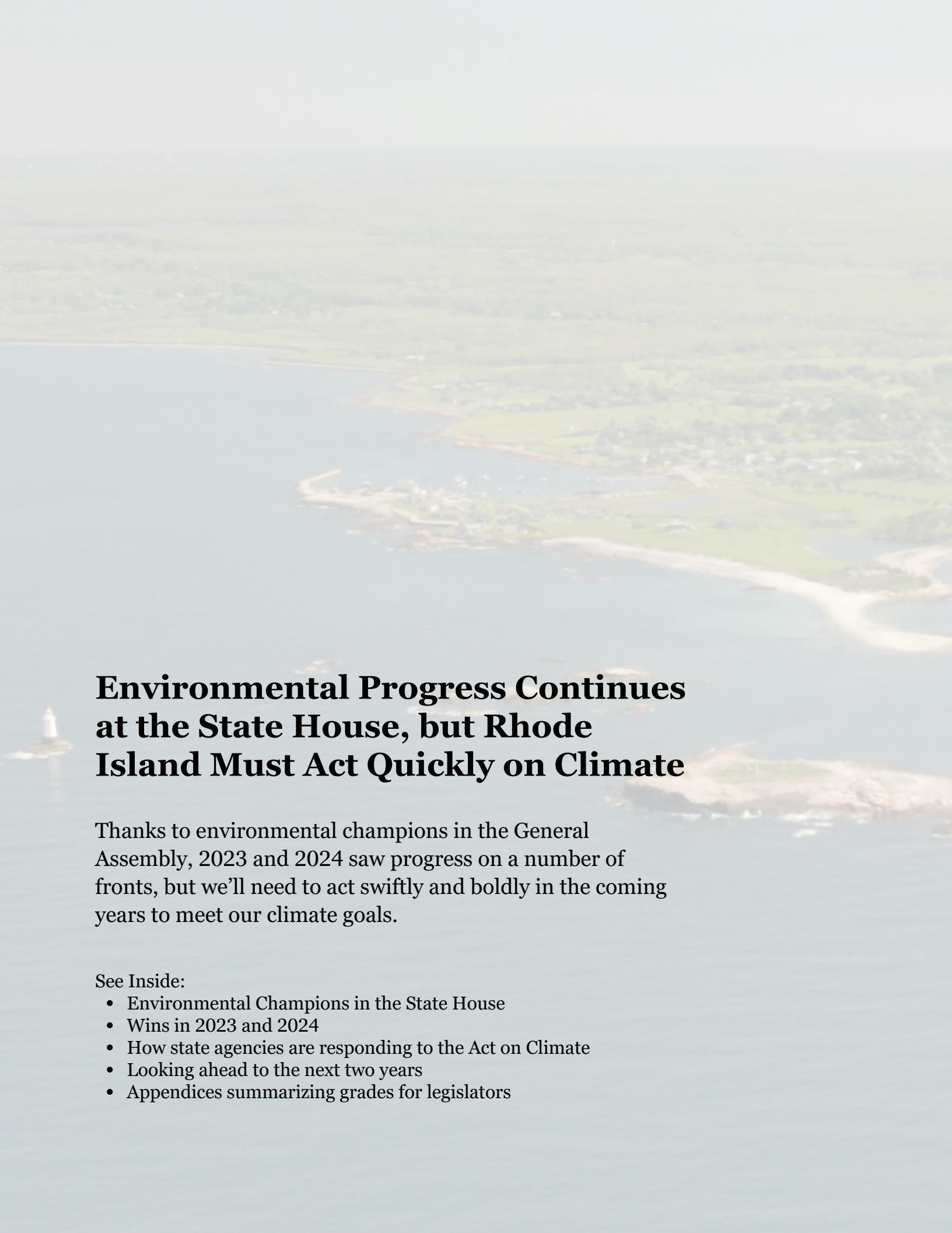




Environment
Council of
Rhode Island

2023-2024 GREEN REPORT CARD



Environmental Progress Continues at the State House, but Rhode Island Must Act Quickly on Climate

Thanks to environmental champions in the General Assembly, 2023 and 2024 saw progress on a number of fronts, but we'll need to act swiftly and boldly in the coming years to meet our climate goals.

