

Trafton testimony in behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island supporting S2024 - Senate Finance Committee, May 21, 2026.

Dear Chair DiPalma and Honorable Committee Members,

I'm Peter Trafton from Providence, Co-VP of Policy for the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) writing in strong **support of S 2024**, the Rhode Island Climate Superfund Act, by Senator Ujifusa and colleagues.

The concept of requiring corporations to take financial responsibility for the damages they have done to the environment has been present and accepted for decades in the United States. The very name "Superfund" and the nationwide sites where corporate responsibility has been successfully required our common knowledge. They have indeed aided Rhode Island substantially in correcting our local industrial messes.

Attribution science now provides the means of identifying and apportioning greenhouse gas impacts from fossil-fuel-producing corporations. Climate Superfund laws now exist in Vermont and New York. They are, of course, being litigated by the corporations and supported by stalwart attorneys. The fact that litigation exists is no reason to delay creating Rhode Island Superfund law. Such laws should be seen as a necessary part of confirming our national need to address ever mounting damages to private and public land and buildings.

As stated in S2024's legislative findings and purpose, the Rhode Island Superfund act is a "remedial cost recovery measure that compensates public entities for expenditures made necessary by the conduct of responsible fossil fuel companies." The bill provides an outline for implementing the act by the DEM – identifying the work eligible for cost recovery, undertaken or in need of, by state and municipalities, its cost, and appropriate apportionment to the responsible corporations. They will be responsible for payment to the created Superfund and apportioned to the state entities to reimburse their costs for correcting the damages.

Needless to say, as the various impacts of global warming arrive in the Ocean State, we will need significant financial assistance to "clean up the corporate messes." The Climate Superfund act is important for Rhode Island's future. We should not delay in passing and implementing it. The action must begin here in your committee.

ECRI urges you to **pass the Superfund Act, S2024** to begin this process.

Thanks very much for considering my comments in ECRI's behalf.

Respectfully,



Peter Trafton, Co-VP for Policy
The Environment Council of Rhode Island