

Representative Bennett, Chair

March 11th, 2026

House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Rhode Island House of Representatives

RE: Green Energy Consumers Alliance Supports House Bill H7183

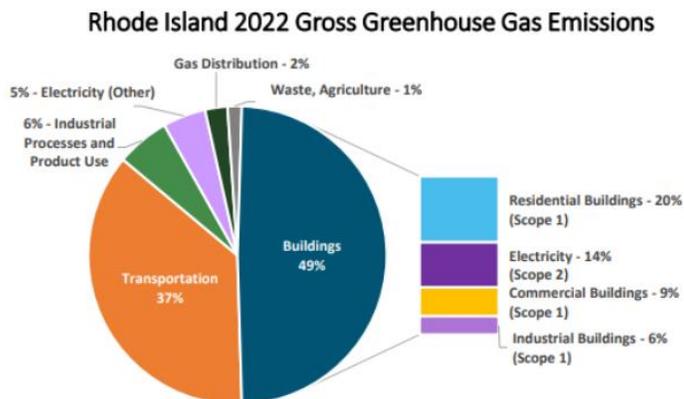
Dear Chair Bennett and members of the committee,

On behalf of Green Energy Consumers Alliance and our thousands of members across Rhode Island, **I write in strong support of House Bill 7183** which would direct the Office of Energy Resources to develop a statewide building benchmarking program to report and track energy usage from large buildings.

Rhode Island Is Not on Track to Achieve Act on Climate Goals

The Act on Climate mandates that Rhode Island reduce its total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 45% by 2030 and net zero by 2050. However, the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council’s (EC4’s) 2022 plan to meet the Act on Climate shows that the state would only achieve 40% emissions reductions by 2030, and that’s if everything in the plan gets implemented. Notably, the 2025 [Building Benchmarking and Performance Standards report](#) required by Joint Resolution 7617 depicts buildings as contributing 49% of Rhode Island’s 2022 gross Greenhouse Gas Emissions when including both Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, as shown in the image below.

APPENDIX 1: SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES AND FIGURES



Note: The emissions breakdown presented in this figure differs from the official accounting framework used by DEM to in the *Rhode Island Greenhouse Gas Inventory*.

Figure 4: Rhode Island Gross Greenhouse Gas Emissions Breakdown, 2022³⁷

Image from Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council report: *Building Energy Benchmarking and Performance Standards*, p. 28.

The state's most recent climate planning report, the 2025 Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy reported that Rhode Island is not on track to meet our long-term Act on Climate mandates, and additional policies are needed to reduce emissions. The image below shows the trajectory of emissions reduction in Rhode Island given the impact of existing decarbonization policies, and there is opportunity for the state's largest buildings to contribute towards emissions reductions if building owners start to track and report their energy usage.

