

Written testimony in support of H7068, H7069, H7178, H7269, H7726, H7727, H7879, H7884 and in opposition to H 7139, H7174, H7175, H7176, H7177, H7523, H7611

Timmons Roberts, Providence

(submitted as an individual, not for any institution)

Dear House Corporations Committee:

I'm here to remind the Committee and House leadership about the importance of

I support a number of bills you are considering to keep Rhode Island moving forward on the transition off fossil fuels. The war in Iran makes crystal clear why continued dependence on oil and "natural" (methane) gas is self-destructive. We face an affordability crisis, but doubling down on volatile, environmentally disastrous products will set back this chamber's efforts, which have been decades in the making.

I would flag up a few I'm especially focused on: allowing balcony solar (H7269) and e-permitting for solar (H7726), creating a study commission on next steps on procuring offshore wind (H7727) and thermal networks (H7879). But H7884 may be most important, as it will keep the federal government's extreme efforts from undermining all our protections.

I'm deeply concerned about the emboldened group of legislators that see this moment as an opportunity to roll back all the state's efforts to address climate change and make us more resilient. In particular, the idea of stopping our energy efficiency programs is baffling.

I know you're hearing a drumbeat that utility bills are out of control. Rolling back the state's climate and clean energy programs will not make your pain go away. The Governor's budget proposal would save people on average \$15 a month off their utility bills—several years from now! With the wild fluctuations in energy costs across the seasons, your constituents will not notice these changes this summer, and those who most need utility relief need far more than this (\$15 will not help those \$1000 in arrears on their RIE bills). Across-the-board cuts in the smallest part of the utility bills make no sense to help them.

You are hearing an orchestrated influence campaign to dismantle what you've spent two decades building; it is funded by the fossil fuel industry and its allies. The Koch-brothers funded State Policy Network, an extremist bill-mill, and its affiliate Americans for Prosperity, are providing bills and the political noise to make it appear the support is

widespread. Be careful: this rollback will not make your pain go away or help you in September—many of your voters elected you to move us forward on clean energy, not to roll over and rollback.

In summary,

**I'm in favor of:**

H7068 (Solomon et al.) on transmission spending review

H7069 (McGaw et al.) removing coal from “renewable” fuel list

H7178 (Phillips et al.) creates a solar siting task force

H7269 (Speakman et al.) allowing balcony solar

H7726 (Boylan et al.) allowing solar e-permitting and expedited issuance

H7727 (Handy et al.) creating an offshore wind procurement study commission

H7879 (Cortvriend et al.) study of thermal energy networks in Rhode Island

H7884 (Handy et al.) backstopping energy and water laws if feds roll them back

**I'm opposed strongly to:**

H 7139 (Place et al.) slowing renewables programs down

H7174 (Paplauskas et al.) repealing energy efficiency charge

H7175 (Chippendale et al.) Requiring RIE to procure methane gas pipeline capacity

H7176 (Chippendale et al.) repealing Renewable Energy Growth (REG) program

H7177 (Chippendale et al.) moratorium on net metering, subsidies on heat pumps, and contracts on wind and solar

H7523 (Quattrocchi et al.) five year moratorium on REG, renewables and energy efficiency program charges on electricity bills

H7611 (Lima et al.) Gutting the Renewable Energy Standard

Thank you so much for stepping up to protect our state's precious environment. It's our constitutional right, and the decades of work you've done are at risk under the current attack.

Timmons Roberts

Providence

**Attachment:** Timeline of climate and clean energy legislation in the Rhode Island Legislature. From: <https://www.climatedevlab.brown.edu/post/who-s-obstructing-climate-action-in-the-rhode-island-legislature>

# Timeline of Rhode Island Climate and Energy Milestones 2004-2025

