



**Senator Jacob Bissaillon, Chair**

**April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Senate Housing & Municipal Government Committee  
Rhode Island Senate

**RE: Green Energy Consumers Alliance Supports Senate Bill S2260**

Dear Chair Bissaillon and members of the committee,

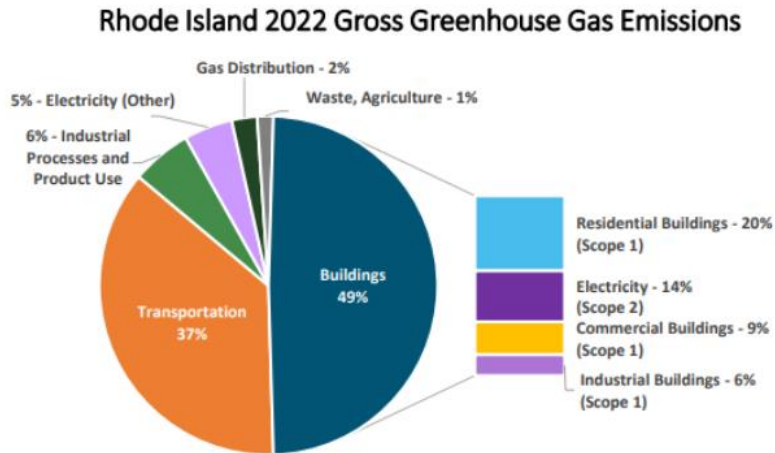
On behalf of Green Energy Consumers Alliance and our thousands of members across Rhode Island, **I write in strong support of Senate Bill S2260** which would direct the Office of Energy Resources to develop a statewide building benchmarking program to report and track energy usage from large buildings. Two sessions ago the Senate took action and passed this bill when it was part of the Building Decarbonization Act, and we hope the Senate recognizes the importance of this legislation again, passing it out of Committee and through a full floor vote.

**Rhode Island Is Not on Track to Achieve Act on Climate Goals**

The Act on Climate mandates that Rhode Island reduce its total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050. However, the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council's (EC4) [2022 Climate Update](#), a foundational plan detailing the state's progress towards meeting the Act on Climate shows, that the state would only achieve 40% emissions reductions by 2030, if everything in the plan were to be implemented.

Emissions from large buildings in the state are a significant piece of the decarbonization puzzle, as their emissions contribute approximately one-third of the state's total emissions, according to the [Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Greenhouse Gas Inventory](#). Notably, the 2025 [Building Benchmarking and Performance Standards report](#) required by Joint Resolution 7617 depicts buildings as contributing 49% of Rhode Island's 2022 gross Greenhouse Gas Emissions when including both Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, as shown in the image below.

APPENDIX 1: SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES AND FIGURES



Note: The emissions breakdown presented in this figure differs from the official accounting framework used by DEM to in the *Rhode Island Greenhouse Gas Inventory*.

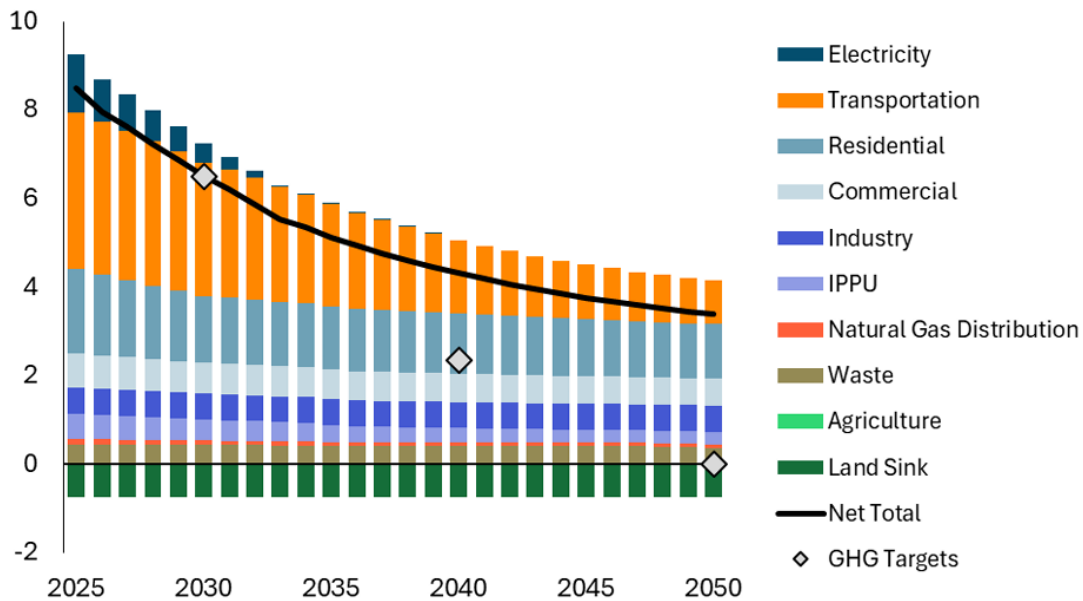
Figure 4: Rhode Island Gross Greenhouse Gas Emissions Breakdown, 2022<sup>37</sup>

