

**Testimony in support of H5343: Lead by Example Act; Date of Hearing: February 27, 2025**

Dr. Hans Scholl, 71 Fales Avenue, Barrington, RI 02806

To Chair Bennett and the honorable Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

I support the Lead by Example Act because it lets the State of Rhode Island lead with taking actions that we ultimately ask our communal governments, residents and businesses to take. As member of the Town of Barrington's Resilience and Energy Committee, I can attest that passing H5343 will lower the threshold for communities to join if the State leads by example.

The bill is consistent with the RI Act on Climate and provides actionable, meaningful common sense requirements for areas under direct control of the State. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, and cost savings will be achieved through

- Purchasing renewable and energy efficient technologies when renovating existing, or building new infrastructure.
- Purchasing electric vehicles instead of fossil fuel powered vehicles.
- Prohibiting use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers with their noise and exhaust pollution.
- Prohibiting use of plastic water bottles.
- Recycling.

Any transition times are adequate, and defined exceptions are allowed to address hardships.

It is always easier to follow someone who sets an example when changing ingrained habits and behaviors, when doing something that is new and that we are not yet used to. Even if we intellectually understand why a change is necessary, it's just human nature to keep doing what we're used to do, because the new is unknown and possibly risky. But, if someone else is doing it and demonstrates that it's possible, safe, better and beneficial, most others will follow.

This is why H5434 will have significant leverage.

However, 2025 is the second year when a Lead by Example bill is being introduced. If the Legislature, again, fails to pass a bill as simple and as common sense as H5343, it will trigger a public response along the lines of "Why should I do this—when even the State can't, and repeatedly won't do it?"

Let's rather be encouraging! Please bring the bill to a vote in 2025 and lead by example!

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



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