



Environment Council of Rhode Island

Testimony in support of House Bill 5953, House Municipal Government, April 2, 2025, by Peter Trafton, Providence, RI

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island, I write with strong support for H 5953 by Rep Tanzi and colleagues..

As the climate crisis begins to affect Rhode Island more and more, with extreme temperature, both high and low, Rhode Islanders for reasons of illness or limited resources are increasingly at risk. Both excessive heat and excessive cold can seriously threaten health, or even survival.

This bill provides, for each Rhode Island municipality, uniform thoughtfully constructed programs for issuing alerts and establishing preparations including warming or cooling centers and support through the municipalities' appropriate resources. Warming Center alerts are called for if temperature or windchill is expected to fall below 36° F. Cooling Center alerts are called for if temperature is expected to be over 95° F for 2 or more days, or 100° F. Special attention is emphasized for those experiencing homelessness.

The proposed plans are essential public health responses for every city and town to provide, and having a uniform process is of course appropriate.

Please support H5953. You will definitely save lives and/or expensive hospital care.

Thank you for considering our comments and supporting this important Bill.

Respectfully,

Peter Trafton, MD

Co-VP of Policy, Environment Council of Rhode Island