

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 Mary Helldorfer Cooney and I am a resident of North Kingstown, RI. I am writing to express my strong support for the Clean Heat Standard Act.

Given that:

- Buildings make up almost 30% of RI's GHG emissions
- The Act on Climate mandates RI reduce emissions 45% by 2030 and net-zero by 2050
- 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) does just that 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.

Benefits of a Clean Heat Standard for Rhode Island:

- Creates a sustainable funding mechanism for electrification
- Does not require consumers to make any particular clean heat choices – mandate is on the heating suppliers
- Equity can be built in – the bill requires that 40% of the clean heat credits be delivered to low- and-moderate income consumers
- Rhode Island would follow learnings from larger markets – Vermont & Colorado have adopted a CHS. Massachusetts is currently creating a CHS through regulation.

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.

Sincerely,

Mary Helldorfer Cooney
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