



MAYOR

Kenneth J. Hopkins

Cranston City Hall
869 Park Avenue
Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903
sen-dipalma@rilegislature.gov

Re: H 7127; An Act Relating to Making Appropriations for the Support of the State for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2027 – Article 11, Section 10

Dear Senator DiPalma:

I am writing to share my concerns regarding Section 10 of Article 11 of the Governor's proposed budget (H 7127), and to do so in the spirit of partnership that has long defined the relationship between Cranston and the State.

For many years, Cranston has worked in good faith to support Rhode Island's Act on Climate goals while also exercising careful fiscal stewardship. We have welcomed renewable energy projects, including multiple solar facilities, not only because protecting our environment matters, but because we believed these efforts could strengthen our community while advancing a shared statewide mission. That balance of progress and responsibility has guided our approach.

Today, through the State's net-metering program, Cranston saves more than \$600,000 each year on electricity costs, with long-term contracts projecting nearly \$1 million in annual savings over the next two decades. These projects also generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in municipal tax revenue. Our school department, through a separate net-metering agreement, expects to save approximately \$100,000 annually. These recurring savings and revenues are incorporated into our multi-year financial planning and are critical to maintaining structurally balanced budgets.

These are not abstract figures. They represent classroom support, public safety, infrastructure maintenance, and direct relief for local taxpayers.





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I have been advised that the grid access fees and credit rate reductions proposed in Section 10 could threaten the financial viability of these projects. That possibility gives me pause. When communities make long-term financial decisions in reliance on state policy, stability matters. Adjusting the economic framework for projects that are already built risks undermining confidence, disrupting local fiscal planning, and making future investment harder to secure.

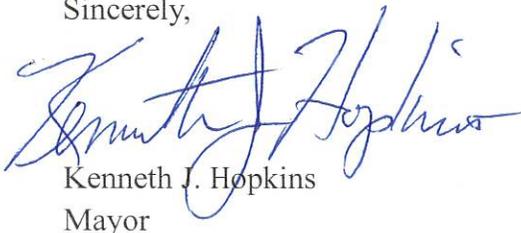
I respectfully ask the Committee to consider the real-world budgetary impact these changes may have on municipalities, as well as on hospitals, universities, and other institutions that participate in these programs. Predictable policy and dependable revenue streams are essential to responsible budgeting at every level of government, and our shared goals are best achieved when policies recognize the interconnected nature of local and statewide responsibilities.

I appreciate the Governor's focus on affordability and share the goal of keeping Rhode Island a place where families can afford to live, work, and stay. But affordability must work at every level. Removing nearly \$1 million in annual savings and tax revenues from our city would shift costs back onto local communities and families, making affordability harder, not easier, to achieve.

I believe there is a path forward that honors our clean energy commitments while protecting the fiscal stability of cities and towns that have been reliable partners in achieving them. I welcome continued dialogue and thoughtful collaboration as these decisions move forward.

Thank you for your time and for considering Cranston's perspective.

Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Hopkins
Mayor

