



March 12, 2025

The Honorable David A. Bennett, Chair
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5493 – RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- BUILDING DECARBONIZATION ACT OF 2025

Chair Bennett and Honorable Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I am writing to respectfully express our opposition to House Bill 5493, which proposes the establishment of an energy and water benchmarking program for large buildings in Rhode Island and sets energy performance standards.

The League fully supports efforts to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability across our communities. We recognize the importance of setting clear benchmarks to improve energy and water performance, reduce costs, and advance Rhode Island's net-zero mandate. However, we believe that the approach outlined in H-5493 is premature given the pilot program currently being developed by the Governor's Office in his budget proposal, Article 3, Section 15.

This pilot program presents an opportunity to establish baseline guidance and best practices for municipalities, ensuring a uniform and well-informed approach to energy benchmarking. By leveraging state-led resources and expertise, municipalities can implement strategies tailored to their unique infrastructure and operational needs. This would provide a more practical and effective framework before mandating compliance through legislation.

We urge the General Assembly to allow the pilot program to be fully implemented and evaluated before enacting new statewide benchmarking requirements. Doing so will enable municipalities to assess the impact, feasibility, and resource needs associated with such a program while ensuring consistency with Rhode Island's broader sustainability goals.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and welcome the opportunity to collaborate on solutions that balance environmental responsibility with municipal feasibility.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Environment and Natural Resources Committee