*Image from Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council report: Building Energy Benchmarking and Performance Standards, p. 28.*

The state’s most recent climate planning report, the [2025 Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy](#), reported that Rhode Island is not on track to meet our long-term Act on Climate mandates, and additional policies are needed to reduce emissions. The image below models the trajectory of emissions reduction in Rhode Island given the impact of existing decarbonization policies, and clearly shows there is opportunity for further emissions reductions if our largest buildings track and report their energy usage. The 2022 Climate Update and 2025 Climate Action Strategy both indicate the critical importance of taking steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions if we are to meet the Act on Climate, yet the state has still not yet acted on these recommendations. The lack of action to reduce emissions from the building sector thus far only further underscores the necessity for passage of legislation including the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 this session.

**Figure 18: Emissions by Sector in Current Policy Scenario**

GHG Emissions (MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e)



*Image from the 2025 Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy, p. 62.*

Lacking a comprehensive policy to track building energy usage makes it difficult for building owners to understand their facilities' performance, especially as it compares to similar buildings, and subsequently improve their building performance. The Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act would provide that supportive framework allowing for data tracking and reporting.

This bill would enable emissions reductions from large existing buildings by requiring transparent energy reporting. Addressing emissions from existing buildings is a significant piece of the building decarbonization puzzle as around 70% of our building stock in 2050 is already in place today. Experts in the field of building decarbonization also point out that building benchmarking is a favored policy for a few reasons:

- While it does impose obligations onto building owners, it is targeted to the largest buildings in Rhode Island.
- Benchmarking encourages the development of the building efficiency market and makes building performance more visible in the marketplace.
- Benchmarking can inform policy development, allowing agencies to craft more effective emissions reductions policies.

Notably, the City of Providence already requires energy reporting for their large buildings through their [Building Energy Reporting Ordinance](#), and is home to a significant number of buildings that would be required to benchmark under this bill. Covered properties in Providence have been benchmarking and reporting energy usage for two compliance years, which can serve as a model for Rhode Island. The state can learn from the success that the City has had and make program improvements if benchmarking is rolled out to all large buildings within Rhode Island.

### **What This Bill Does**

**Building energy reporting:** Requires large buildings to report their energy usage and GHG emissions to a central data repository such as ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, a free and secure EPA platform used by nearly half a million buildings nationwide.

- Buildings covered by reporting requirements (estimated 3,974 total):
  - **Starting 2028:** Buildings larger than 50,000 sq ft
  - **Starting 2030:** Buildings larger than 25,000 sq ft
- The data collected will:
  - Help building owners measure their energy usage and emissions;
  - Compare facility performance with energy usage with buildings of similar size and use and;
  - Implement ways to reduce energy usage and utility costs.

### **Inclusion of S2260 into H7127 Article 3 Section 16**

Green Energy Consumers Alliance would like to thank the Governor for including a state facilities benchmarking and performance standards program, and a voluntary benchmarking program for private buildings in the FY 2027 Budget. We are in support of this program and advocated for it at the associated Senate Finance Committee hearing. However, Rhode Island can and must do more to address emissions from large buildings in the state, not just from state-owned and state-operated facilities or on a voluntary basis. Therefore, we also advocate for S2260 to be incorporated into H7127 Article 3 Section 16 to create a more comprehensive building benchmarking and performance standards program.

### **If Not a Benchmarking and Performance Standards Program, Then What?**

Though Rhode Island's building stock contributes approximately one-third of the state's greenhouse gas emissions, the state has yet to implement any policies to address these emissions. Alongside our advocacy for the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 we are strongly support the Building Performance Standards Act of 2026 ([S2218](#)),

which would direct the Office of Energy Resources to develop building performance standards by which covered properties (buildings greater than 25,000 square feet) would be required to reduce emissions in line with the mandates in the Act on Climate.

Without passage of S2260 and S2218, the state will continue to lack a holistic plan to measure and reduce emissions from our largest buildings. This is not aligned with what is needed from the state according to the 2025 Climate Action Strategy and will severely hinder the state's ability to meet the Act on Climate. Rhode Island cannot afford to continue pushing off developing a plan to reduce emissions from large buildings.

### **Conclusion**

To achieve the requirements of the Act on Climate, we must implement larger policies that will enable emissions reductions from the building sector. Passage of the Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 is a necessary step that will ensure large building owners begin tracking and reporting building energy use to allow for improvements to be made.

Green Energy Consumers Alliance thanks Senator Kallman for introducing this bill and urges the Committee and full General Assembly to vote in favor of its passage.

Sincerely,

Tina Munter, RI Policy Advocate

**Green Energy Consumers Alliance**

[Tina@greenenergyconsumers.org](mailto:Tina@greenenergyconsumers.org)