

Representative Bennett, Chair
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives

March 20th, 2024

Re: Support for H7617 – The Building Decarbonization Act

Dear Chair Bennett and members of the Committee,

My name is Corinna-Barbara Francis and I am a resident of Providence, RI. I am writing to convey my strong support for **H7617** -- the Building Decarbonization Act.

We are all aware of the climate crisis facing the globe, and that it will equally impact us here in Rhode Island. Every community needs to do its part and take responsibility for its share of GHG emissions.

We furthermore know that buildings are a huge part of the problem -- making up around 30% of all GHG emissions in the state. Given that, it is urgent that we move forward as decisively as possible to address emissions from both existing buildings and new construction in RI, and I believe this legislation proposes critical steps in the process of mitigating the impact of buildings on the overall climate challenge, and key for RI to achieve the targets set of in the Act on Climate.

I support the bill's goal of addressing the challenges of dealing with GHG emissions from both existing buildings and new construction in the way that it has. Namely, in order to move forward with the task of reducing emissions from existing buildings it is essential to first establish data on the current emissions from those buildings -- which is what the **first section** of the bill does -- by requiring large existing buildings to report on their energy use, as the basis on which the Office of Energy Resources will establish emissions reductions standards in line with the Act on Climate.

In the **second section** the bill tackles emissions from new construction by phasing in requirements for all-electric new construction. Every building that gets constructed on the basis of fossil fuel equipment locks in the use of fossil fuels for at least 20 years. We cannot afford to allow that to happen.

I have been active in environmental causes for many years. I am in the process of taking personal steps to move away from fossil fuels, having now installed a heat pump in my home, and am in the process of having solar panels installed. While every individual should do his or her part, we also need you, our representatives, to take big action to give us more systemic change -- to take care of issues that we, as individuals, cannot do on our own.

The time is really now !! Well, maybe it was yesterday -- but NOW is the best we can do and what we must do. Please help us to move forward on this critical issues and vote in favor of the passage of this important bill.

Sincerely,

Corinna-Barbara Francis

61 Colonial Rd. Providence, RI 02906