



March 18, 2026

RE: SEIA Support FOR H7726

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon Jr.
Chair, House Committee on Corporations State House
82 Smith Street Providence, RI 02903

To the Chair Solomon and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony on H7726: The 2026 Solar Cost Reduction Act on behalf of the Solar Energy Industries Association, SEIA.

Founded in 1974, SEIA is the national trade association for the solar and storage industries, building a comprehensive vision for the advancement of these technologies. SEIA works with our 1,200+ member companies, as well as other strategic partners, to shape fair market rules that promote competition and the growth of reliable, low-cost energy storage and solar power.

Reviewing and approving residential rooftop solar permitting applications requires a considerable amount of time and resources from local governments. The plan review process generally takes about 45 to 60 minutes to complete. They are checking for code compliance and safety prior to issuing a permit to start work. When issues arise in the plan review process that kicks off a volley of emails back and forth between the installer and the building department to correct the issue. This is where the delays happen. Nationwide, an average of 10% of residential solar installations are cancelled once initiated and permitting delays are cited as the largest contributing factor to those cancellations.

H7726 directly responds to these problems and would expedite the process for receiving a permit to install residential solar in Rhode Island by requiring the state to implement a smart permitting platform that programmatically conducts the plan review and code compliance checks for residential rooftop solar installations. There are several smart permitting platforms available on the market and this legislation gives the state and local jurisdictions the flexibility to adopt any platform capable of performing programmatic compliance checks to determine whether a rooftop solar project meets the required building and electrical code specifications. I am most familiar with SolarAPP+, which was developed by the US Department of Energy in collaboration with the major building safety organizations like the International Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association. SolarAPP+ is a web-based platform that allows solar installers to upload solar system specifications through a streamlined form, have those specifications instantly reviewed for safety and code compliance, and receive immediate confirmation that the system is code-compliant. SolarAPP+ is available to local jurisdictions at no cost and has already issued over 137,000 rooftop solar permits, across 17 states and 340 jurisdictions. SEIA believes that a healthy marketplace is a competitive one. There exist alternatives to SolarAPP+ and are encouraged that this bill provides jurisdictional choice when it comes to what smart solar permitting solution a municipality can implement.



Having systems that provide easy, no or low cost implementation and simple user agreements that don't lock in contractual obligation or stifle competition is the best path forward. This bill appears to do just that.

Implementing a safe, streamlined plan review process for residential solar applications will help Rhode Island save time and resources, in addition to removing a key barrier and reason for cancelled solar projects, thus allowing more Rhode Islanders to adopt and benefit from residential solar at a time when electric utility rates are on the rise. This is about giving the [Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources \(OER\)](#) a tool that they've never had, at no cost to them or the taxpayer. This bill will give the OER and jurisdictions the certainty to know that the residential systems that are permitted have been properly reviewed and are safe and code compliant.

For these reasons, SEIA strongly supports this legislation and respectfully urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on H7726. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to your questions.

Respectfully,

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