

Providence RI, Feb. 6, 2024.

I am Peter Trafton, writing on behalf of myself, **in support of House Bill 7246**
to be heard by the House Committee on State Government & Elections, February 6, 2024.

Dear Chair Shanley and Honorable members of Committee,

I believe that passing 7246 is an important addition to our state's efforts to succeed economically and respond effectively to the challenges of the climate crisis.


Increasing carbon emissions continue to cause global warming. The resulting effects on our climate have increasingly severe impacts on Rhode Island and its people. Higher temperatures, increased storm severity, sea level rise, and public health problems disturb our state, and threaten economic efforts. "Billion-dollar storms" affect America, more and more frequently. Even if we are successful at reducing carbon emissions, the effects of global warming will persist for centuries. Here in the ocean state, we must prepare ourselves, our land, our buildings, and our businesses from the threatening environment. Our Commerce Department must participate in the necessary planning and do so in effective collaboration with the state agencies – particularly the EC4 and OER - who lead planning and implementation of climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

Adding the director of the DEM and CRMC to the Secretary of Commerce's Economic Development Planning Council is a "no-brainer". We need them at the same table. Requiring the Planning Council to consider "climate change, sea-level rise, coastal resiliency" is, of course, another "no-brainer".

Prodigious resources will be required to protect Rhode Island from the storms. This was very clearly pointed out by the city of New York's review of Super- Storm Sandy. Princeton Prof. Michael Oppenheimer, a senior author of the review, and part-time Block Island resident, stresses the importance of planning and investing in the necessary protections which are required to minimize the costs of damages.

In addition to building Rhode Island's resilience, we should remember that the economic transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy offers a tremendous opportunity to our state's businesses. Closer collaboration between our Commerce Secretary and her colleagues on the EC4, promoted by Bill 7246, can assist our energy transition as well as help us build necessary resilience. Please support 7246 and help Rhode Island thrive as we adapt to the realities of climate change.

Sincerely,

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

Peter Trafton