



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. McKEE

June 22, 2021

The Honorable David A. Bennett
Chairman, House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Room 101, Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: 2020-H6144-SubA – Relating to Public Utilities and Carriers – Public Utilities Commission

Dear Chairman Bennett:

When I signed the Act on Climate earlier this year, I committed myself to doing everything I can to ensure Rhode Island's future is one with clean energy, clean air, and a vibrant economy to get this important work done. That is why I write to offer my strong support of House Bill 6144-SubA, An Act – Relating to Public Utilities and Carriers – Public Utilities Commission, which extends the state's Energy Efficiency and Least-Cost Procurement programs, and the Renewable Energy Fund.

In order to meet our state's greenhouse gas emission reduction and clean energy procurement goals, our policies, laws, and stakeholders must work in coordination. Charging a commission to explore the potential uses of this fund to align and harmonize with our broader climate goals is one step in doing so, though we all know energy efficiency and conservation measures will continue to be an essential tool in our kit in fighting climate change in Rhode Island, driving down our energy demand and therefore cost.

Rhode Island is recognized as a national leader in energy efficiency – consistently ranked in the top 5 by ACEEE (and tied for first place with Massachusetts for “utility-sector energy efficiency programs and policies”) because we consistently see some of the highest savings in the country. These investments in our families, businesses, and public sector not only serve their energy needs, but prevent harmful greenhouse gas emissions at least-cost, and create jobs in the fast-growing clean energy economy. In fact, energy efficiency jobs represent 6 out of every 10 clean energy jobs created in the state pre-COVID.¹

¹ 2020 Rhode Island Clean Energy Industry Report is available at:
<http://www.energy.ri.gov/cleanjobs/2020/RICEIR%202020%20Report.pdf>.

Since 2005, Rhode Island has saved nearly 12,000 GWhs of electricity, meaning that despite projections that our electric load would be 12% higher today than in 2005, our load is actually 10% lower. Although we have much work ahead of us to meet the goals set in the Act on Climate, I am dedicated to doing this work, and ensuring safe, reliable energy for Rhode Islanders *cost-effectively*.

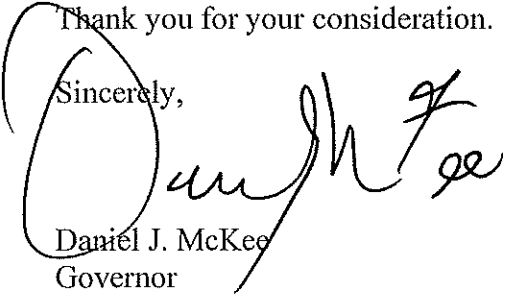
Additionally, the Renewable Energy Fund, administered by the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, has been and will continue to be an important program to meet our energy goals. The Renewable Energy Fund expands renewables' role in Rhode Island, providing grants, loans, inspections, and other support for renewable energy products. These innovation programs enhance our environmental sustainability and local economic development, and I wholeheartedly support this extension. The Efficient Buildings Fund and other programs administered by the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank will continue to complement the state's suite of energy programs, providing energy savings and greater efficiency for consumers and businesses alike.

Eliminating the payment incentive will increase the amount of funds available for direct program investment.

Thank you, Chairman Bennett, and Representative Ruggiero, for your leadership in producing legislation necessary to continue to do the work needed to meet our state's bold but achievable climate goals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. McKee
Governor

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
The Honorable Representative Ruggiero
Danica A. Iacoi, Esq.