timely, practical legislation forward. Our Company looks forward to working with the Committee to advance H-5575 and further Rhode Island's clean energy future in a safe, reliable, and affordable manner.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,



Nicholas S. Ucci
Director of Government Affairs

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Corporations Committee