



Climate Jobs Rhode Island
194 Smith St, Providence, RI 02908

January 25, 2024

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon
House Committee on Corporations
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support H-7015

Dear Chair Solomon,

Climate Jobs Rhode Island (CJRI) is a coalition of more than thirty (30) labor unions, environmental, and community organizations committed to working together to make Rhode Island a national leader in the development of a resilient 21st century economy through a Just Transition, that centers our frontline communities and frontline workers.

Our members range from those who represent the frontline workers who build, repair, and maintain Rhode Island's critical infrastructure and energy systems, to community groups like the United Way of RI and Childhood Lead Action Project; to environmental organizations like The Nature Conservancy, and Clean Water Action.

We write in strong support for House bill 7015. This bill clarifies the types of electrical work required to be performed by persons or firms that have an electrical contractor's license. It does not change the well understood scope of the existing licensing law. These clarifications simply ensure that the current law is interpreted as it is currently written and intended to be.

H-7015 will ensure the essential requirements for obtaining an electrical contractor's license remain intact. The clarification provided by this legislation is critical to preventing individuals seeking to bypass the current state requirements. It closes a dangerous loophole that allows home inspectors, non-union developers and other entities whose profit motives far outweigh their interests in protecting the safety of their workers, to misinterpret the current licensing law.

It is imperative to stand firm against any proposals that alter the composition of the current licensing law and water down its well-established regulations and standards governing the electrical sector. This legislation has been reviewed by the Director of the RI Department of Labor and Training, the Board of Examiners of Electricians, the Chief Electrical Licensing

Investigator, and the Chief Electrical Inspector of RI, and all of which concur the clarifications H-7015 provide are consistent with the current law that is often violated.

If passed, this legislation will eliminate the current law from being misconstrued. This simple clarification is a matter of safety for not only our workers, but our families, and communities, along with the energy systems that keep them running. Ensuring and upholding electrical labor standards is paramount to maintain the same level of safety, reliability, and integrity of all electrical work. The standards and requirements set within our current electrical licensing law and clarified within this bill, guarantee this work is performed by highly trained, qualified, and skilled professionals. Electrical labor standards not only safeguard working individuals and communities by promoting on site safety and preventing electrical hazards but add to the overall efficiency and quality of our electrical infrastructure.

House bill 7015 may seem minor or redundant to some, but it is an integral step to ensure the quality and reliability of our electrical systems along with ensuring the safety of the workers who play an essential role in keeping this state running. Thank you, Representative Fellela and bill sponsors, for introducing this important legislation and thank you members of the House Corporations Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on its behalf. I urge you to protect Rhode Island's electrical workers and the integrity of our state's licensing laws, by supporting House bill 7015. The importance of electrical labor standards and worker safety cannot be left up for interpretation.

Sincerely,



Erica Hammond
Field Director, Climate Jobs RI