



Representative Joseph Solomon, Chair
House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives

April 28th, 2026

RE: Green Energy Consumers Alliance Supports House Resolution 7891

Dear Chair Solomon and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Green Energy Consumers Alliance and our thousands of members across Rhode Island, **I write in strong support of House Resolution 7891**, which requests that the Public Utilities Commission terminate the existing line extension allowance policy that Rhode Island Energy has in effect via the open distribution rate case, Docket No: 25-45-GE.

Gas system expansion slows Act on Climate progress

The Act on Climate mandates that Rhode Island reduce its total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 45% below 1990 levels by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050. When evaluating emissions by sector, the building sector accounts for over 30% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the state, and Rhode Island does not currently have a clear path to reduce these emissions. Additionally, the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Councils (EC4's) 2025 Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy shows that the state is not on track to meet the Act on Climate under current state policies. To achieve the Act on Climate, action is needed to reduce emissions from the building sector. One step towards reducing emissions is ensuring that those constructing new buildings within the state carefully consider whether their development needs a new gas connection, as expansion of our gas system directly conflicts with the mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

To determine the future of the gas distribution business in Rhode Island, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has an open docket to investigate this topic (Docket No. 22-01-NG), and stakeholders are awaiting a final policy report to be released. At the same time, Rhode Island Energy has opened a distribution rate case, Docket No. 25-45-GE, through which the Company's existing tariffs can be adjusted and modified. Given the parameters of the Act on Climate, the current policy governing line-extension allowances (LEA) should be terminated as it can implicitly encourage the construction of new gas infrastructure. This is because the cost to connect a new development to a gas main or service line is not paid by the developer seeking the extension if the request is under a certain footage from the existing gas line ([RIPUC RIE-Gas-No. 101B](#), p. 136). Because the individual seeking the extension typically does not pay the cost for the extension, it can appear favorable to request gas service, rather than just build new construction all-electric. While eliminating the line extension allowance policy does not prohibit building new gas connections, it does shift the cost burden from current ratepayers to the individual seeking the line extension, and this can encourage electrification as a result.

Line-extension allowances create stranded-asset risk and increases ratepayer cost

The lifetime of gas lines can often exceed 30 years, and Rhode Island is actively developing strategies to transition away from the fossil fuel distribution system through dockets and state climate plans. Continuing to expand the gas system now will lock ratepayers into paying for a system that will be minimally or no longer used in 24 years, when Rhode Island must reach net-zero emissions. This creates significant risk for the creation of stranded assets as the lifetime of this infrastructure outlives the timeline it can be utilized for.

As mentioned earlier, line extension allowances are often free to the individual seeking the allowance and paid for by all other ratepayers on the gas system. This misalignment in cost allocation can incentivize a developer to seek a gas extension because it appears as low or no cost to them, while others pay for it. While historically, adding new customers to the gas system could be justified due to the longevity of the system, that model breaks down as the state pursues a transition away from fossil fuels. It no longer makes sense for gas ratepayers to pay extra for new customers to connect to the gas system when the life of the infrastructure that the cost is intended to be repaid over outlasts the state's net-zero mandate. Line extension allowance reform is something that [8 other states have or are pursuing](#) because of the conclusions that gas system expansion harms climate goals and costs ratepayers' money.

Allowing continued investment in a system that will see declining use through policy changes and customer behavior also risks increasing rates for customers who remain on the gas system. Increased electrification is critical to meeting the Act on Climate and ensuring that Rhode Islanders are using clean, efficient technology for needs like space heating and cooking and that transition is already here, with [heat pumps outselling furnaces for the fourth year in a row](#) nationwide. The transition towards electrification is growing, and terminating the current line-extension allowance policy in RIPUC RIE Gas Tariff No. 101B can protect ratepayers from rising gas costs and increased investment in new gas distribution infrastructure that could become stranded assets.

Conclusion

In order to achieve the Act on Climate, we must ensure that the Public Utilities Commission is requiring that the utility update their policies to better align with the Act on Climate. Requesting that the PUC eliminate the current line extension allowance policy through Docket No. 25-45-GE will do so. Green Energy Consumers Alliance thanks Representative Cortvriend for introducing this resolution and urges the Committee and full General Assembly to vote in favor of its passage.

Sincerely,

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