

Representative Bennett, Chair
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives

March 21st , 2024

Re: Support for H7782 – The Clean Heat Standard Act

Dear Chair Bennett and members of the Committee,

My name is George Hasapidis, and I am a resident of Foster, RI. I am writing to express my strong support for the Clean Heat Standard Act.

Given that buildings are the source of almost 30% of RI's greenhouse gas emissions, the Act on Climate mandates RI reduce emissions 45% by 2030 and net-zero by 2050, and RI pledged to have heat pumps make up 65% of HVAC sales by 2030 and 90% by 2040, we need a macro-policy that enables us to install the amount of heat pumps necessary to meet these targets and achieve the Act on Climate.

A Clean Heat Standard (CHS) would accomplish this by requiring heating suppliers such as gas utilities and oil and propane dealers to provide customers with gradually increasing percentages of clean heat services, phasing out the sale of fossil fuels. Providers would be required to obtain a certain amount of "Clean Heat Credits", which would be generated by deploying "clean heat measures" such as heat pumps, energy efficiency, clean district energy, weatherization, and other verified low-carbon options. Over time, the number of credits each heating provider would be required to obtain would increase in line with the Act on Climate's greenhouse gas reduction mandate of 45% below 1990 levels by 2030 and net-zero by 2050.

Among the benefits of the proposed CHS are creating a sustainable funding mechanism for electrification, and not requiring consumers to make any particular clean heat choices since the mandate is on the heating suppliers. Further, equity can be built into this legislation: the bill requires that 40% of the clean heat credits be delivered to low and-moderate income consumers.

Personally, my wife and I just finished decarbonizing our home; we burned the last of our heating oil a few weeks ago, and are now heating solely with our air source heat pump and heat pump water heater (and occasionally our wood stove). I have someone coming to remove the empty oil tank and old oil boiler in a few weeks, and couldn't be happier about saying goodbye to fossil fuels.

In order to achieve the Act on Climate, we must implement macro-policies that drive the transition toward electrification. A Clean Heat Standard is just that. I respectfully urge the Committee and full General Assembly to vote in favor of its passage.

Thanks for your time and attention,

George Hasapidis
Foster, RI