

TO: HouseEnvironmentandNaturalResources@rilegislature.gov

SUBJECT: **Support for House Bill No. 7183** BUILDING BENCHMARKING AND REPORTING ACT OF 2026

House Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

May 18,2026

**Dear Chair Bennett and Members of the Committee,**

My name is Dr. Caroly Shumway. I am a resident of Cumberland, RI, and an oceanographer, climate educator, and a member of the nonpartisan 800-member strong RI Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby (RICCL). **I am writing in strong support of House Bill No. 7183, and I hope that you will support it too.**

**This bill is an important step for Rhode Island to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve the Act on Climate.** Buildings make up over 1/3 of all greenhouse gas emissions in our state. If we want to meet the Act on Climate, we *must* reduce emissions from buildings. We hope that this bill and the corresponding Senate bill will be passed this legislative session, the fourth year that it has been submitted.

**It's not hard to do and it's not expensive.** Providence has developed a plug-and-play software system for managing building emission tracking (based on USEPA software) that is ready for the state and municipalities to adapt to their needs. Furthermore, since Providence is two years into its benchmarking program and has already done the work for 400 buildings, the work has been completed for a huge chunk of the large buildings in the state. Further:

- 7 states including MA and many cities/towns have already acted on building decarbonization.
- Many large companies, universities, and hospitals already track buildings emissions for their own net zero goals, and it is an easy lift to share this data with the state.

**It's common sense and can save municipalities and businesses money.** The benchmarking knowledge resulting from this bill **will save money** almost immediately, as municipalities and private owners can make data-driven decisions to reduce their buildings' energy use. It will also save money when building standards are implemented, and **will also be a boon to those employed in the resulting labor.**

**You can help Rhode Island be on the leading edge of environmental efforts again.** Starting with Republican Senator John Chaffee, and being the first place to revolutionize recycling. Now, Rhode Island has fallen behind. Won't you help us become a leader again? For the

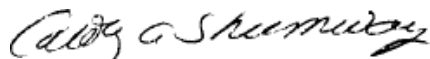
building sector, the American Council on Energy Efficient Economies ranks RI behind MA, CT, and VT in New England (ACEEE, 2025). If Rhode Island want to create an attractive and thriving environment for businesses in the state, investing in a sustainable building sector needs to be a key component. Investing in sustainable buildings is part and parcel of other types of infrastructure investment. Further:

I am deeply concerned about climate change for my children's sake. **We are doing our part**, converting as much of our house as we can to electric. We put in solar panels two years ago, and also bought an electric car. We also bought an induction stove, electric dryer, and will put in mini-splits next year.

**I humbly ask you to consider your own legacy and do the right thing.** Make RI a leader again on the environment, as it once was with its recycling initiatives. You will be helping all Rhode Islanders reduce carbon emissions, critical for making the world better for future generations. Our future is literally in your hands.

Seventy-six years ago, my grandfather, famed scientist Dr. Roger Revelle (and later, Al Gore's mentor) and Hans Suess showed that the oceans could not buffer all of the increasing CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion, and that the excess CO<sub>2</sub> would go into the atmosphere. We have procrastinated for 76 years - far too long to address the climate crisis at the detriment of all of us. **The consequences and economic cost of our procrastination are increasingly clear. We need to act now before it's too late – for the sake of our children and future children.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caroly Shumway".

Dr. Caroly Shumway, Cumberland, RI 02864