

May 12, 2026

Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chair, House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence RI 02908

Re: The Nature Conservancy Supports HB 8519 on the Renewable Energy Standard

The Nature Conservancy appreciates the opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 8519 which would uphold the Renewable Energy Standard (RES) under current statute, maintaining it at 100% by 2033. We thank Rep. Carson and former Speaker Shekarchi for introducing this bill.

TNC is a global organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Here in Rhode Island, we steward more than 15,000 acres of protected land, and we have partnered to protect 35,000 acres of land. At The Nature Conservancy, we realize that we cannot succeed in our core mission to protect the land and water on which all life depends without seriously addressing climate change, and we recognize renewable energy is central to this goal.

We applaud Rep. Carson for spending the last four months working on this piece of legislation and taking the time to meet with a variety of organizations across the state, including Rhode Island Energy, the AFL-CIO, and industry stakeholders. Upholding the RES as this bill does would continue to spur renewable energy development, which will in turn bolster the RI workforce, support the economy around the state, and lower electricity bills over time. Renewable energy is the future, and maintaining the 100% Renewable Energy Standard by 2033 is essential to ensuring Rhode Island does not fall behind.

Furthermore, as an organization grounded in science and data, we value transparency. As such, we also support the legislative reporting requirements in this bill, which would require the Office of Energy Resources and the Public Utilities Commission to submit a report on the state's progress towards meeting the RES and emissions reductions. This is common-sense policy and will position the state well to monitor its progress on meeting its Act on Climate goals.

At a time when the federal government is rolling back renewable energy investments, Rhode Island is positioned to chart a way forward. We urge the General Assembly to stand firm and reject the proposed rollback of the RES and pass this bill. The Nature Conservancy supports this bill and thanks you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,



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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Diana Fontaine'.

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