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April 28, 2026

The Honorable Representative Stephen Casey
Chairman
House Committee on Municipal Government & Housing
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903
Re: Opposition Testimony H7774 – An Act Relating to Health and Safety – State Building Code

Dear Chairman Casey and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to H7774 – An Act Relating to Health and Safety – State Building Code (Amends the state building code and would require that the state adopt the 2024 International Residential Code and prohibit the state building committee from adopting amendments for one to four residential dwelling units until 2030)

My company specializes in modern wood heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems.

As a contractor with years of experience installing heating systems, I have worked firsthand with technologies that significantly improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions in residential homes. My company has taken pride in helping homeowners in Rhode Island and across New England transition to cleaner, more sustainable energy solutions.

It is difficult to understand why this legislation would seek to halt innovation in the energy sector at a time when advancements are delivering measurable benefits in both efficiency and environmental impact. Freezing updates to residential building codes until 2030 would place Rhode Island at odds with national progress and best practices.

This proposal risks making Rhode Island an outlier. Building codes—such as the International Code Council standards and evolving energy codes like the IECC—are developed through a collaborative, national process that includes input from experts across industries, including HVAC, electrical, and plumbing. These processes are open, transparent, and allow all stakeholders to participate during formal comment periods. Preventing the adoption of updated codes undermines this system and ignores the collective expertise that drives improvements in safety, efficiency, and environmental performance. Once a code is finalized, it serves as a benchmark for progress—not something to be selectively paused.

Additionally, Rhode Island already faces structural challenges in its construction industry. Unlike neighboring states such as Massachusetts, Rhode Island does not broadly require builder licensing. Policies that discourage innovation or create

regulatory inconsistencies risk pushing qualified contractors to operate in other states, exacerbating—not alleviating—the housing shortage.

Most importantly, delaying adoption of future energy codes, including anticipated updates like IECC 2027, would slow progress toward lower emissions and more efficient housing. Moving backward on energy standards benefits neither consumers nor the environment.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to oppose H7774.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Lataille

Eastern Biomass