

**Representative Marvin Abney, Chair**  
House Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island House of Representatives

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**RE: Green Energy Consumers Alliance Opposes Budget Article 11, Sections 3 and 8 in H7127 (Fiscal Year 2027 Budget).**

Dear Chair Abney and members of the committee,

On behalf of Green Energy Consumers Alliance and our thousands of members across Rhode Island, **I write in strong opposition to Budget Article 11, Sections 3 and 8 in House Bill 7127 (Fiscal Year 2027 Budget)** which seek to cap energy efficiency program budgets and push out Rhode Island's Renewable Energy Standard.

**Rhode Island Must Remain on Track to Achieve Act on Climate Goals**

The Act on Climate mandates that Rhode Island reduce its total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 45% by 2030 and net zero by 2050. According to the 2025 Climate Action Strategy (CAS), approved by the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) in December 2025, Rhode Island is approximately on track to meet the 2030 AOC target under current existing policies. We would like to note that our assessment is that the EC4 report is overly optimistic in the achievable emissions reductions and that new policies are needed to meet the mandate. Regardless, Sections 3 and 8 of H7127 will significantly reduce the likelihood of Rhode Island achieving those targets.

**Figure 3: Economy-wide GHG Emissions Under the Current Policy Scenario**

GHG Emissions (MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e)

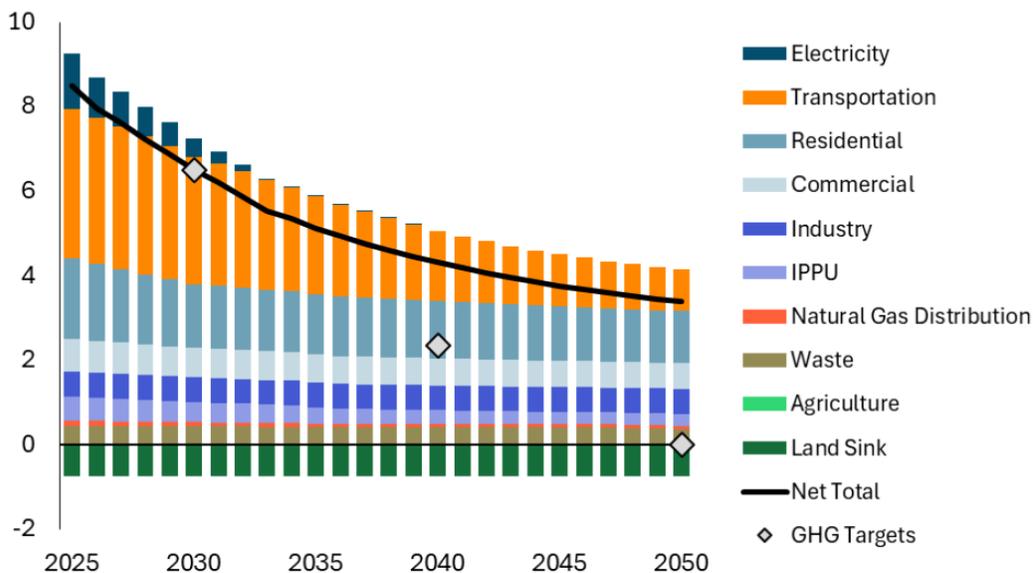


Image from 2025 Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy, pg. 12.

After the Senate Finance Committee hearing on February 10<sup>th</sup>, which heard the same budget sections as what will be heard this evening, it has become clear that our state agencies are weakening their resolve to meet the mandates in the Act on Climate. We analyzed a few comments made by Chris Kearns, the Acting Commissioner of the Office of Energy Resources and Linda George, Administrator of the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers in a recent blog: [Rhode Island State Agencies Give Up on Clean Energy and The Act on Climate](#).