See Inside:

- Environmental Champions in the State House
- Wins in 2023 and 2024
- How state agencies are responding to the Act on Climate
- Looking ahead to the next two years
- Appendices summarizing grades for legislators

Executive

SUMMARY



In our last Green Report Card, the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) was pleased to name 2021 and 2022 “the best two years of environmental policymaking in Rhode Island history,” thanks to the passage of landmark legislation like the Act on Climate. Though not quite as prolific as the previous two years, the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions built on this momentum, bringing **some significant wins**—such as advancements in responsible solar siting, stronger regulation of toxic chemicals like PFAS, an update to the state building code, an amendment to make the Green Bond greener, and the Act on Coasts. These successes are exciting and help to advance ECRI’s long-standing mission to protect and enhance Rhode Island’s environment.

Moving forward, the state and the General Assembly must continue to push for more comprehensive, bold policies to effectively tackle the environmental challenges ahead. Most importantly, **our efforts to mitigate climate change remain insufficient** to achieve the goals of the Act on Climate. While the Act on Climate has created momentum, it is critical that we follow through by ensuring adoption of the policies necessary to meet our climate goals. As we look ahead to the 2025 legislative session, it’s essential for the state and the General Assembly to take stronger and more decisive action to do our part to mitigate the climate crisis and protect our environment.

ECRI emphasizes that the environmental achievements of the past two years are significantly due to the commitment and remarkable efforts of environmentally concerned members of both the Senate and the House. In this report, we will highlight many of the legislators whose advocacy made the difference.

About ECRI



The Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) is a coalition of over 60 organizations plus individual members committed to developing and advocating for policies and laws that protect and enhance our state’s environment for the benefit of all Rhode Islanders. Founded in 1972, ECRI is the Rhode Island affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation.

The Council works to embody and promote the vision that together we can build an ecologically healthy future in a sustainable economy. ECRI provides its members with a forum for sharing information and technical expertise, and provides policymakers and the public with informed opinions and position statements. Guided by our strategic plan, ECRI is working to emphasize and address issues of climate and environmental injustice across our advocacy efforts.

Each legislative session, our members convene monthly to vote on our collective agenda—deciding which environmental bills to support, oppose, and prioritize. To share our agenda with legislators, we host two signature events at the State House each year: a February “Coffee Hour” event, and ECRI Lobby Day in April. Throughout the session, we meet with lawmakers and submit testimony at hearings to educate and advocate for legislation that protects and enhances Rhode Island's environment.

*Legislative***HIGHLIGHTS****Environmental Justice**

ECRI is working to emphasize and address issues of climate and environmental injustice across our advocacy efforts. All residents of Rhode Island have a right to a clean and healthy environment. Yet too often communities where people of color, low-income people, and limited English proficient speakers live and work experience higher rates of pollution, disease, and other public health emergencies. For instance, people of color in Rhode Island are much more likely to be exposed to nitrogen dioxide outdoor air pollution. Compared to other states across the U.S., Rhode Island had the 6th largest pollution exposure gap between whites and non-whites. Furthermore, most areas designated as disadvantaged in Rhode Island are majority non-white and low-income.

Systemic injustice related to race and economic status has and will continue to exacerbate climate impacts such as flooding, pollution, increased allergens with warmer weather, and respiratory illness, amplifying the disparities these residents face. ECRI believes that legislation and administrative actions must center the needs of those most impacted by climate change including Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other communities of color, and low-income and disabled people facing deep inequities from decades of disinvestment.

In 2024, just 1 of the 6 environmental justice bills that ECRI supported passed. Unfortunately, that's an improvement from the 2023 legislative session, in which ECRI supported 7 environmental justice bills and every single one failed to pass.

The Environmental Justice Act (S-2535/H-8127) introduced by **Senator Dawn Euer** and **Representative Karen Alzate** was one of ECRI's priority bills in the 2024 and 2023 sessions. In 2024 it was held for study in the Senate (despite passing the Senate the previous two years) and did not receive a hearing in the House. The bill would have required state agencies to consider impacts on environmental justice communities when issuing permits for polluting facilities. Another bill that would have established protections for environmental justice communities (S-909/H-6357), sponsored by **Senator Tiara Mack** and **Representative David Morales**, was an ECRI priority bill in 2023. It did not receive a hearing in 2023 or 2024.

The single environmental justice bill that did pass (S-2036/H-7017), sponsored by **Senator Melissa Murray** and **Rep. Morales**, extended the winter moratorium on utility disconnections by only two weeks. Home energy costs are a significant burden for many Rhode Islanders. Low-income households in the state are spending 9% of their annual income on energy costs on average, and would be spending as much as 19.1% of their income on energy if not for assistance from the Low-Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

A bill to create a Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) (S-2366/H-7286, also sponsored by **Sen. Murray** and **Rep. Morales**) was introduced once again in 2024 but failed to pass. PIPP programs help to lower and stabilize costs for low-income ratepayers and decrease administrative burdens for the state.

