

Rep. Joseph Solomon, Chair
House Corporations Committee
RI House of Representatives

SUPPORT FOR H5816 Affordable Clean Energy Security Act

April 1, 2025

To: Chair Solomon and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joel Gates. I am a Gloucester resident and a member of Climate Action Rhode Island. I am writing in strong support of H5816 Affordable Clean Energy Security Act.

Rhode Island needs to jumpstart its offshore wind journey that was begun with the Block Island wind farm years ago. For a multitude of reasons the promising progress has stalled. Let's get this cleaner renewable energy solution back on track. H5816 is a great way to get there.

There are so many reasons to push for more offshore wind energy including reduced greenhouse gas emissions (so RI can achieve its Act on Climate goals), energy security, job creation and job security for taxpaying Rhode Islanders, and stabilizing energy prices.

We have all experienced high electricity prices this winter. Luckily peak offshore wind production happens in the colder months. This will have a tempering effect on the gas needs for electrical generation and free up that gas for the thermal networks. I would also like to get rid of the gas thermal networks, but that testimony is for another bill! The high price of electricity in the winter is due to the increased demand for gas. So, increased electricity supply from offshore wind will give the utility a chance to reduce its gas usage and thereby reducing winter electricity rates!

Now is the time to increase Rhode Island's offshore wind procurement before we feel the urge to build bigger gas pipelines and or build new gas-fired power plants. We cannot afford any backsliding, especially when the solution is right off our coast!

Please pass H5816 out of committee and support its passage in the full House. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Joel Gates
Gloucester, RI