

Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 5168

Dear Honorable Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Nadine Najah and I am a concerned third year medical student at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University actively engaged in the Environmental Coalition Student Group. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 5168, which mandates healthcare facilities to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. This bill represents a pivotal step toward advancing the health and sustainability of our communities and the healthcare system as a whole.

Healthcare facilities are integral aspects of our society, and providers that work within them pledge to do no harm. Yet by engaging in the usage of fossil fuels, they are contributing to the growing threat of climate change and thereby harming people's health through increased heat-related illness, air pollution disease, vector-borne disease, natural disaster traumas, and much more. Such harms go against what healthcare is meant to do: heal, treat, cure, and support. Shifting to green energy will mitigate the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to the climate crisis.

Moreover, shifting to renewable energy sources renders the healthcare field less susceptible to the volatility of the fossil fuel industry. Relying on renewable energy, a rapidly growing infrastructure that is decentralized and can even be sourced from Rhode Island, promotes greater long-term energy security and resilience. This bill will place Rhode Island as a leading state in the nation in the field of healthcare sustainability. In addition, as healthcare institutions lead the way in environmental responsibility, other sectors of society will be inspired to follow suit.

All in all, I urge the committee to pass this bill and help pave the way for a greener, healthier, and more sustainable healthcare system. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Nadine Najah

Student at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University