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They have proven successful in other states including Pennsylvania—the home of Pennsylvania Power and Light (PPL), the owner of Rhode Island Energy. This bill did not receive a vote in either the House or Senate despite an outpouring of community support.

Notably, the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) and the Office of Energy Resources (OER) each made significant, laudable efforts to promote climate and environmental justice, which are reviewed below in Section VI.

Labor and Workforce Transition

The Act on Climate calls for supporting workers and ensuring an equitable energy transition. It also requires that the state develop programs for recruiting, training, and retaining members of underrepresented workforce groups.

Consistent with the Act on Climate, the Labor Standards in Renewable Energy Projects Act, sponsored by **Senate President Dominick Ruggerio** and **Representative Joseph Solomon, Jr.**, was passed in 2022. It was amended in 2023 (S-771/H-5493, sponsored by **Senator Robert Britto** and **Representative Brandon Potter**) to cover smaller solar projects. This legislation ensures the payment of fair wages and the protection of workers' rights to representation, and requires that companies employ quality apprenticeship programs.

Another significant labor bill that ECRI supported was also passed in 2023. S-1079/H-5902, sponsored by **Senator Meghan**

Kallman and **Representative Robert Craven, Sr.**, helps to prevent wage theft and employee misclassification. The protections in this legislation are particularly relevant for renewable energy projects and those working for out-of-state employers.

Unfortunately, two other important labor transition bills did not pass in 2023: S-551/H-6105, the Climate Change Workforce Development Act, sponsored by **Senator Valarie Lawson** and **Representative Terri Cortvriend**; and S-537/H-6008, sponsored by **Senate Majority Leader Ryan Pearson** and **Representative Arthur Handy**. The latter would require that new schools in Rhode Island be constructed to maximize energy efficiency and integrate renewable energy.

ECRI is acutely aware that a capable and trained workforce is essential for the construction, operation, and maintenance of clean energy buildings, infrastructure, and energy generation facilities. We believe that strong labor standards and training opportunities should be an integral part of the transition to clean energy.

In 2024, ECRI did not designate any bills specifically as labor legislation, but we supported 8 bills alongside Climate Jobs Rhode Island (CJRI), a coalition of labor and environmental groups advocating for a just transition to a green economy in Rhode Island. Three of these passed: the Renewable Ready Act (S-2293/H-7616), the Consumer PFAS Ban Act (S-2152/H-7356), and S-2151/H-7431, which corrects minor errors in earlier

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solar siting legislation. Each of these bills is discussed in more detail below.

The remaining 5 bills jointly supported by ECRI and CJRI did not pass. These included the Building Decarbonization Act (S-2952/H-7617) and RIPTA funding legislation (H-7774)—both ECRI priority bills—as well as the Energy Capable Schools Act (S-2168/H-7593, also called the “Green and Healthy Schools” bill). This bill would adopt regionally established high standards for the renovation or replacement of school buildings, which would help establish clean energy practices and build a skilled workforce. Regrettably, we continue to miss these opportunities.

Two more labor and ECRI-supported measures failed to pass in 2024: **Representative Terri Cortvriend’s** Thermal Energy Network and Jobs Act (H-7285) and the Student and Workforce Climate Education Program (S-2356/H-7496), sponsored by **Sen. Lawson** and **Representative Jennifer Boylan**. We urge that they be revisited.

Climate and Energy

2021 and 2022 were banner years for climate action in Rhode Island, as the General Assembly passed the Act on Climate and updated the state’s renewable energy standard to require 100% renewable electricity by 2033. While some important climate legislation passed in 2023 and 2024, there’s still a great deal of work to do before the state will be on track to achieve the emissions reductions required by the Act on Climate. As we look ahead to the 2025 legislative session, it’s essential that the General

Assembly take stronger and more decisive action to do our part to mitigate the climate crisis.

In 2023, just 1 of the 9 climate and clean energy bills that ECRI supported passed both the House and the Senate: H-5550/S-1119, the Mercury Reduction and Education Act, introduced by **Senate President Ruggerio** and **Rep. Handy**. This bill authorized Rhode Island to join a multistate effort to replace fluorescent mercury-containing light bulbs with less expensive, safer, and more efficient LEDs. **Senator Alana DiMario** successfully sponsored a resolution urging Rhode Island Energy to consider off-peak charging rebates. A similar resolution in the House sponsored by **Rep. Cortvriend** was unsuccessful.

It is essential that the General Assembly take stronger and more decisive action to mitigate the climate crisis.

