

## **Testimony in support of H7617: Building Decarbonization Act of 2024**

Dr. Hans Scholl, 71 Fales Avenue, Barrington, RI 02806

Date of Hearing: March 21, 2024

To Chair Bennett and the honorable Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

Residential and commercial buildings generate about 30% of greenhouse gas emissions in Rhode Island; emissions that will have to be brought down to net-zero by 2050, as required by our Act on Climate, to help limiting global heating to temperatures that will still sustain future human life.

The urgent need to reduce emissions applies to both, existing buildings and new construction.

70% of the buildings that are expected to be still in use in the year 2050 have already been built. It will be impossible to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 by continuing to burn fossil fuels in these buildings to heat, make water, dry clothes and cook. The obvious solution is to convert these buildings as soon as possible to using *only* electric energy.

The technology exists, with electric heat pumps, heat pump water heaters and clothes dryers, and induction stoves; it will be greenhouse gas pollution free<sup>1</sup>, is much more energy efficient, is creating a healthier indoor environment, and is already less expensive than fossil fuels over the lifetime of the installation of the necessary equipment.

Out of the same reasons, it is counterproductive to continue to build *new* buildings and still use fossil fuel based technology instead of requiring an all-electric design. Why would anyone lock owners of new buildings into a polluting, more expensive fossil-fuel based technology, while clean and less expensive alternatives exist?

I support H7617 because it provides a well-designed policy and a detailed process and requirements to ultimately eliminate greenhouse gas pollution from the building sector, within realistic time frames, leading to all-electric, clean and less costly decarbonized buildings, and a better environment.

Please bring the bill to a vote, in 2024. Don't wait! Future generations will thank you for it.

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you to Representative Kislak for introducing this important bill.



Dr. Hans Scholl

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<sup>1</sup> After reaching Rhode Island's 100% Renewable Electricity Standard's goal in 2033, all electricity in the state will come from renewable sources, without fossil fuel burning.