

February 10, 2026

Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Chair DiPalma and Finance Committee Members,

My name is Jason Kashdan. I am a registered dietitian based in Providence and I am writing underscore my concern with Gov. McKee's proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget, specifically how it delays and weakens Rhode Island's Renewable Energy Standard (RES). Pushing back renewables and energy efficiency targets by 17 years will exacerbate health disparities in our state, add additional strain to our already over-burdened healthcare system, and negatively impact our fishing industry.

RI has the highest adult asthma rates in the country: 28.4% of Black and 14% of Latinx residents have asthma, compared to 9.4% of white Rhode Islanders. Prolonging the state's exposure to volatile natural gas will disproportionately effect residents already living in neighborhoods with poor air quality.

When more Rhode Islanders are diagnosed with chronic health conditions, who will treat them? We can't afford it. The Trump Administration's HR 1 cut the Medicaid provider tax costing our state more than \$150 million and don't have enough providers to see patients today.

Additional delays in meaningful climate action will increase the frequency and severity of weather events and increase ocean temperatures. This directly threatens our costal industries and marine life. Lobster are moving north and out to deeper waters and native shellfish populations are declining.

I echo calls from the Resilient Rhody 2025 draft urging an interdisciplinary systems-based approach to tackling our state's energy crisis. This budget is antithetical to the Governor's own action when he made our state the first in the nation to commit to 100% renewable energy by 2033:

"Here in the Ocean State, we know that action to address the climate crisis cannot wait. Rhode Islanders are already feeling the effects of climate change, and the risks facing our communities will grow increasingly dire in the years ahead."

Let's honor the Governor's promise and prioritize the health and vitality of our state for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Jason Kashdan, MS, RD



Jason@AlimenteRI.com
376 Broadway, Providence, RI