

Lou Mansolillo

From: Susan Kelley <skelley1236@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 10:24 AM
To: House Corporations Committee
Subject: In Support of HR5161

Dear Chair Solomon and members of House Corporations Committee,

On behalf of the group, Village Vanguard, I write in support of HR5161, to study publicly owned utilities. Rhode Island's radically increasing utilities' rates issued by privately-owned utilities are hurting Rhode Islanders, as evidenced by the number of citizens testifying at the recent PUC meeting. Village Vanguard works to help the suffering citizens of Rhode Island.

Many states in the US have publicly owned utilities (POUs) that operate successfully.

It appears that the three most often claimed benefits are local control, lower electric rates, and more flexibility and willingness to focus on specific local needs:

- POU's are typically governed by local or regional authorities, which would give Rhode Island more direct control over utility rates, policies, and decisions.
- Lower electric rates can result because POU's are not driven by profit motives, and can focus on providing affordable and reliable service rather than generating profits for shareholders.
- POU's can prioritize investments in infrastructure and energy systems that meet the specific needs of our State, such as renewable energy sources, energy efficiency programs and grid modernization, and most importantly can have more willingness to embrace the transition to renewable electricity instead of extending the status quo of doing business as usual.

I support the House Resolution because the proposed Legislative Commission will allow to explore these and other possible benefits and also any disadvantages of public ownership of our electric utility, and to explore what Rhode Island can learn and apply from other successful POU's.

With electric rates being high and the renewables transition under way, we have carefully to explore all alternatives that can bring relief and accelerate electrification. We need to identify the best solutions to reduce greenhouse gas reductions and rapidly move to clean, abundant and affordable electricity. A publicly owned RI utility can be one of them. Let's find out!

Please bring the bill to a vote in 2025.

Thank you very much for considering my thoughts.

Sincerely yours,
Susan M. Kelley, Member
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