

Testimony of Warren Heyman,

Organizing Director of the Rhode Island School Recycling Project

Feb 26, 2026

In support of HB #7533

My name is Warren Heyman and I am the organizing director of the Rhode Island School Recycling Project. I am speaking in support of HB #7533 which directs a recycling and waste audit conducted on the waste stream in the State House.

Our Project has set up food waste and recycling sorting stations in 73 schools across the state. We have conducted waste and recycling audits in all those schools. We will launch more schools in East Providence, Barrington, Burrillville, Middletown and Pawtucket before the end of the current school year. The students we have worked with have diverted 600 tons of food waste from the landfill and redirected 68 tons of perfectly good, healthy food from the waste stream to food insecure students and their families. They have reduced their carbon footprint by 970 metric tons of CO2.

We were asked by Rep Carson and the Joint Legislative Committee to conduct an audit of the State House. We reached out to Tess Feigenbaum, co-founder of Epic Renewal because of their experience in California. They agreed to partner with us.

We did the first audit in February, will do the second one in April and the final one in June. After the final audit we will provide the results to the Joint Legislative Committee and this committee if so requested.

The report will enable the legislators to take steps to make sure this building is in compliance with the laws that are passed here. It will help lengthen the life of the landfill and reduce your carbon footprint.

As you know, the Landfill will be filled by 2046. Connecticut spends over \$100 millions sending their trash to Ohio, WV, Penn and Alabama. In New Hampshire there is legislation currently pending to prohibit

out of state haulers to bring trash to that state. If states that take trash start to refuse to take trash, it will only increase the costs we will have to pay starting in 2046.

Doing a waste and recycling audit on your building will provide you with the information you need to make sure your impact on the waste stream helps lengthen the life of the landfill. Every ton we divert is tax dollars we are saving for our residents.