We had more success with climate and energy bills in 2024. While ECRI’s top priority energy bill, the Building Decarbonization Act (S-2952/H-7617, sponsored by **Sen. Kallman** and **Representative Rebecca Kislak**), didn’t pass as introduced, an amended version including benchmarking, building performance standards, and requirements for electric-ready construction did pass the Senate. The House instead opted for a resolution calling on the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) to produce a report on how to successfully implement the policy. The resolution passed the House and the Senate in concurrence.

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The report is due to the General Assembly on February 15, 2025, and ECRI will closely monitor its progress. Though this outcome is disappointing, we believe that the report will lay the foundation for effective policy in the next session and compel the state to take its capacity for implementing a benchmarking and building performance standard program seriously.

The important Energy Storage Act, S-2499/H-7811, introduced by **Sen. Euer** and **Rep. Handy** became law, and opened the way for Rhode Island to begin work on this vital part of modernizing our electric grid to accommodate renewable energy sources.

The Renewable Ready Act, S-2293/H-7616, sponsored by **Sen. DiMario** and **Representative June Speakman**, encourages siting of solar energy facilities on previously contaminated sites. It passed by overwhelming margins in both the Senate and the House.

Senator Samuel Zurier and **Rep. Boylan's** bill supporting battery powered leaf blowers, S-2277/H-7495, did not pass independently but was funded by the budget. This will provide incentive payments and demonstration and training opportunities for Rhode Island's many commercial lawn care companies. This will enable them to adopt improved electrical equipment and avoid the noise pollution, public health impacts, and significant greenhouse gas emissions of fossil fuel powered equipment.

Transportation

The transportation sector is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Rhode Island, so reducing transportation emissions is a critical part of meeting our goals under the Act on Climate.

In 2023, ECRI supported seven key transportation-related bills, with S-195/H-6055 emerging as a top priority. This legislation, championed by **Sen. DiMario** and **Rep. Cortvriend**, aimed to adopt the Advanced Clean Cars II and Advanced Clean Trucks regulations, which would gradually increase the number of zero-emission vehicles that manufacturers deliver to and sell in Rhode Island. While we were actively advocating for these bills, Governor Daniel McKee and DEM opted to advance the initiative through rulemaking. As a result, the legislation was not pursued, and the regulations were established through agency rulemaking. We applaud Sen. DiMario and Rep. Cortvriend for advocating for these policies.

In 2024, after several years of effort, the Electric Bicycles Act, S-2829/H-7713, introduced by **Sen. Euer** and **Rep. Boylan** became law. It was the only 1 of 5 ECRI-supported transportation bills to pass in 2024. This bill defines three classes of electric bikes, details the allowable uses of e-bikes at state properties, and sets requirements for safety gear. Bicycles are a major mode of transportation in many of the world's cities, promoting public health and reducing carbon emissions.

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Thus, ECRI strongly supports prompt adoption of Rhode Island's Bicycle Mobility Plan, as well as other incentives that promote their increased use, such as OER's Erika Niedowski Memorial Electric Bike Rebate program, which lowers the cost of e-bikes for qualifying purchases.

ECRI's 2024 priority transportation bill, **Rep. Alzate's** "Save RIPTA" budget appropriation (H-7774), is discussed below in the state budget section.

Buildings

Like transportation, the buildings sector is a major contributor to Rhode Island's greenhouse gas emissions. While the state has introduced major legislation and regulations to address emissions from the electricity and transportation sectors, we've made relatively little progress decarbonizing our buildings.

In 2023, 1 of the 4 building bills supported by ECRI passed the General Assembly. We congratulate **Senator Victoria Gu** for shepherding S-855A through both the House and the Senate. This legislation updates the state building code by requiring that Rhode Island adopt the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code—a significant step in ensuring newly constructed buildings in Rhode Island are more efficient and produce less emissions.

In 2024, in addition to the resolution based on the Building Decarbonization Act mentioned above in our climate and energy section, S-2998A/H-7062A, Uniform Zoning Standards for Accessory Dwelling Units, passed both the

House and the Senate. We recognize the importance of Rhode Island's efforts to address our current housing crisis. We recognize the importance of Rhode Island's efforts to address our current housing crisis. We encourage the state to prioritize transit-oriented development, energy efficiency, and avoiding new construction with fossil fuel infrastructure, which is counterproductive to our climate goals and will be costly to update in the long run. We appreciate **Speaker Joseph Shekarchi's** work in successfully passing uniform standards for accessory dwelling units.

