



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES & CARRIERS

Administration

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April 1, 2025

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chairman – House Committee on
Corporations
State House
Providence, R.I. 02903

Re: H 5576 – An Act Relating to Public Utilities and Carriers – Utility Thermal Energy Network and Jobs Act

Dear Chairman Solomon:

The Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division) appreciates the emergent discussion and investigation of thermal energy networks as a component of overall decarbonization strategy. At the same time, because of the myriad significant regulatory and potential ratepayer cost issues we believe Rhode Island would be better served by reviewing the data generated by ongoing pilot programs in the region and then revisiting this statutory provision.

In New York, more than a dozen pilot programs are being launched under the Utility Thermal Energy Network and Jobs Act. In Massachusetts, pilot programs are being operated by Eversource and National Grid. Recently, one of the Massachusetts programs was abandoned due to high cost projections, while another has gone on-line. In their various successes and failures these projects will yield data and guidance for Rhode Island in developing our own statutory and regulatory provisions as well as fine tuning on issues and goals to be addressed in our own pilot program and development of any subsequent regulatory provisions.

As with all utility related issues, and, in particular, in this instance of contemplating the creation of new regulated and/or unregulated utility components, the Division is happy to engage with all stakeholders on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda George". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda George, Esq.

Administrator, RI Division of Public Utilities and Carriers

CC: The Honorable Representative Terri Cortvriend

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations

Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel