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February 10, 2026

The Honorable Senator Louis P. DiPalma
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street Providence, RI 02903

Re: CCSA Testimony Opposing Section 10 of HB 7127, Article 11

Dear Chair DiPalma and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 7127. The Coalition for Community Solar Access is a national trade association representing more than 120 community solar companies, businesses, and nonprofits. Together, we are building the electric grid of the future where every customer has the freedom to support the generation of clean, local solar energy to power their lives. Through legislative and regulatory advocacy, and the support of a diverse coalition, we enable policies that unlock the potential of distributed energy resources, starting with community solar. Our members include long term owners and operators of community solar and solar serving municipalities and public institutions across Rhode Island.

Policymakers are right to focus on affordability issues; and energy costs are indeed too high. However, the real drivers of these costs are high and volatile natural gas prices and an aging grid infrastructure. We strongly urge legislators to resist the temptation to cut clean energy programs - an action that is penny-wise, pound foolish, and will only exacerbate the root causes of increasing costs.

CCSA is very concerned with the proposal in Section 10 of Article 11, which would alter compensation for and impose new fees on small renewable projects. These changes would apply to operational projects that have already made firm commitments based upon net metering structures set in statute. To change the rules on these assets midstream is inherently unfair and bad for business. Solar projects are capital intensive infrastructure assets that require stable, known revenues to attract low cost investment. The projects serving Rhode Island are underwritten by debt and equity provided at terms based on the net metering rules set in statute. Should Rhode Island decide to alter a policy without any grandfathering of existing projects, it will send the signal to investors that it cannot be trusted to keep its commitments. While the changes may be

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targeted to one program, the impacts will be felt in any future energy investments the state wishes to make.

The proposed changes to net metering will hurt Rhode Island customers who have come to rely on the savings they receive from community solar or a net metering contract. By design, many of these customers are cities, towns, schools, universities and hospitals - entities whose reductions in energy costs directly benefit their community. While the budget provisions are intended to reduce ratepayer costs, they will simply shift costs on to taxpayers to make up for lost energy savings.

Rhode Island's leadership in clean energy is commendable and has led to healthy investment in a diverse energy economy. The state's policy choices have led to a clean energy workforce 15,000 people strong. We urge the Senate to continue this momentum, rather than disrupt what you have already successfully built. CCSA and our members are willing and eager to work on forward-looking, creative solutions to optimize the design of solar and clean energy programs. While we appreciate the Governor's Executive Order calling for a stakeholder process to review the state's solar programs, we encourage a thorough process, not rushed by budget timeline constraints.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/Kate Daniel
Northeast Regional Director
Coalition for Community Solar Access