

March 25, 2026

The Honorable David A. Bennett
Chairman, House Environment & Natural Resources Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

RE: H-7004 – Relating to State Affairs & Government – Rhode Island Climate Superfund Act

Dear Chairman Bennett:

On behalf of Rhode Island Energy, I write in **opposition** to H-7004, which would make companies engaged in the extraction or refining of fossil fuels liable for historic climate change emissions.

Rhode Island Energy provides essential energy services to more than 770,000 customers across the state through the delivery of electricity and natural gas. Our team of 1,300+ union and non-union employees is dedicated to helping Rhode Island customers and communities thrive, while supporting the transition to a cleaner energy future in a safe, reliable, and affordable manner.

Respectfully, Rhode Island Energy notes the following:

- **The financial cost of this proposed mandate – including its potential to increase fuel and energy prices for Ocean State homes and businesses – is unknown.** At a time when energy affordability is front and center across Rhode Island, a policy of this magnitude should be grounded by transparent, data-driven analysis.
- **Energy customers already pay for a suite of public policies and programs designed to “avoid, prepare for, [and] moderate...the negative effects of climate change.”** For instance, since 2014, Rhode Islanders have paid ~\$2.7 billion through their utility bills to support clean energy-related mandates. These charges support the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere through investments in renewable generating resources, energy efficiency, etc. Moreover, the region’s fossil fuel-based power plants are *already* subject to a cap on their emissions through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). If not carefully designed, the proposed Act may charge local energy consumers twice over for the same reduction in emissions.
- The bill defines a “responsible party” as an entity “engaged in the trade or business of extracting or refining fossil fuels.” **Respectfully, this definition should be amended to clarify that companies engaged in the distribution of fossil fuels, including the state’s regulated public utilities, are not subject to the requirements of the proposed Act.**
- **The proposed Act may violate the U.S. Constitution and other federal laws.** Similar legislation is now being challenged in other jurisdictions.

Nicholas S. Ucci
Director of Government Affairs
Rhode Island Energy

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In closing, Rhode Island Energy respectfully urges the Committee to oppose H-7004.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "NSU", written over a light blue circular scribble.

Nicholas S. Ucci
Director of Government Affairs

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Environment & Natural Resources Committee
The Honorable Jennifer Boylan, Rhode Island House of Representative