

Testimony in support of H7004: Climate Superfund Act of 2026

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To Chair Bennett and the honorable Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

With over 400 miles of coastline, Rhode Island faces increasing inland and coastline flooding and wind damage from unnatural, manmade weather disasters. These do, and will even more continue to cause very expensive damage and loss of life.

The changing climate is caused by extracting, processing, transporting and burning fossil fuels, which pollutes with greenhouse gases, leading to overheating the earth's atmosphere and oceans, endangering future generations and the places we love.

Unfortunately, the money for loss and damage prevention falls almost exclusively on taxpayers, while the fossil fuel industry as the actual root cause does not contribute with payments.

Instead, the fossil fuel executives cynically decided to continue to "excel" in several areas:

- they reap huge profits from their products,
- they are still hell-bent on expanding fossil fuel use,
- they are blatantly indifferent to the damage they cause,
- they systematically misinform the public in order to continue to burn fossil fuels,
- they invest aggressively to obstruct moving towards abundant clean, healthy, renewable and less expensive alternative energy sources,
- they knew for more than 50 years that they cause disastrous consequences for the climate, and they buried the evidence.

In short: They knew it, they lie about it, let them pay!

Following the model of VT, MD and NY, which have already implemented "superfund" bills, H7004 provides a well-defined mechanism for making those who extracted or refined fossil fuels and were responsible for more than one billion tons of covered greenhouse gas emissions pay for their share of the costs of Rhode Island's climate change response work.

This is timely, because the current drastic eradication of federal funding and support will burden the RI tax payers beyond their means and bring climate change response work to a slow trickle, harming all of us unnecessarily—unless we make responsible parties contribute.

Since the bill was held and not voted on in 2025, I urge you to not lose more time and to bring the bill to a vote on the House floor in 2026.

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you to Representative Boylan for introducing this important bill.



Dr. Hans Scholl

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