



2026 Legislative Priorities



Protect State Clean Energy Programs



Green Bond with Added Funding for Conservation



Building Decarbonization



Save RIPTA Package



Protect State Clean Energy Programs

In 2021, Rhode Island enacted the Act on Climate, which commits the state to achieving science-based greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Over the past few years, ECRI has prioritized legislation designed to reduce climate-damaging emissions. There is still a lot of work to do in order to meet our commitment to address the climate crisis.

As we implement new policies to tackle our emissions, we need to ensure that we **don't backslide by weakening or eliminating our most important existing climate and clean energy policies**. Efforts to roll back state renewable energy and energy efficiency programs are **short-sighted and irresponsible, only achieving limited short-term savings by creating even larger costs in the future**.

Securing energy affordability in the long term means ending our reliance on fossil fuels—the real drivers of rising energy costs. The costs of fossil fuels and fossil fuel infrastructure have risen steadily in recent years, and as recent events have demonstrated, they are volatile and can spike unexpectedly.

In order to protect our environment, our public health, and our economy, **we must continue to act—not retreat—on climate**.



Green Bond with Added Funding for Conservation

ECRI supports **The Green Bond with Added Funding for Conservation (H-8144)**. This bill helps to make the Green Bond greener by adding \$17.5 million in funding, including \$10 Million for forest, farmland, and open space conservation programs. ECRI supports bolstering the Green Bond with:

- \$3 million in Outdoor Recreation Grants for municipalities and Native American tribes to create playgrounds, conserve important parks, and improve access to outdoor recreational opportunities;
- \$3 million for the State Open Space Program to acquire and conserve lands of statewide interest and significance, including ecologically valuable land that enhances DEM's management areas, parks, and important forest lands;
- \$2 million in Local Open Space Matching Grants to municipalities, land trusts, and non-profit conservation land organizations to preserve valuable habitats and open spaces in local communities across RI; and
- \$2 million for the farmland preservation that is critical to preserving important farms in the state.



Building Decarbonization

Rhode Island's building sector (including residential, commercial, and industrial heating) produces nearly 40% of the state's greenhouse gas emissions. Despite this, we have **yet to enact a major statewide policy to address and reduce emissions from our buildings.**

Reducing the combustion of fossil fuels in our buildings would also **improve air quality and public health**, and speed adoption of highly efficient technologies like heat pumps. ECRI supports the Building Decarbonization package of bills:

- **The Building Benchmarking and Reporting Act of 2026 (H-7183 / S-2260)**

This bill would require that buildings greater than 25,000 square feet track and report their energy usage to the state. This would allow for transparency regarding energy use and facilities performance among various building types. It would also allow property owners to evaluate where improvements could be made to enhance performance and save money on utility bills.

- **The Building Performance Standards Act of 2026 (H-7184 / S-2218)**

This bill would require OER and DEM to develop building performance standards for large buildings. This would ensure that large buildings are reducing emissions in line with the emissions reduction commitments of the Act on Climate.



Save RIPTA Package

RIPTA, Rhode Island's chronically underfunded public transit agency, had to reduce its services last fall. The disruptive impact on customers and drivers is well documented. *See* <https://pvdstreets.org/save-ripta/>. The proposed 2027 budget will not reverse those 2025 service cuts. In spite of strong advocacy and public support, insufficient funding prevents RIPTA from flourishing.

Public transit needs sufficient and sustainable funding to be an attractive alternative to automobiles. Expanding public transportation serves not only as a way to reduce emissions but also **provides essential services and mobility access for all Rhode Islanders.**

RIPTA is an essential alternative for those without cars—including students, the young, the elderly, people with disabilities, and lower-income Rhode Islanders.

Reduced dependence on cars also means less traffic, and lower emissions of air pollutants that cause or worsen health problems like heart and lung disease.

