

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chairman, House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

RE: H-7890 – Relating to Public Utilities and Carriers – Intervenor Compensation Program

Dear Chairman Solomon:

On behalf of Rhode Island Energy, I write in **opposition** to H-7890, which would establish an “intervenor support program” funded by Rhode Island taxpayers and, potentially, by electric and natural gas customers and/or other entities subject to the Energy Facility Siting Act.

Rhode Island Energy provides essential energy services to more than 770,000 customers across the state through the delivery of electricity and natural gas. Our team of 1,300+ union and non-union employees is dedicated to helping Rhode Island customers and communities thrive, while supporting the transition to a cleaner energy future in a safe, reliable, and affordable manner.

We respectfully offer the following:

- **The legislation will lead to additional costs** incurred by Rhode Island taxpayers, the electric and/or natural gas distribution companies and their customers, and entities subject to the Energy Facility Siting Act.
- The regulatory processes before the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and Energy Facility Siting Board are carefully designed to strike a balance between regulatory oversight and efficiency. **The bill skews this balance by creating a pathway for any newly formed non-profit organization or single aggrieved individual to intervene in proceedings before these agencies at the cost of utility ratepayers and Rhode Island taxpayers.** While Rhode Island Energy supports public engagement and transparency, these interests are already advocated for by the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers, the PUC itself, the Rhode Island Attorney General’s Office, and numerous actively engaged non-profit organizations, some or all of which regularly participate in the most significant proceedings.
- The legislation requires the PUC to determine whether a potential intervenor faces “significant financial hardship,” yet **provides no definition of the term or standards of review.**
- **This bill will create a substantial administrative and cost burden on the PUC.** It is not clear what impact this legislation would have on the agency’s existing resources and budget or whether *additional* costs would need to be recovered through Rhode Island General Revenues or utility bills to support that work.

- Finally, we find it curious that a bill purportedly designed to increase transparency and participation in PUC proceedings is **specifically limited** to “proceedings involving electric distribution companies serving over one hundred thousand (100,000) customers, electric transmission companies, gas distribution companies, and energy efficiency programs” (page 2, lines 24-26). The scope of the bill is clearly targeted at Rhode Island Energy. The PUC website lists 21 different companies regulated by that agency, including other electric companies, water districts, telecommunication companies, water carriers, and a wastewater treatment entity. Rhode Island families and businesses are customers of these public utilities, too.

Rhode Island Energy appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation and respectfully requests the Committee to oppose H-7890.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Nicholas S. Ucci
Director of Government Affairs

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations
The Honorable Jennifer A. Stewart, Rhode Island House of Representatives