Figure 18: Emissions by Sector in Current Policy Scenario

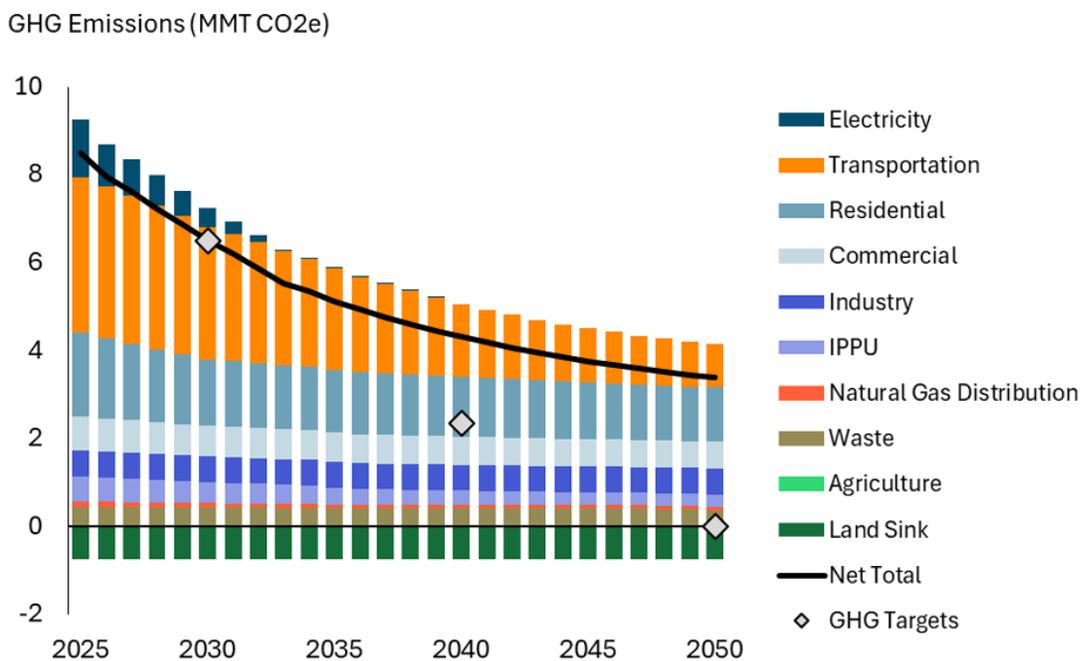


Image from the 2025 Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy, p. 62.

However, Rhode Island still lacks a policy to address emissions from our large existing buildings and cannot make progress towards reducing these emissions without a framework like what the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act would provide. Rhode Island has much evidence that proves buildings are a significant source of GHG emissions and that policy development is needed to reduce those emissions. This demonstrates the need for legislation such as H7183.

This bill would tackle emissions from large existing buildings by requiring energy reporting and then subsequent emission reductions over time. Addressing emissions from existing buildings is a significant piece of the building decarbonization puzzle as around 70% of our building stock in 2050 is already in place today. Experts in the field of building

decarbonization also point out that building benchmarking is a favored policy for a few reasons:

- While it does impose obligations onto building owners, it is targeted to the largest buildings in Rhode Island.
- Benchmarking encourages the development of the building efficiency market and makes building performance more visible in the marketplace.
- Benchmarking can inform policy development, allowing agencies to craft more effective emissions reductions policies.

The City of Providence already requires energy reporting for their large buildings, and is home to a significant amount of buildings that would be required to benchmark under this bill. The state has the opportunity to learn from the success that the City has had, and make program improvements if benchmarking is rolled out to all large buildings within Rhode Island.

What This Bill Does

Building energy reporting: Requires large buildings to report their energy usage and GHG emissions to a central data repository such as ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, a free and secure EPA platform used by nearly half a million buildings nationwide.

- Buildings covered by reporting requirements (estimated 3,974 total):
 - **Starting 2028:** Buildings larger than 50,000 sq ft
 - **Starting 2030:** Buildings larger than 25,000 sq ft
- The data collected will:
 - Help building owners measure their energy usage and emissions, compare to buildings of similar size and uses, and implement ways to reduce their energy usage and costs.
 - Enable the state to perform analyses and develop a standard by which large buildings must reduce their emissions.

Inclusion of H7183 into H7127 Article 3 Section 16

Green Energy Consumers Alliance would like to thank the Governor for including a state facilities benchmarking and performance standards program, and a voluntary benchmarking program for private buildings in the FY 2027 Budget. We are in support of this program and advocated for it at the associated House Finance Committee hearing. However, we feel that Rhode Island can and must do more to address emissions from large buildings in the state, not just from state-owned and state-operated facilities or on a voluntary basis. Therefore, we also advocate for H7183 to be incorporated into H7127 Article 3 Section 16 to create a more comprehensive building benchmarking and performance standards program.

If Not a Benchmarking and Performance Standards Program, Then What?

Though Rhode Island's building stock contributes a significant share of the state's greenhouse gas emissions, the state has yet to implement any policies to address these emissions. Alongside our advocacy for the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 we are supporting the Clean Heat Standard ([H7912](#)) Act, which will boost the development of a clean heat services market in Rhode Island. The state cannot afford to continue pushing off developing a plan to reduce emissions from large buildings throughout the state.

Conclusion

To achieve the requirements of the Act on Climate, we must implement larger policies that drive down emissions from the building sector. Passage of the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 is a necessary step that will start tracking building energy use in preparation to reduce building emissions.

Green Energy Consumers Alliance thanks Representative Kislak for introducing this bill and urges the Committee and full General Assembly to vote in favor of its passage.

Sincerely,

Tina Munter, RI Policy Advocate

Green Energy Consumers Alliance

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