



**ENERGY
MARKETERS
ASSOCIATION OF
RHODE ISLAND**

March 21, 2024

The Honorable David Bennett
Chairman, House Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H.7617, An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Building Decarbonization Act of 2024

Chairman Bennett and Committee Members:

The Energy Marketers Association of Rhode Island would like to express concerns to H.7617 An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Building Decarbonization Act of 2024.

H.7617 prohibits building permits for certain buildings. No city or town shall issue a permit submitted after December 31, 2024, for new construction or alteration of any residential, commercial, or mixed-use building that is not electric-ready. This indicates the building is designed with sufficient capacity for a future retrofit of a mixed-use full building to an all-electric building, including space, drainage, electrical conductors, etc. An exemption does exist if some component is not physically or technically infeasible. Financial consideration is not sufficient.

No permit shall be issued (submitted after December 31, 2024) for new State of Rhode Island owned building construction or alternation projects that are not all-electric – again unless not physically or technically feasible. Financial consideration for heating fuel consumers is a great concern especially when they are using Biodiesel to heat their homes and have energy star equipment.

Any municipality could adopt provisions to require new building construction or alternation projects to be all-electric unless physically or technically infeasible. This means municipalities could move faster and not allow all electric-ready construction.

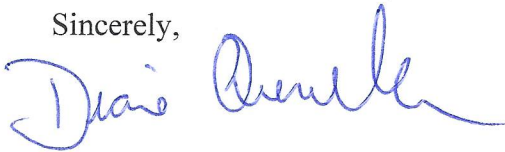
No permits shall be issued for the construction of any new commercial, residential, or mixed-use building that is not an all-electric building if the initial application for the permit was submitted

after December 31, 2026. The definition of “all-electric building” does allow for a back-up system that only operates when the electric grid goes down.

The state of Rhode Island retail distributors of home heating oil, referred to as “heating fuel dealers,” provide warmth and comfort to many Rhode Islanders and most dealers are small family owned businesses. Rhode Island has led the way for renewable liquid heating fuels, 2017 mandated 5% renewable blend, this past July 2023 the state mandate went to 10% and by 2025 20%. By 2050 the mandate will have a net zero heating fuel. This industry, our hometown businesses, has the solution and has been providing blends of biodiesel and renewable diesel.

EMARI is asking that renewable liquid heating fuels working in step with the states Biodiesel mandate are afforded the right to be issued building permits. EMARI is concerned with consumer choice, affordability, reliability, and safety. For these reasons EMARI is opposed to the bill drafted.

Sincerely,



Diane Quesnelle
Executive Director
Energy Marketers Association of Rhode Island
16 Miller Street
Warren, RI 02885