

Trafton testimony in behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island supporting H 8167, House Finance Committee, April 30, 2026.

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

I'm Peter Trafton from Providence, Co-VP of Policy for the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) writing with our strong support for H 8167, the Act Relating to Education – School Funds and Property, by Rep Cortvriend and colleagues.

ECRI has supported previous versions of this bill for several years and has decided to do so again. We are happy to join our colleague Jeanine Silversmith of the Rhode Island Environmental Education Association in so doing.

The goal of 8167 is for Rhode Island's Department of Education to develop and adopt regulations that require standards for zero energy capable schools by the end of 2037. The latest standards of the Northeast collaborative for high-performance schools (NE – CHPS) will provide a basis for this. This highly respected organization has been the model for Rhode Island's schools for some years.

As a former East Providence resident, I recognize the highly favorable impact that town's new high school has had on its students and citizens. More importantly, healthy school buildings are essential part of optimal academic performance and should be made available for all our students. Thus, ECRI believes that this bill, H8167, will be vital for building the Rhode Island's future. Now is the time to pass this legislation. We hope that you will do so.

Thanks very much for considering my comments in ECRI's behalf.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PTrafton". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Peter Trafton
Co-VP for Policy
The Environment Council of Rhode Island