

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** George Hasapidis <ghasapidis@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 19, 2024 1:52 PM  
**To:** House Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of HB7617

Dear Chair Bennett and Committee Members,

Buildings in Rhode Island are responsible for nearly 30% of our states total emissions, but in contrast to other major greenhouse gas emitting sectors such as electricity generation and transportation, Rhode Island has no plan to reduce building emissions. We must pass the Building Decarbonization Act this legislative session to improve emissions monitoring and start reducing emissions in both new construction and existing buildings. (70 percent of the buildings that will stand in 2050 are already built. ) Without the benchmarking requirements and standard this act would establish, we can't begin to put a dent in our building emissions and don't have a hope of meeting our Act on Climate requirements to be net-zero by 2050.

By transitioning to all-electric buildings by 2050, we will be able to eliminate 1.5 million metric tons of emitted carbon dioxide, the same as taking more than 300,000 cars off the road. This will not only reduce adverse health impacts of air pollution but help to reduce the risk of devastating climate impacts.

The Building Decarbonization Act requires energy reporting from large buildings. With these emissions reports, the state will be able to formulate an emissions standard for large buildings, setting clear, enforceable targets for large building owners to meet in the emissions reduction process. The Act also addresses electrification of new buildings (the easiest to electrify), with new public buildings required to be all-electric and a very reasonable phased program for electrification in other new construction, ensuring a rational and fair approach to building electrification in Rhode Island. It's also worth noting that, especially with incentives from the Inflation Reduction Act, it's actually less expensive to fit new construction with electric heating systems than with traditional fuel-burning technologies!

Rhode Island has been a climate leader in several areas, including the 2022 passage of the 100% Renewable Electricity Standard, with the nation's most aggressive goal of reaching 100% renewable electricity by 2033. To avert the worst impacts of climate change we must actually put that clean electricity to use and stop heating our buildings with dirty fossil fuels. Passing the Building Decarbonization Act would allow us to join the six states and 50 municipalities that already have building energy reporting requirements in place as well as the four states, one county, and seven municipalities that have building performance standards. Providence is among those municipalities that have already successfully implemented building energy reporting—saving money and reducing emissions. Because the mandates of Act on Climate are statewide, we must establish a state-level policy to reduce our building emissions.

To meet the Act on Climate mandate by reducing current and eliminating future emissions from buildings in Rhode Island, I urge you to vote for H7617.

Thanks for your time and attention,

George Hasapidis  
Foster, RI