

Camille Nixon, 70 Bradford St., Warren, RI 02885

Date of hearing: February 10, 2026

To Chair DiPalma and the honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I come to you as a grandmother who is trying to protect our grandchildren's future and planet. Rhode Island has been the beacon of what states can do to fight climate change. Let us continue to be recognized as fearless in our pursuit of a healthy planet. There are some issues that I see with this proposed document. We know that burning fossil fuels is killing us. We see that promoting clean affordable renewable energies such as wind and solar is the best way to protect our planet. And, yet, I see some snakes in the grass of this proposed document. Among others, please let me point out two concerns.

1. Why is the allowance to the Rhode Island infrastructure bank being halved from 5 million to 2.5 million when we should be increasing our support, not decreasing it? We need to give start-up funds for clean energies so they can take off. The benefits will be realized only if we help fund the projects. Please increase funding of renewable energies, not decrease it.

2. The most worrisome finding in this proposal is what I read under read under 39-26-4: Renewable energy standard. The goal here is "one hundred percent (100%) of Rhode Island's electricity demand is from renewable energy and zero-emission resources by 2050 and each year thereafter."

I wondered why you changed "renewable energy" to include "zero-emission resources" because I thought renewables were zero-emission. "Zero-emission" sounds good, though. So, I looked closer and saw that you have added zero-emission all over this proposal. I was horrified to see that "zero-emission resources" are defined here under 39-26-2 as "Nuclear Energy." So, Nuclear Energy is being greenwashed to make it look safe. This is a bald cover-up. Nuclear energy has no place in our safe affordable renewable energy standards. It is neither safe nor affordable nor renewable. Nuclear energy must be taken out of this document which forces us into not only subsidizing it, but, into greenwashing it as "low-emission" to hoodwink the public.

Rhode Island is admitting, here, that nuclear energy with its radioactive waste might fall under our umbrella of safe renewables and is greenwashing it by naming it a "zero-emission resource". This is lying to the public that nuclear energy is low-emission because nuclear waste will be released into our environment and even with the new "clean" plants there will be radioactive waste. We and our progeny for centuries will be handcuffed into making sure this waste remains contained. All nuclear power plants, even the new "clean" plants emit radioactive nuclear waste which were it not hermetically contained would be a catastrophic emission.

Also, you have included that nuclear energy will be part of our affordable renewable infrastructure into the future and that the production of nuclear energy will realize the financial benefits which we are affording genuine, clean renewables. These "alternative compliance payments" will, essentially, subsidize nuclear energy. Nuclear energy, already, gets huge subsidies that we pay. Nuclear energy is not affordable as the cost is more than just financial, which is unbelievably high. We must not force our Rhode Island to absorb even more of the astronomical costs of nuclear energy.

We have granted Nuclear Energies across the country limited liability when it comes to harming the public. Nuclear plant operators want to be sure that if there's a catastrophic accident, billions of the cost of damage they cause will be borne by the general public and not by their shareholders. Think of Chernobyl or Fukushima and realize that even with all the safety protocol surrounding the containment of nuclear waste, there will, eventually, be catastrophic accidents—why would the nuclear industry require liability limits if nuclear power were safe? Don't be fooled that the new "safe" nuclear power plants will

be 100% safe—and they will, always, produce radioactive waste which will need to be contained. And for generations to come, we will force Rhode Islanders into dealing with this horrible radioactive nuclear waste containment nightmare.

We don't need nuclear energy if we invest more deeply into real renewables like wind and solar. This has been proven. Please take nuclear energy out of our clean, renewable energy future. We don't need any more nuclear proliferation in the energy realm. We should center on investing in wind and solar energies, not nuclear energy. This nuclear snake in the grass will take over real renewables just as it is slithering into our renewables. I will not be part of this travesty of greenwashing nuclear energy and making our constituents pay even more for it. Neither should you.

It is disingenuous of Rhode Island to put Nuclear Energy under the umbrella of Renewables as low-emission. Getting away from the immediate scare of burning fossil fuels does not mean embracing nuclear energy and all the nuclear waste that comes with it. Please take this lie of zero-emitting nuclear waste out of the affordable clean renewable energy plan for Rhode Island for the sake of future generations who will be saddled with paying for and containing this radioactive waste mess.

I look at my grandchildren and hope that they will be proud of what we are doing here to protect their futures and their planet while instilling trust in us that we are looking out for them. Please let wonderful Rhode Island stay the beacon for the country of what can be done to further our true and honest fight against the climate crisis.

Thank you for considering the views that I have expressed here.

Thank you for helping to protect our planet.

Best wishes,

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References:

Effective January 1, 2022⁷, the commission shall allocate, from demand-side management gas and electric funds authorized pursuant to this section, **five million dollars (\$5,000,000) two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000)** of such funds on an annual basis to the Rhode Island infrastructure bank.

SECTION 7. Chapter 39-26 entitled “Renewable Energy Standard” is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

39-26-5.1. Zero-emission resources.

(a) Zero-emission resources are:

(1) Nuclear energy resources,

39-26-2. Definitions.

When used in this chapter:

(1) “Alternative compliance payment” means a payment to the renewable energy

development fund of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per megawatt-hour of renewable energy obligation, in 2003 dollars, adjusted annually up or down by the consumer price index, which may be made in lieu of standard means of compliance with this statute.

(1) "Alternative compliance payment" means a payment made in lieu standard means of compliance with this statute, as follows:

(i) For new renewable energy and zero-emission resources, an alternative compliance payment of forty dollars (\$40.00) per megawatt-hour of renewable energy obligation.

(ii) For existing renewable energy and zero-emission resources, an alternative compliance payment of eleven dollars (\$11.00) per megawatt-hour of renewable energy obligation.

39-26-4. Renewable energy standard.

(a) Starting in compliance year 2007, all obligated entities shall obtain at least three percent (3%) of the electricity they sell at retail to Rhode Island end-use customers, adjusted for electric line losses, from eligible renewable energy and zero-emission resources

(14) An additional five percent (5%) of retail electricity sales in each of compliance years 2049 and 2050 to achieve one hundred percent (100%) of Rhode Island's electricity demand is from renewable energy and zero-emission resources by 2050 and each year thereafter.