

Peter Trafton MD, Providence, RI
Written testimony in favor of 7731
House Committee on Environment and natural resources, March 21, 2024

Dear Chair Bennett and Honorable Committee Members,

I write on behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island to support your approving Rep Cortvriend's Resolution that creates a legislative study commission on climate change impacts and solutions. We are adding this bill to our legislative agenda for the current year.

The study commission will have 17 members from various groups with expertise and experience across the spectrum of climate change causation, mitigation efforts, impacts and management thereof.

The Commission is to have multiple hearings as needed report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations for legislative action to the speaker of the house no later than January 5, 2025 - all in a rather short time. The commission's report will be public. Perhaps this commission will be the first of many. I doubt that it can provide long-term solutions that will be accepted and adopted by us all, but we must keep trying.

We believe that Rep. Cortvriend's proposal is timely and excellent. There are some who believe that all we need to do is pass the act on climate, and perhaps procure sufficient clean energy. This Commission should help expand the required scope of concern and continuing involvement. At the moment, too few Rhode Islanders seem to understand what this is all about.

Rhode Island's response to climate change requires involvement of all hands – from the general public of all ages, through members and leaders of all of all Rhode Islanders. The public must learn what is happening and participate in decisions as well as the decades of hard work ahead. This is much more like a long-duration military campaign than a series of two-year legislative terms or four- year gubernatorial terms. The Act on Climate specifies the communications, learning, teaching, and helping one another that will be necessary. We should all be working to help Rhode Island emerge from the required socio-economic transitions with fairness, justice, and success.

Thank you for considering our input. We are grateful for your work.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter Trafton