

Testimony in opposition to H 7177: Moratorium on Net Metering, Long-Term Contracts and Subsidies for Heat Pumps

Dr. Saskia van Wees, North Providence, RI

Date of Hearing: March 19, 2026

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

I oppose H 7177. As a North Providence homeowner and someone who has followed energy policy for years, I find this bill both shortsighted and economically self-defeating.

Countries across the globe are investing heavily in solar, wind, and heat pump technology because they see where the economy is going. This is not a controversial observation — it is what the data show. A bill that shuts down net metering, blocks long-term clean energy contracts, and eliminates heat pump incentives opts Rhode Island out of that future for no good reason.

Net metering is what makes rooftop solar financially viable for ordinary homeowners. Ending it doesn't ban solar — it just makes the math not work. The same goes for heat pump subsidies. These programs make clean energy technology accessible to working families, not just wealthy ones.

It is worth noting that this bill was filed the same day as H 7175, which would mandate new long-term gas contracts. Together they form a coherent agenda: lock in fossil fuel infrastructure, eliminate clean energy alternatives. That may benefit certain industry interests. It does not benefit Rhode Island ratepayers.

Please reject H 7177.

Dr. Saskia van Wees

March 18, 2026