



Audubon Society of Rhode Island

March 13, 2025

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

Re: Audubon Society of Rhode Island Supports H 5493, Building Decarbonization Act

On behalf of Audubon Society of Rhode Island, we urge the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to support House Bill 5493, the Building Decarbonization Act, which could significantly reduce climate emissions in Rhode Island. Climate emissions are a threat everyone in this room has contributed to and one that is reducing bird populations at alarming rates worldwide while harming the health and safety of our friends, family, and neighbors, particularly in environmental justice communities. Audubon has made it a key tenet of our strategic plan to advocate for action on climate.

To that end, Audubon launched our RePower Audubon campaign to electrify all of their buildings and properties and make substantial investments in solar power. With this initiative, Audubon will be one of the first nonprofits in Rhode Island to reach net-zero and become a leader in climate resilience.

Audubon has invested significant resources for this effort and support for other decarbonization efforts is necessary. House bill 5493 provides the framework for a phase in for decarbonization of buildings that keeps Rhode Island a leader in taking action on climate change and is a major step towards fulfilling the promise of the 2021 Act on Climate.

Our 17,000 members and supporters have been eager for good news on climate change and have been engaging in advocacy in support of jobs, hope, relief, and smart investment. Last year, our members submitted over eighty emails to legislators in support of decarbonization in a matter of hours. It took only four days to recruit over sixty people to attend our first organizing meeting on climate change focused on decarbonization. Over 200 Rhode Islanders stood on the state house steps during one of the coldest days of 2025 to advocate for action on climate change, including heavy emphasis on decarbonization.

The Building Decarbonization Act is a sensible and necessary approach to reducing significant climate emissions from Rhode Island. We urge the committee to vote favorably for HB 5493.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Phoenix Wheeler
Director of Advocacy

Connecting All People With Nature