

## **Trafton testimony in support of H7183. House Environment Committee March 11, 2026**

Dear Chair Bennett and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I'm Peter Trafton of Providence Rhode Island. Since retiring from my career as a trauma surgeon in 2015, I have devoted much of my time and energy toward protecting our future generations from the ravages of climate change. This inevitably leads to the fact that our burning of fossil fuels is the cause of global warming. The gases in our atmosphere produced by burning methane and petroleum products retain more heat than the earth radiates, and so we get hotter and hotter. We have the answer – stop burning fossil fuels, as soon as possible. Here in Rhode Island, where we must import our costly fossil fuels, we fortunately have ample renewable energy, offshore wind especially and also solar. We must switch to them. And it turns out this offers a great additional benefit – renewable energy is turning out to be far less expensive than fossil fuels – a great boon for our state's economy, if we can only take advantage of it.

Our buildings require heat when it's cold, and we like our food cooked and our showers warm. We buy our gas and oil from away. We don't have to pay for sun and wind, just the systems to turn them into usable energy, and those we create and service in state, providing work and income for Rhode Islanders. Furthermore, they offer greater efficiency than deriving our energy from burning gas and oil, processes that waste much of the heat produced.

So, we need to reduce and replace our use of fossil energy, lots of which goes to the buildings, especially the larger buildings of Rhode Island. H7183 which will provide baseline knowledge for heating needs of our larger buildings is the 1<sup>st</sup> step to this process. You know about this bill. We've been trying to pass it for several years. Now is a most appropriate time as we worry not only about climate change but the costs of energy in our state. Please help us pass this essential part of our transition to far better and less expensive energy. Further stalling this legislation is standing in the way of a far better future for Rhode Island.

Thanks very much for considering my support for energy benchmarking – H7183.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Trafton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Peter Trafton