



Climate Jobs Rhode Island
1540 Pontiac Ave Suite A,
Cranston, RI 02920

April 1, 2025

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon
House Corporations
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support H-5816, Affordable Clean Energy Security Act

Dear Chair Solomon and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. I am submitting these comments on behalf of Climate Jobs Rhode Island and I write in support of House bill 5816, the Affordable Clean Energy Security Act.

Climate Jobs Rhode Island (CJRI) is a coalition of more than thirty (30) labor unions, environmental, and community organizations committed to working together to make Rhode Island a national leader in the development of a resilient 21st century economy through a Just Transition, that centers our frontline communities and frontline workers. Our members range from those who represent the frontline workers who build, repair and maintain Rhode Island's critical infrastructure and energy systems, to community groups like the United Way of RI and Childhood Lead Action Project, to environmental organizations like the Nature Conservancy, and Clean Water Action.

This bill is critical for Rhode Island to meet its energy, climate, and economic goals. With increasing energy demand, offshore wind procurement is a necessary step to secure reliable, clean energy sources to meet future needs. This bill requires Rhode Island to procure 1,200 MW of offshore wind by 2029. According to the Road to 100% Electricity Report published in 2021, Rhode Island needs up to 1,100 MW of offshore wind to meet its 100% Renewable Energy Standard. So far, only 430 MW has been procured, with 630 MW pending contract execution with SouthCoast Wind. Without new procurement measures, Rhode Island risks missing its mandated climate goals from the Act on Climate, facing grid reliability issues, and enduring ongoing high power prices, particularly during the winter.

H-5816 sets a strong precedent by requiring offshore wind developers to adhere to labor peace agreements, pay prevailing wages, and maximize local hiring and contracting opportunities. These provisions help to ensure that the jobs created by Rhode Island offshore wind industry are

high-quality, family-sustaining jobs with fair wages and benefits. Additionally, this bill prioritizes employment and business opportunities for workers from historically marginalized and disadvantaged communities. By incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion plans into the offshore wind procurement process, we can break down barriers to good-paying jobs and ensure that the benefits of our clean energy transition are shared equitably across the state. This approach not only strengthens our workforce but also fosters long-term economic resilience in communities that have historically been left behind.

H-5816 also acknowledges the critical role of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs in building a skilled workforce for the offshore wind industry. By requiring developers to support a guaranteed pipeline of workforce opportunities to allow increased apprenticeship and family-sustaining wages, this bill helps create sustainable career pathways in the growing clean energy economy. Investing in training and workforce development will help to ensure that Rhode Island workers, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, are prepared to take on these good-paying, union jobs.

Finally, this legislation ensures that ratepayer interests are protected by promoting economic and environmental benefits, including enhanced grid reliability and mitigation of energy cost volatility. These long term investments in clean energy infrastructure will drive economic growth, lower emissions, and secure Rhode Island's position as a national leader in offshore wind development.

I urge you to pass H-5816 to guarantee that our clean energy transition uplifts Rhode Island's workforce, advances labor standards, and ensures equitable access to economic opportunity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you,



Aislinn Hanley
Program Director, Climate Jobs Rhode Island