



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of a set of funding related bills before the Committee that together represent a comprehensive and necessary investment in Rhode Island's climate, transportation, environmental, and economic future. Several of these proposals align closely with the Governor's priorities as laid in his proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

As outlined in the State's Climate Action Strategy, the need for investment is urgent. Without dedicated funding, even the most thoughtful and ambitious plans cannot be executed at the scale or pace required. We need to employ a coordinated strategy to move Rhode Island from climate planning to implementation.

Here in Providence and across Rhode Island, we are already experiencing the urgency of the climate crisis, with flooding events in the last three years endangering our neighborhoods and at times coinciding with high heat days that are also increasing and becoming more frequent. These challenges underscore the importance of making long-term investments to address these issues.

As Mayor of the state's capital city, I have prioritized advancing our climate goals through strategies that move the needle on carbon emission reductions and improve the quality of life for Providence residents. We are implementing our nationally recognized Climate Justice Plan. We have launched an energy benchmarking program, BERO, for our municipal buildings and large private buildings citywide that can easily and cost-effectively be replicated and implemented by the State and administered with municipalities. We recently announced the creation of the Green Revolving Fund to ensure we can sustain the clean energy investments in our public buildings to increase the resiliency of our community-centered spaces. Last week we released our Decarbonization Roadmap to establish a clear pathway for phasing out fossil fuels from 130 city-owned buildings over the next 14 years. This will transform how we power, heat, and cool and operate our buildings and achieve a 64% reduction in the City's energy use. Since 2023, our Providence Community Electricity program has helped stabilize electricity supply costs while delivering cleaner energy for Providence residents.

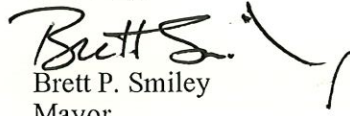
Providence's prosperity and Rhode Island's future are also tied directly to the strength of our transit system. Investments in transit and safer, more accessible transportation infrastructure are central to reducing emissions, improving public safety, and ensuring equitable mobility. Providence has also prioritized complete streets, multimodal access, and traffic safety through both planning and implementation. Our efforts to build a more sustainable, equitable city depend on reducing emissions, improving air quality and making it safe and affordable for people to get where they need to go.

Municipalities cannot do this work alone. Sustained state investment, particularly in transportation, clean energy, and resilient infrastructure, is essential to achieving meaningful progress.

Rhode Island must continue to take a thoughtful and coordinated approach to investment that strengthens our economy, supports working families, protects our environment, and positions the to meet its climate commitments.

I respectfully urge the Committee to continue advancing investments that ensure funding for these critical priorities.

Sincerely,


Brett P. Smiley
Mayor