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## Testimony of

Christopher Carlozzi, State Director, National Federation of Independent Business  
In Support of House Bill No. 7531  
Relating to State Affairs & Government – 2021 Act on Climate  
Before the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
March 25, 2026

Chairman Bennett and Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Christopher Carlozzi. I am the Rhode Island State Director of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). A non-profit, non-partisan organization, NFIB is the nation's and Rhode Island's largest small business advocacy group. In Rhode Island, NFIB represents hundreds of small and independent business owners involved in all types of industry, including manufacturing, retail, wholesale, service, and agriculture. The average NFIB member has five employees and annual gross revenues of about \$450,000. In short, NFIB represents the small Main Street business owners from across the state. On behalf of those small and independent business employers in Rhode Island, I urge you to support House Bill No. 7531 on carbon reduction mandates.

Rhode Island residents and small businesses now face skyrocketing energy bills resulting from the state's self-imposed carbon reduction mandates. The more states push full electrification, the faster bills are increasing for ratepayers.

States across the northeast are currently reexamining their similar carbon reductions mandates. To combat rising energy bills, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey delayed the implementation of that state's Advanced Clean Truck (ACT) rule for medium and heavy-duty trucks last year because the infrastructure and technology does not yet exist to support this mandate aimed at reducing transportation carbon emissions. The Healey administration also called for a delay in the clean heat standard until 2028 because of the estimated impact on Massachusetts energy prices.

A recent report released by regulators in New York shows the cost of that state's carbon reduction mandates. The data shows that if the New York climate law is fully implemented, by 2031, New York ratepayers would see their energy bills increase by more than \$4,100 for households using oil or natural gas heat, \$7,000 for small and medium commercial businesses, with consumers paying \$2.23 more per gallon for gasoline and \$2.41 more per gallon for diesel.

Small businesses in Rhode Island not only compete with businesses across state lines but also nationally and internationally. Having access to affordable energy plays a large part in being able to produce goods and offer services to consumers. Rhode Island small businesses already face some of

the highest energy expenses in the nation. Energy is crucial to the operation of a small business in Rhode Island. With our brutally cold winters and excessively warm summers, the price of energy is something small business owners carefully monitor as it significantly impacts their business' bottom line.

On behalf of Rhode Island small businesses already paying with some of the highest energy prices in the nation, we urge the committee to support legislation asking lawmakers to rethink the state's self-imposed carbon reduction mandates. Thank you.