

Caroly Shumway, Ph.D.
16 Jencks Rd, Cumberland, RI 02864
March 20, d 2024

Re: Support for House Bill H7617 – The Building Decarbonization Act

Dear Chair Bennett and members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Caroly Shumway. I am a resident of Cumberland, RI. I am writing in strong support of House Bill H7617, the Building Decarbonization Act, which will help to reduce carbon emissions from both existing buildings and new construction in RI. Buildings make up 1/3 of all greenhouse gas emissions in our state. If we want to meet the Act on Climate, we must reduce emissions from buildings. H7617 will put us on track to do just that.

Accordingly, this legislation is an essential step for Rhode Island to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve the Act on Climate.

The bill has two main sections:

Section 1: Building Benchmarking & Performance Improvement. This section of the bill requires large buildings to report their energy usage to the state. The benchmarking of building performance is a necessary and critical step in addressing emissions from large existing buildings. Three years after collecting the data, the Office of Energy Resources must establish emissions reductions standards in line with the Act on Climate. Because Rhode Island is so small, it makes the most sense to implement these policies on a statewide basis, in line with An Act on Climate.

Section 2: Phase in of All-electric New Construction. This section addresses emissions from new construction by phasing in requirements for all-electric new construction. Simply, all-electric new construction is better for our climate, our health, and our wallets. We cannot continue to make the problem worse by building with fossil fuel equipment, which is designed to last 20 years. Building with fossil fuel equipment make it much less likely that the state can comply with the Act on Climate mandate to reduce emissions 45% by 2030. This is only six years away.

I am deeply concerned about climate change for my children's sake. I'm sure you also care deeply about the future for our children too. We need immediate action on climate change *because later is too late.*

We are doing our part, converting as much of our house as we can to electric. We bought an induction stove last year, and absolutely love it. In addition to boiling water faster than any gas stove, our indoor air is cleaner now. We also bought an electric dryer, and will put in mini-splits next year. We put in solar panels last year and also bought an electric car.

I hope you will do your part too. By supporting this bill, you will be helping all Rhode Islanders do our part in reducing carbon emissions, critical for making the world better for future generations. Our future is in your hands.

I respectfully urge the Committee and full General Assembly to vote in favor of its passage.

Sincerely,

Dr. Caroly Shumway
Cumberland, RI