

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,
I'm a resident of Narragansett and am providing written testimony in my personal capacity for the committee hearing on Feb. 10, 2026 related to two items in the Governor's proposed budget 1) the proposed \$75 Million annual cap on energy efficiency program budgets and 2) pushing back the Renewable Energy Standard (RES) compliance date for achieving 100% clean energy from 2033 to 2050. These proposals would undermine our options for achieving the Act on Climate targets Rhode Island has committed to. With meaningful leadership, Rhode Island can achieve these important climate goals and the many benefits that come with it. There are challenges in meeting them coming from the federal leadership caving to fossil fuel interests, but there is no need to emulate at the state level. RI legislators and the governor should not be beholden to fossil fuel interests. Both of these proposal supposedly are intended to reduce energy costs modestly in the short term, but in the long term will have expensive impacts, both for our energy system, and through increased climate change impacts.

Renewable energy programs save me money personally because of the upgrades I've been able to make on my home, but the system as a whole benefits everyone by driving down supply and delivery costs - the more Rhode Islanders who are able to take advantage of these energy efficiency programs, the better off we all are by avoiding volatile gas spikes. \$75 Million each year is not enough to meet the need or to support a meaningful transition to an improved efficient energy state. Rhode Island set itself as a leader in renewable energy when we set our RES dates. Rhode Island is incredibly vulnerable to climate impacts, and we set these ambitious targets because we need the world to be on track to meet ambitious climate targets if we want to avoid the worst climate impacts, that are prohibitively expensive to adapt to. As someone who works in the field of climate adaptation, there are some emissions thresholds that once we pass, we have limited options for adaptation. To protect many of our most valued resources, we need to make substantial changes in the next 7 years. Realistically we needed to make changes decades ago. We lost our chance to push dates back, by dithering for years to pass any meaningful climate legislation. If we had set RES twenty years ago, it would have been much more affordable to achieve these targets. The longer we put it off, the more expensive the transition becomes and more importantly, the more expensive the climate impacts become. Please don't give up on Rhode Island.

Sincerely,
Amanda Babson
61 Inez St
Narragansett, RI