

SUBJECT: Support for Senate Bill No. 2801 (The Solar Cost Reduction Act)

FROM: Bill Ibelle, co-chair Climate Action RI Politics Team
28 Memorial Rd. Providence, 02906

Dear Sosnowski and members of the committee:

Residential solar costs far more in the U.S. than it does in Europe, largely because of our outdated and overly complex permitting process, which drives up the cost of installation.

This bill provides a solution that eliminates unnecessary red tape by automating the permitting process. The system utilizes **free** software—(SolarAPP+)—that was developed by the U.S. Department of Energy.

The program allows contractors to submit permit applications electronically for residential solar and automates the approval process, eliminating the need for costly and time-consuming review. The program automatically performs code compliance checks for fire, electrical, zoning, and building codes. It then either issues the permit or automatically determines the revisions needed to earn a permit.

This software can be easily integrated into the state’s existing online permitting platform and automatically tracks all this information for easy data analysis.

It’s simple, cheap, and it will lower the cost of residential solar by eliminating unnecessary red tape.

This bill is also part of a priority legislation package designed by Climate Action RI to move us forward on our climate goals and reduce electric rates with **virtually no cost** to the state or ratepayers.

In a year when the response to climate legislation is either “We have no money” or “Rates are already too high,” this legislative package provides an affordable solution.

Bill	Cost		Summary	Bill # and sponsors
	Ratepayers	State		
Solar Cost Reduction Act	None	None	Reduces the cost of solar energy by eliminating unnecessary red tape	S2801 H7726 Valverde / Boylan
Plug-in solar	None	None	Allows residents to use safety-certified plug-in solar panels.	S2359 H7269 Valverde / Speakman
Next Generation Buildings	None	None	Prohibits fossil fuel heating in new municipal buildings	S2529 H7081 Urso / Boylan
Benchmarking (large buildings)	None	Minimal	Step 1: Requires owners of large buildings to provide energy use data to an automated data base.	S2260 H7183 Kallman / Kislak

Performance Standards (large buildings)	None	Moderate	Step 2: Sets emissions reduction requirements for large buildings.	S2218 H718 Kallman / Kislak
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