



TO: Chair Sosnowski and members of the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee
FROM: Michael Kadish, Ocean State Climate Alliance
RE: Support for S2801 – Solar Cost Reduction Act
DATE: 4/14/26

Chair Sosnowski and the honorable Members of the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee:

My name is Michael Kadish, and I live in Barrington. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Ocean State Climate Alliance (OSCA).

OSCA is a Rhode Island-based organization working to advance practical, results-oriented climate and energy policy. We focus on bridging the gap between policy ambition and real-world implementation by bringing the real-world perspectives of businesses, workers, and local stakeholders into the conversation.

We strongly support the Solar Cost Reduction Act.

This is a cost-reduction bill. Residential solar in Rhode Island is more expensive than it should be, not because of equipment or labor, but in large part because of process inefficiencies.

Permitting delays and redundant administrative requirements add an estimated \$6,000 to \$7,000 to the cost of a typical installation. These costs are ultimately borne by Rhode Island homeowners.

By enabling automated plan review and instant permitting for code-compliant systems, this bill removes unnecessary costs without compromising safety.

It modernizes an outdated system. Rhode Island's current permitting process requires manual review of routine residential solar projects that already meet established codes. This results in delays measured in weeks for work that can be verified in minutes using proven software tools.

States across the country: including California, New Jersey, Texas, and Florida, have already adopted similar approaches. Rhode Island is not being asked to experiment, but to catch up with best practices that are already working.

It preserves safety and local control. This legislation does not change building, electrical, or fire codes. It does not eliminate inspections. It does not remove municipal authority over permitting, zoning, or fees. Instead, it improves how compliance with existing standards is verified.

As the Solar Energy Industries Association notes in its support for this bill, automated permitting tools maintain code compliance while freeing up local staff to focus on more complex projects.

It costs the state nothing and reduces administrative burden. The bill has zero fiscal impact on the state budget. The permitting platform is made available at no cost to municipalities, and it reduces staff workload by automating routine plan reviews.

This is a rare example of a policy that lowers costs for homeowners, improves efficiency for municipalities, and strengthens the operating environment for local businesses, all without requiring new spending.

It supports Rhode Island's economy and competitiveness. Rhode Island's solar companies operate in a regional market. When permitting timelines are slow and unpredictable, business shifts to neighboring states with more efficient processes.

This bill helps level the playing field for Rhode Island's solar workforce and companies, while enabling more residents to access lower-cost energy.

Rhode Island faces complex energy challenges, but not every solution needs to be complex. Our state currently ranks in the bottom half of states for solar permitting timelines. This is one of the fastest, lowest-cost actions the state can take to address that gap.

The Solar Cost Reduction Act is a practical, immediate step the state can take to lower energy costs, support local businesses, and accelerate deployment of clean energy without new spending or regulatory expansion.

From OSCA's perspective, this is exactly the kind of pragmatic, business-informed policy that can help Rhode Island meet its climate and economic goals.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to pass S2801 out of committee with a recommendation for passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Kadish
Ocean State Climate Alliance
Barrington, Rhode Island