

**Testimony in opposition to House Bill 7127, House Committee on Finance, February 25, 2026
from Peter Trafton Providence Rhode Island**

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee On Finance,
I write with strong opposition to several sections of this year's budget bill 7127.

Gov. McKee has thrown a 1 - 2 punch at Rhode Island's Act on Climate and its efforts to advance our transition to a clean energy economy, in spite of strong evidence of the progressively increasing costs of fossil fuels. He participated minimally in the 2025 Climate Action Strategy development efforts. Significant evidence supports America's transition from fossil fuels toward renewable energy sources. Trump's policies will not endure.

It is unfortunate that our governor has given up on supporting our state's energy transition. He offers an "affordability plan" that he claims will reduce average Rhode Island electrical bills by \$15 a month. The price of methane gas – our primary source for electrical and thermal energy has been steadily rising for years. Its costs can be countered by switching as fast as we can to commercial scale solar, continued development of rooftop solar, and offshore wind. Better electrical grid management can move electricity demand away from peak pricing. We need to promote these efforts and policies rather than trim small amounts from electrical bills. We need to lead our mono-utility, RIE, towards such programs and away from infrastructure overdevelopment. Unfortunately, the plans suggested by the governor's budget in article 11 are leading us astray. We must recognize this and move in a more responsible direction.

Section 3:

I strongly oppose and urge the committee to reject the governor's proposal in Section 3 to radically reduce the funding of the state's 2026 3-year energy efficiency plan. Highly successful for many years, recognized nationally, and significantly effective in reducing the state's need for electrical and gas energy, Rhode Island's energy efficiency program is now accused of saving less money in the last couple years. Insufficient time has elapsed to evaluate the current energy efficiency program. Longer-term effects are likely to be beneficial. The program should be strengthened along the lines proposed by the Energy Efficiency Council and discarded by the PUC.

Section 7 Zero-emission Resources

Recognizing nuclear energy electricity generation and "large-scale hydroelectric facilities" would reduce the need for proven wind and solar energy developments. We may be able to enter shared purchase programs with Connecticut and New Hampshire's nuclear facilities. The only large-scale hydroelectric facilities appear to be those of Canada which recently failed to deliver to the US recently because of Canada's own needs. I thus oppose Section 7.

Section 8 Renewable Energy Standard.

Recognized as a major driver of Rhode Island's energy transition by the team of consultants eating with our 2025 Climate Action Strategy program, with no evident involvement of the Governor, it is now proposed to be scrapped by extending the hundred percent renewable energy mandate from 2033 to 2050, based on some estimates of the cost of required renewable energy certificates. The creation of Section 8's recommendations, done outside of

public view and discussion, is not acceptable. A sensible review of its role is reasonable but to except the recommendations out of hand is precipitous and unwise.

Section 9 Long-Term Contracting Standard for Renewable Energy is deleted in its entirety. While payments to the utility for entering into such contracts should not be necessary at all, the concept of long-term contracts should never be discarded.

Section 10 Solar Development and Net Metering Changes

This section is not being discussed today but will need radical changes before it brings benefits to Rhode Island.

Thank you very much for considering my comments. Please help us support the future of Rhode Island as we move towards affordable energy independence.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Trafton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Peter Trafton