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Rhode Island Works Best When We Say **UNION YES.**

May 6, 2026

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

RE: Opposition as written to H7127: Article 11, Section 10 - Net Metering & Sections 7 and 8 - Renewable Energy Standard, & Governor's Budget Amendment #7

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the 80,000 union members of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO and our affiliated local unions, I write in opposition to the Governor's FY2027 budget proposal Article 11, Section 10 Net Metering & Sections 7 and 8 Renewable Energy Standards, and the Governor's Budget Amendment #7.

Article 11, Section 10 - Net Metering:

While we appreciate the Governor's willingness to engage with impacted parties, including organized labor and industry stakeholders, we remain concerned with the proposed reduction in the capacity limitation for new net-metering projects from 275 MW to 125 MW. The RI AFL-CIO believes the proposed 125 MW cap may not be sufficient to support the continued growth of local clean energy development and the local jobs tied to those projects.

Virtual Net Metering projects play a significant role in expanding local energy generation and helping stabilize long-term energy costs for municipalities, schools, public entities, and ratepayers. These projects support the development of in-state energy resources that reduce reliance on imported fuels and help create a more resilient and diversified energy system for Rhode Island. Maintaining a strong pipeline of local clean energy projects can provide both workforce benefits and long-term value through greater energy price predictability and local infrastructure investment.

We believe there is an opportunity to continue discussions around a framework that balances affordability concerns with the long-term economic, energy security, and workforce benefits these projects provide.

Article 11, Sections 7 and 8 - Renewable Energy Standard:

I write in opposition to the proposed changes to the Renewable Energy Standard (RES). The Rhode Island AFL-CIO believes that we can both maintain the 2033 timeline and reduce costs to ratepayers. There is room for thoughtful adjustments to the RES that we could support. We firmly believe there is common ground and are willing to work with all stakeholders on this issue to address affordability concerns while continuing to protect Rhode Island's climate goals, workforce, and long-term clean energy progress.

We also believe maintaining a strong Renewable Energy Standard supports long-term energy price stability by encouraging the development of local energy resources that are not tied to the volatility of regional fuel markets. Expanding in-state energy generation, including solar, storage, offshore wind, and other distributed resources, helps Rhode Island reduce dependence on imported fuels while strengthening grid reliability and creating local economic opportunity, while protecting ratepayers from cost spikes.

The Rhode Island AFL-CIO is committed to working collaboratively with the Administration, the General Assembly, and other stakeholders to identify practical solutions that preserve market stability, meet the Renewable Energy Standard, support economic growth, and provide meaningful relief for Rhode Island families.



We make Rhode Island work.

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Rhode Island has established itself as a national leader in clean energy development and climate action, and we believe maintaining that leadership remains important for both our economy and workforce. Preserving that leadership sends a strong signal that our state remains committed to supporting forward-looking investment, modern energy infrastructure, and the industries and workers helping shape the future of our economy.

For these reasons, we remain opposed to each of these proposals as written and look forward to continuing to work with the Administration, the General Assembly, and stakeholders to find a reasonable path forward. Thank you for your time and consideration, along with the opportunity to provide written testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 401-751-7100 should you have any questions or require any additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Erica A. Hammond'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Erica A. Hammond
Legislative Director, Rhode Island AFL-CIO