

To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee

Testimony in support of House Bill No 7183 BUILDING BENCHMARKING AND REPORTING ACT OF 2026

Dear Chair Bennett and Members of the Committee,

My name Barbara K. Sullivan-Watts, PhD, retired Senior Marine Scientist from University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography. I live in Kingston, RI.

I am writing as the State Coordinator for Rhode Island Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby, a national, non-partisan organization working to find solutions to climate change. In Rhode Island we have over 800 registered members. I choose to represent this organization because their focus on solutions to climate change is the right focus. My expertise in ocean science has informed me with an understanding of the urgency of dealing with carbon emissions that cause climate warming.

Actions promoted by House Bill No 7183 BUILDING BENCHMARKING AND REPORTING ACT OF 2026 are essential steps toward fulfilling the Act on Climate. **Buildings are currently one of the largest sources of pollution in Rhode Island.**

What do we gain by passing this bill? In addition to the mitigation of climate warming:

- When buildings use energy efficiently to heat and cool they are less expensive to run.
- When buildings use energy efficiently they burn fewer fuels that cause health problems such as asthma and heart disease.
- Improving energy efficiency and installing efficient heat pumps that both heat AND cool buildings provides jobs for Rhode Islanders.

This bill will assist building owners in measuring their emissions so as to help them improve efficiency and in the process save money. Initial investments are recovered. And their tenants will be healthier.

The City of Providence has led the way on to how to accomplish this at minimal cost to the state. The RI Legislature led the way in passing the Act on Climate. Let's do what needs to be done this year in passing this legislation.

Sincerely,

Barbara K. Sullivan-Watts, Kingston, RI

