

Testimony in support of H7269: Portable Solar Generation Devices

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

Portable solar generation devices, also known as “balcony solar”, or “plug-in solar” offer a simple way to expand solar power across the state of RI. For those that cannot deploy rooftop solar (renters, condominium owners, cost constraint residents...) portable solar systems plug into standard wall outlets and deploy like a household appliance.

Such systems are safe to install and operate, require no electricians, no permits, no roof-work, and no utility approval. Installation takes 10-15 minutes and can save households \$100-400 annually on electricity bills. The systems pay for themselves in several years with system life expectancy of 20+ years, and zero tax-payer dollars required to implement or operate. How’s that for an amazing ROI!!!

At a time when RI is struggling to meet the 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction mandate of the Rhode Island Act on Climate, smaller energy contributions replicated at scale are worth pursuing today. This is absolutely possible with portable solar.

Germany has the longest experience with portable solar generation, with more than 1 million portable solar systems installed, generating capacity of hundreds of Megawatts and with no reported safety incidents. Utah and Virginia passing legislation with unanimous bipartisan support. The Utah law exempts compliant portable solar generation devices from burdensome interconnection requirements, giving residents accessible, affordable clean energy without red tape. More than ten others States are introducing portable solar generation device bills in 2026. H7269 is an exact copy of the bill that passed in Utah, and gives Rhode Island the opportunity to become a leading State to empower its residents with this simple, proven technology, with the added benefit that it will not cost tax payer money.

Passing H7269 will supplement other bills that simplify the permitting requirements for rooftop solar, like the 2026 Solar Cost Reduction Act. This is overdue, because the main reason that we pay three times as much for solar installations in the US compared to countries like Australia is the excessive waste of time, money and red tape during our costly permitting processes. Connecting portable solar generation devices is safer than connecting portable generators.

Despite years of experience with the technology as being safe, Rhode Island Energy has expressed concerns about the safety of portable solar generation devices. RIE will likely oppose the bill as written. RIE's position is without merit and should be discarded in favor of helping RI residents deploy portable solar and lower their energy costs.

Please bring the bill to a vote in 2026.

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

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