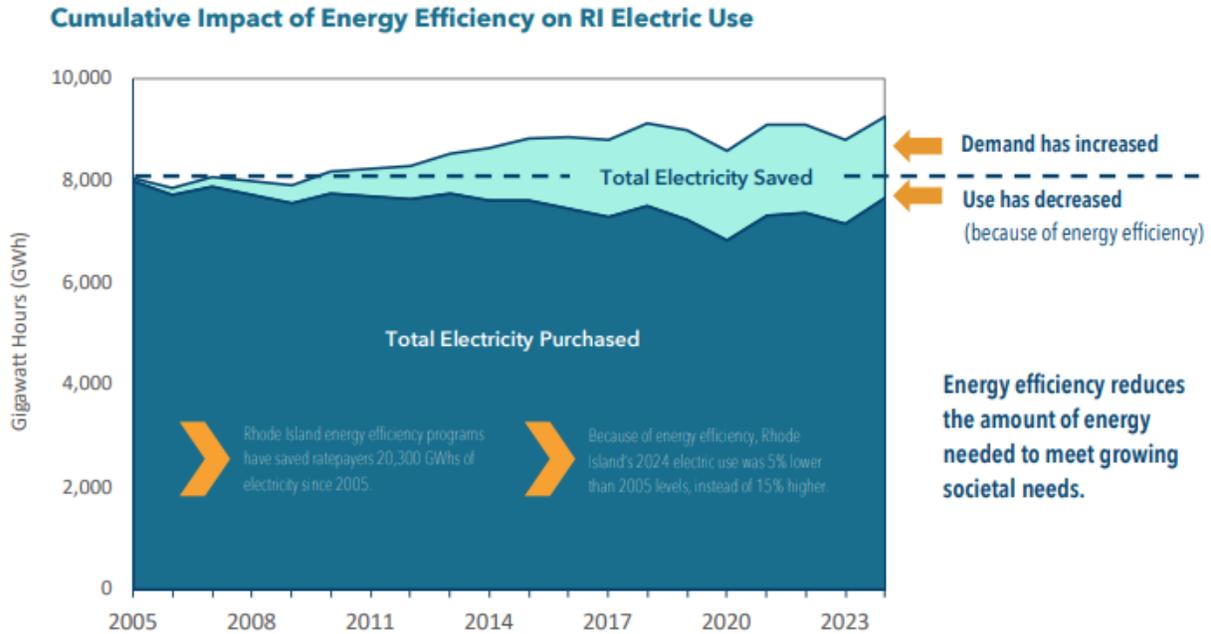
With state agencies seemingly conceding on state climate mandates, the legislature must remain firmly committed to the Act on Climate and the opportunity to create an affordable energy future through renewable energy deployment.

### **Section 3: System Reliability and Least Cost Procurement**

This section proposes to cap the gas and electric energy efficiency budgets at \$75 million for the 2027-2029 three-year energy efficiency plan. If approved, this cap would be another significant reduction in energy efficiency program budgets, as the approved 2026 program budget is ~\$92M and the prior 2025 budget was ~\$114M. These continually declining budgets will reinforce how the state has slipped from a nationwide leader in energy efficiency to a state that struggles to keep up with current trends.

Energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective methods of reducing ratepayer utility bills. According to the [2025 Energy Efficiency Council Annual Report](#), for every \$1 invested into energy efficiency, Rhode Islanders receive \$3 worth of benefits, which include directly lower bills, job creation, and greenhouse gas reductions. Artificially constraining program budget levels to \$75M will reduce the amount of cost-effective energy efficiency measures that can be accessed by Rhode Islanders and may result in consequences like paying more for energy than the cost of increased energy efficiency measures.

As shown in the image below, investments in energy efficiency have reduced the amount of electricity purchased by Rhode Islanders even as demand has grown. Reducing investment in energy efficiency programs will correspond with a loss in jobs and work hours for those employed by the efficiency industry and will eliminate a significant amount of financial benefits felt by Rhode Islanders as compared to prior budget amounts.



**Figure 1. Cumulative Impact of Efficiency Investments on RI Electric Supply Requirements (2005-2024).**

Image from 2025 Energy Efficiency Council Annual Report pg. 17.

### **Section 8: Renewable Energy Standard**

This section proposes to make several changes to the existing 100% by 2033 Renewable Energy Standard (RES), a legacy policy spearheaded by former Senate President Ruggiero. The most notable change proposed in H7172 is pushing out compliance with the RES by 17 years, so the state only reaches 100% clean electricity by 2050. As outlined above, the RES is a foundational policy to ensure the state complies with the 2030 AOC target and pushing it out would introduce significant uncertainty that the state is not prepared to address through other policies.

Delaying the transition to clean electricity will prolong Rhode Island's dependence on imported fossil fuels, hitching ratepayers to a volatile fuel source with costs projected to rise over time ([Future of Gas Technical Report](#), pg. 64). The state's Public Utilities Commission (PUC) opened a docket nearly four years ago to investigate the future of the regulated gas distribution business ([Docket No. 22-01-NG](#)) and while final recommendations from the PUC remain absent, many scenarios outlined in the technical report rely on high levels of electrification needed to meet the Act on Climate, supporting the finding from the 2025 CAS that current policies are essential to meeting the 2030 AOC target.

Without the 100% by 2033 RES, the state cannot meet the 2030 AOC target. While other sectors (e.g. transportation, building) could theoretically reduce emissions on a faster timeline to make up for the loss left by pushing out the RES, there are no policies in place for those sectors to speed up emissions reductions. Plainly, this proposal deliberately makes it harder to achieve the AOC while also reducing future clean energy development and clean energy job growth in the state.

**Conclusion**

To achieve the requirements of an Act on Climate, Rhode Island must remain committed to the policies already in place intended to reduce utility bills, incentivize deployment of in-state renewable resources, and procure clean electricity. The proposals included in Article 11, Sections 3 and 8 of House Bill 7127 will make it more difficult to meet the legally binding mandates within the Act on Climate and can increase utility bills for ratepayers.

Green Energy Consumers Alliance urges the committee to reject these proposed amendments to existing state policy.

Sincerely,

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**Green Energy Consumers Alliance**  
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