The "Save RIPTA" Package includes eight bills, all aimed at filling the funding gap. The bills in this package are:

- **\$5M Budget Allocation (H-8317 / S-2825)**
- **Increase RIPTA's Share of Highway Maintenance Account to 20% (H-8178 / S-2095)**
- **Rideshare Sales Tax to RIPTA (H-8145 / S-3084)**
- **Commuter Transportation Benefits Act (H-7363 / S-2323)**
- **Transit Master Plan Bond Referenda (H-8202 / S-2813)**
- **Car Inspection Fee Funds to RIPTA (H-8369 / S-3013)**
- **RIPTA Board Restructuring (H-8127)**
- **Increased Funding from Motor Fuel Tax to RIPTA (H-8315 / S-2668)**

About ECRI / More Info

The Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) is a coalition of more than 60 organizations advocating for policies to protect and enhance the environment for all Rhode Islanders. Our policy priorities address some of our state's most pressing environmental issues.

ECRI publishes its Green Report Card every two years, after the legislature adjourns, and prior to the election of a new General Assembly. The Report Card reviews events in environmental policy over the previous two years, including the voting records of individual legislators, the actions of the executive branch, and related affairs. We hope that it will keep legislators, environmental advocates, and the public aware of environmental policy issues in Rhode Island and promote their informed participation in environmental policymaking.

The 2023 - 2024 edition of ECRI's Green Report Card is available on our website. **Our next Green Report Card will be published this summer.**

ECRI's Legislative Agenda may be updated from time to time. This initial version is being issued on **April 14, 2026**. Any updates will be indicated in the upper right corner of the Legislative Agenda table on the following page. The most recent version will be posted on our website.

Please contact our Co-VPs of Policy with any questions:

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ECRI LEGISLATIVE AGENDA 2026

Senate #	House #	SUPPORTED BILLS	Senate Sponsor	House Sponsor	
2248	7880	Income-tiered utility subsidies for low income homes ("PIPP")	Sosnowski	Slater	
		<i>Climate & Energy</i>			
2222		Economic and Climate Resilience Act of 2026 (carbon pricing)	Sosnowski		
2024	7004	RI Climate Superfund Act of 2026	Ujifusa	Boylan	
2013	7612	Delay of utility service termination for illness	Kallman	Cruz	
2359	7269	Portable Solar Generation Devices (balcony solar)	Valverde	Speakman	
2427	7270	PUC must classify and report on Data Processing Centers' energy use	Lauria	Speakman	
2260	7183	Building Benchmarking & Reporting Act of 2026	Kallman	Kislak	
2218	7184	Building Performance Standards Act of 2026	Kallman	Kislak	
2550	7578	DOA to report annually on state-owned vehicle power categories	Vargas	McGaw	
2354	7891	Asks PUC to end gas line extension allowances in Docket 25-45-GE	DiMario	Cortvriend	
2229	8167	Requires regs for school buildings to be net-zero capable by 2037	Pearson	Cortvriend	
2244	7506	Sales tax exemption for behind meter batteries with photovoltaics	Valverde	Boylan	
	7344	Creates permanent Comm'n on Climate Change Impacts and Solutions		Cortvriend	
	7178	Creates a solar-siting advisory task force for state properties		Phillips	
	7068	Increases EFSB oversight of regional transmission spending		Solomon	
2529	7081	Next Generation Public Buildings Act (no fossil fuels after 2027)	Urso	Boylan	
2801	7726	Solar Cost Reduction Act (simplifies permitting and approval)	Valverde	Boylan	
2661	7727	Establishes an Offshore Wind Procurement Policy Study Commission	Zurier	Handy	
	7484	Large building developments must provide carbon impact report		Carson	
2449		Sales Tax Exemption for energy storage systems	Valverde		
2264		Thermal extremes alerts and warming/cooling centers for the at-risk	Mack		
2535		Asks PUC to consider seasonal heat-pump rate in Docket 25-45-GE	DiMario		
3080	7879	Thermal Energy Network and Jobs Act - Geothermal Pilot Projects	Britto	Cortvriend	
2905	8132	Decarb. Demonstration Act - Geothermal for large apartments	Euer	Cortvriend	
2779	7881	Utility Base Rate to exclude politics, marketing, and investor-related	Euer	Handy	
2727	7890	Intervenor support program for fees and experts at EFSB and PUC	Acosta	Stewart	
		<i>Budget</i>			
	7127	2027 Governor's Budget: OPPOSE ROLLBACKS (Article 11, etc.)		Abney	
?	8144	Adds \$10 million for land conservation to Green Bond		Cotter	
2238	7313	"Millionaire's Tax" (3% on income over \$640,000 = "top 1%")	Murray	Alzate	
		<i>Transportation</i>			
	7138	Allows use of MBTA commuter rail pass for RIPTA buses		J Lombardi	
2668	8315	Increases RIPTA share of Motor Fuel Tax	Zurier	Stewart	SR
2092		75 cent surcharge on rideshares (50% to RIPTA, 50% to streets)	Kallman		SR
2095	8178	Increases RIPTA funding from Highway Maintenance Account	Zurier	Cortvriend	SR
2323	7363	Commuter Transportation Benefits Act	Bissailon	Hull	SR
2825	8317	Budget Appropriation of \$5 million to fund RIPTA service	McKenney	Alzate	SR
3133	8145	Rideshare sales tax allocated to RIPTA "Ride Anywhere" (for disabled)	Britto	Stewart	SR
2813	8202	\$100 Million Bond for "Transit Forward RI 2040"	Vargas	Tanzi	SR
	8127	Reforms RIPTA Board; removes DOT Director as Chair		Tanzi	SR
3013	8369	Vehicle inspection fee raised to \$75 with \$10 of each to RIPTA	Vargas	Furtado	SR

