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Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2024 2:23 PM
To: House State Government and Elections Committee
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Subject: Testimony on H 7246

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Testimony from Greg Gerritt on Bill H 7246 AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Adds climate change, sea-level rise and coastal resiliency to the analysis of data of the strategic plan for economic development policy.)

Members of the committee, my research is on economic development in RI. The more I look at the RI economy the more I am absolutely convinced that for RI to prosper in the 21st Century that nearly all of our focus on economic development should be through the lens of a Climate Justice Economy. The premise is that if we do not get just about everything about climate right that it is going to be very difficult for RI to thrive. That we must complete end our use of fossil fuels, insulate every building in the state, and build out Green energy is only part of the equation. We also have to reduce inequality, rebuild low income communities, and give communities much more control over what happens to them so as to protect the public health, especially in lower income communities. We are very unlikely to actually take the steps to stop the climate catastrophe without strengthening democracy and community voice in economic development planning. The American people want more action on climate. The next wave of action is going to be around creating the right signals in the economy to move us forward faster. The focus must be on justice and climate simultaneously. Our solutions have to move the needle on both things at the same time or they do not really work.

I have recently written a paper on the topic, with a full set of references, on what this might look like in economic development planning in RI. I wanted you to see this electronically because then you can use the references. I think if you look at the underlying data it is pretty obvious that climate justice must be the focus of economic development if RI is to prosper in the coming years. Please read the paper linked below

I strongly support passage of this bill because without it RI will miss the economic boat.

Greg Gerritt Providence RI