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February 27, 2025

Representative David Bennett
Chair, House Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources
Rhode Island State House
Providence RI 02908

Re: The Nature Conservancy testimony in support of HB 5343

Dear Chair Bennett,

The Nature Conservancy is grateful for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5343, which would require the state to “lead by example” on a range of climate and environmental initiatives. We are grateful to Rep. Boylan for sponsoring it and Reps Cortvriend, McGaw, Tanzi, Carson, Donovan, Handy, Fogarty, Speakman, and Ajello for co-sponsoring it.

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Here in Rhode Island, The Nature Conservancy protects more than 14,000 acres of land and has partnered on the permanent conservation of more than 35,000 acres of land.

At The Nature Conservancy, we realize that we cannot succeed in our core mission without seriously addressing climate change – both mitigation and adaptation. The science is clear and unequivocal: we need to fully decarbonize our economy by 2050, with major emissions reductions before 2030. The State adopted the Act on Climate in 2021, and there is active work underway to ensure its implementation.

This legislation would require the State to “lead by example” on a range of climate and environmental issues, including state procurement of electric vehicles, installation of EV chargers at state facilities, eliminating pollution from gas powered leaf blowers, increasing composting across the state, eliminating single serve bottled water from procurement (except for safety purposes), and increasing efficient and renewable technologies. This legislation builds on the Administration’s current work on lead by example, led by the Office of Energy Resources – and expands it to cover more issues.

As we work to implement the Act on Climate and other important environmental legislation – it is imperative that the State lead the way and demonstrate what is possible, while also understanding and addressing the real challenges non-public actors will face in achieving the mandates. This is an excellent and important piece of legislation, and we support its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sue AnderBois".

Sue AnderBois
Director of Climate & Government Relations, Rhode Island
Interim Lead, Climate & Clean Energy Strategy – Northeast Division
The Nature Conservancy
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