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Senate #	House #	SUPPORTED BILLS	Senate Sponsor	House Sponsor
		<i>Buildings & Homes</i>		
2873	7582	Sets school air quality standards; testing and reporting; 5 year cycles	DiPalma	Cotter
	7623	Requires construction detail checklist for state buildings >\$10 million		Handy
	7738	RI must adopt 2024 IECC building codes, then no change until 2031		Cortvriend
2765	7739	Creates commission to implement Green Building Act	DiPalma	Cortvriend
		<i>Food & Agriculture</i>		
2447	7698	Tax credit for food donations by qualified taxpayers to NFP orgs	Kallman	McEntee
2438	7342	Amends School Waste Recycling & Disposal program	Valverde	Carson
2437	7622	DEM to issue and enforce regulations for educational food waste ban	Valverde	Cortvriend
2441	7675	Compost Diversion Grant Fund, with grants to reduce solid waste	Valverde	Cortvriend
2827	7242	Exempts urban and small farmers from certain taxes	Mack	McGaw
		<i>Water & Toxics</i>		
2439	7343	Restricts pesticide & rodenticide use at schools and childcare facilities	Vargas	Carson
2870	7191	Lead Poisoning Prevention Act (adds use of licensed clinical labs)	Murray	Phillips
2795	7222	Rodenticide controls with municipality pilot programs	Murray	Kislak
		<i>Waste</i>		
2531	7620	Prohibits inclusively "plastic waste conversion facilities" in RI	Ujifusa	McGaw
3012	7911	Ext. Producer Resp. for paper, packaging, and beverage containers	McKenney	McEntee
		<i>Land - Forest - Shore</i>		
2352	7071	RI Invasive Plant Management Act	McKenney	Boylan
	7028	Extends Pawtuxet River Flooding Commission		Read
2327	7230	Names May as Rhode Island Native Plant Month	Sosnowski	McGaw
	7915	Motorboat registration fee (funds freshwater lake preservation)		Chippendale
3082	7996	Moves CRMC to a bureau within the DEM	McKenney	Edwards
		<i>Resilience</i>		
2903	8169	Proposes planning and funds for adaptation of coastal property	Gu	Cortvriend
	7991	Coastal Resilience - Nature Based Solutions for Erosion Control		Cortvriend

OPPOSED BILLS

2012		Transparency in Electric & Gas Bills Act	Rogers	
2532	7072	Expands definitions of Farm and Agricultural Land (affects marshes)	Rogers	Cotter