

Testimony in support of House Bill 5167, House Environment And Natural Resources Committee, February 6, 2025, by Peter Trafton, Providence Rhode Island

Dear Chair Bennett and Honorable Members of the House Environment And Natural Resources Committee, I write with strong support for **Representative Cortvriend's House Bill 5167, the Rhode Island Clean Heat Standard.**

As introduced last year by Representative Cortvriend, the clean heat standard is a performance standard which will facilitate Rhode Island's transition from fossil fuels to clean energy. It progressively reduces greenhouse gases emissions, and additional health-threatening pollutants produced by burning fossil fuels. The standard requires that suppliers of gas utilities and delivered fuels provide their customers with gradually increasing percentages of clean heat services, ultimately phasing out the sale and use of fossil fuels. Utilities and other providers would be required to obtain a certain amount of clean heat credits each year by deploying clean heat measures – heat pumps, clean district energy, and energy efficiency measures. The progressive adoption of clean heat services would be calculated to achieve the act on climate's greenhouse gas emissions reduction mandates. It would eliminate the efficiency surcharge on electric energy. The clean heat standard would not specify a particular clean heat choice, can coexist with the building decarbonization legislation (measure emissions, then mitigate them), and can be created to ensure that equity needs are addressed.

Clean heat standards are being adopted by a number of other states with Colorado and Vermont there already and Massachusetts hot on their heels Rhode Island will be able to information gleaned there and in a number of other states, to aid in design and management of the clean heat standard process.

The Environment Council of Rhode Island supported the Rhode Island Clean Heat Standard last year and can be expected to do so again in the current session. We urge you to support this process and the legislation necessary to create it. Without it, our transition to clean energy and elimination of fossil fuel costs with their significant environmental and health impacts is unlikely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to meet the requirements of the Act on Climate.

Thus, I join many others in urging you to pass the Clean Heat Standard to protect Rhode Island's future, particularly for our grandchildren and their offspring.

Thank you very much for considering my comments.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PTrafton". The letters are stylized and cursive.

Peter Trafton

