

## **Trafton testimony in support of H-8132. 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. As a surgeon I've spent my life trying to help people recover from severe injuries. Now I'm trying to encourage Rhode Islanders to adopt policies and practices that advance energy efficiency and the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, to save money and save the earth from global warming.

I write now to strongly support Rep Cortvriend's H-8132, which provides opportunities for RI to create and demonstrate the remarkable clean energy benefits and savings of geothermal systems. Such systems, which provide both heating and cooling, have been developed in multiple countries including the United States. Eversource Energy launched the nation's first utility-operated geothermal network in Framingham MA in 2024. It's working! Several other pilot projects are underway. Rhode Island is lagging behind. The initial costs raise concerns. Once these are overcome, geothermal benefits are substantial and the whole process has the added benefit of collaboration with skilled workers from gas utilities who can manage the drilling, tunneling, and pipe work with their existing knowledge and skill.

Unlike other forms of green thermal energy, geothermal has somehow maintained federal government support with some funding. It offers great benefits for gas utilities, and their workers. Geothermal technologies will hopefully provide incentives for utilities to stop distributing methane with their leaky hundred-year-old pipes.

This Decarbonization Demonstration Initiative Act of 2026 provides financial support through the initial feasibility study required for investment and construction. Without it, Rhode Island will suffer continued delays rather than progress towards our own geothermal systems.

Thanks very much for considering my support for H 8132. I hope that your committee will enable our state to enter this highly promising, efficient, and healthy alternative to fossil fuels.

Respectfully,

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

Peter Trafton