

Testimony in support of H5816: Affordable Clean Energy Security Act

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To Chair Solomon and the honorable Members of the House Corporations Committee:

H5816 is a massively important bill to Rhode Island, which I support in full. The opportunities of passing and implementing this bill are extremely beneficial for our state. Job creation and economic growth abound with this bill and the long-term benefits to cement RI as the offshore wind leader are epic. RI has a competitive advantage here with offshore wind. This fact cannot be overstated, but only if we pass this bill and seize the challenge that is literally at our doorstep. Consistent public sector investment in offshore wind is essential and will attract more private investment to RI at a time when such investment is needed more than ever. There is so much at stake by not accelerating offshore wind energy in RI. Neighboring state are stepping up to secure offshore wind contracts (and good paying innovative jobs). We should not squander this oversized opportunity for offshore wind.

The RI Act on Climate serves as the mandate for reaching our greenhouse gas emission reductions targets. Offshore wind is the state's ace in the hole which can (and should) get us to the 100% renewable electricity by 2033. We have the answer to our renewable energy mandate right here, right now. We just need our RI State government to step up and pass legislation like H5816. Energy independence has never been more important than today and offshore wind along with solar is the way to get there. I live on the water and can tell you first hand how windy it get during the fall and winter months. Every time the wind blows I think about how much "free" energy is available for humanity. Offshore wind perfectly complements solar. It is strongest at night and in fall and winter, while solar produces during the day and more during spring and summer. Together, offshore wind and solar can provide an optimal energy balance that favors RI residents, RI workers, and the natural world we all depend on for life.

RI residents need urgent action by our state government. Falter, and dirty, expensive fossil fuels use (and possibly new powerplants) become a reality. Let's lead the way forward and not give fossil fuel companies (and the feds) more reasons to harm RI.

H5816 is a great bill that will let RI meet its energy, climate, and economic goals, while ensuring grid reliability for generations to come.

Please bring the bill to a vote in 2025!

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you Representative Handy for introducing this important bill.

George Voutes

*George Voutes*