



# Roots 2Empower

*Fostering an equitable, regenerative future.*

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House Finance Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

## **Re: Opposition to Article 11, Section 3 and Article 11, Section 8 – FY2027 Budget**

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tarshire Battle, the Executive Director of Roots 2Empower. I am submitting testimony in opposition to Article 11, Section 3 (cap on energy efficiency programs) and Article 11, Section 8 (17-year delay to the Renewable Energy Standard) in the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

Strong investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy benefit every community in Rhode Island urban, suburban, and rural by lowering costs, improving public health, strengthening infrastructure, and reducing long-term climate risk.

Energy efficiency programs reduce overall electricity demand, which lowers system-wide costs for all ratepayers. When homes, schools, and businesses use less energy, utilities avoid expensive infrastructure upgrades and fuel purchases. These savings are shared broadly, not limited to program participants. Reduced demand also protects residents from volatility in fossil fuel markets, stabilizing utility bills statewide.

Expanding renewable energy similarly diversifies Rhode Island's energy supply and decreases dependence on imported fuels. This improves grid reliability, enhances energy security, and protects households and businesses from price spikes. Renewable energy deployment also supports local economic development, job creation, and long-term competitiveness.

Environmental benefits extend to all regions of the state. Reduced fossil fuel combustion lowers air pollution, which improves respiratory and cardiovascular health outcomes. Cleaner air benefits residents in dense urban neighborhoods and smaller towns alike. Lower greenhouse gas emissions also reduce the severity of long-term climate impacts, including coastal flooding, extreme heat, and storm intensity risks that affect communities across Rhode Island.

Investments in clean energy are not narrow or localized benefits; they are structural improvements to the state's economic, environmental, and public health systems. Delaying renewable standards and restricting efficiency programming would increase long-term costs and climate exposure for every resident.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject Sections 3 and 8 of Article 11 and maintain Rhode Island's commitment to affordable, reliable, and clean energy for all communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tarshire Battle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "T".

Tarshire Battle