ECRI believes that land conservation efforts and adequate housing development can be complementary and can create opportunities to increase quality of life for Rhode Islanders. In other words, Rhode Island can both conserve land and alleviate the housing crisis. Thus, we strongly support S-2638/H-7699, the Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Act, sponsored by **Senator Jacob Bissaillon and Rep. Speakman**, which unfortunately did not pass in the 2024 session.

Food and Agriculture

In 2024, we saw big, largely unprecedented wins in protecting our farmland and our food systems. This includes \$5 million in the biannual Green Bond for state farmland preservation and an additional \$3 million for open space and farmland protection.

Outside of the Green Bond, ECRI supported 3 food and agriculture bills in both 2023 and 2024.

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None passed either year. Importantly however, an unprecedented \$2.5 million was included in the budget to fund farmland preservation through the Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission.

We were excited to see that the compost and organics diversion bill (S-2753/H-7856) introduced by **Senator Bridget Valverde and Rep. Cortvriend** had hearings in both the House and Senate finance committees in its first year of introduction. This important legislation would add a small surcharge on food waste brought to the landfill to fund food waste reduction, diversion, and composting programs, which in the long run would save money for each involved municipality. While the bill was held for further study and did not move forward, we hope that in the next session it might be endorsed by the leadership and placed more appropriately with the environment committees. We must stop dumping food waste in our landfill. It increases methane emissions and occupies space. If composted, it can be used for agriculture.

We were also glad to see hearings for S-7684/H-2335, the Small and Urban Farmland Success Act, introduced by **Sen. Mack and Representative Michelle McGaw**. This bill, originally introduced in 2023, would provide vital tax protections already granted to large farms to small and urban farmers who are vital to the health of their communities and environment. Not only do urban farms provide a natural carbon sink, they also increase access to nutritious food, helping to mitigate the impacts of food deserts. This bill was also held

for further study and ECRI is eager to see the bill move forward in the 2025 session.

Finally, 2024 also saw the introduction of S-2941 by **Senator Louis DiPalma**, which would allow DEM to keep the funds generated through agricultural permits and fees in a dedicated fund to be used for agriculture and environmental protection. This would be another important step in protecting the economic competitiveness of our farms and ensuring the environmental sustainability of our food systems.

Water and Toxics

In 2023, 3 of the 5 water and toxics bills supported by ECRI passed successfully.

Following years of concern and advocacy efforts, major strides were made to reduce the risk of lead poisoning, especially for children living in our state's older houses. We gratefully congratulate **Senate President Ruggiero, Representative William O'Brien**, and their colleagues for passing the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act (S-2B/H-5007A) and creating a program to replace Rhode Island's remaining archaic lead water pipes. Further protections were created under S-804/H-6239A, sponsored by **Sen. Euer** and **Representative Mia Ackerman**. This legislation amended the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act to require landlords to register their properties and, for homes built before 1978, to certify removal of lead pipes.

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While widely used in consumer products since the 1940s, the dangers of PFAS chemicals have only recently become widely known. These “forever chemicals” pose serious environmental and public health threats. While important protections against PFAS in water and food packaging were established in the 2022 session, our battle against PFAS is not over.

The Consumer PFAS Ban Act (S-2152/H-7356), sponsored by **Sen. Kallman** and **Rep. Cortvriend**, was a notable success of this year’s session. This new law will ban PFAS chemicals from a variety of common household products and firefighting foam, which will reduce exposure in the home and in our environment. It was one of two ECRI-supported water and toxics bills that passed successfully in 2024, the other being S-2850B/H-7619A, introduced by **Sen. Valverde** and **Rep. Cortvriend**, which makes minor amendments to the Toxic Packaging Act.

Waste

ECRI has long been concerned about the management of waste in Rhode Island. We must stop creating and using single-use products that inevitably become waste. Recycling is a limited solution, as only a small portion of materials that are nominally recyclable are ever really recycled. Landfills and incinerators encourage corporations to produce more waste. They pollute the (typically minority and low-income) communities that are forced to host them, threatening public health and the environment.

The prevalence of plastic waste, which currently amounts to 12% of municipal solid waste, is rapidly increasing. According to researchers at the University of Rhode Island, over 1,000 tons of tiny plastic particles cover the bottom of Narragansett Bay. These particles are in our food and in our bodies. 99% of plastic is made from fossil fuels. Plastic production produces toxic chemicals and greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Unfortunately, manufacturing plastics is highly profitable. Any effort to reduce their production is vigorously resisted by petrochemical lobbyists at the national and state levels.

Another major source of waste is discarded food, which may represent as much as 35% of material sent to our central landfill. Composting and other food waste management practices are discussed further in the section above on food and agriculture.

The past two years have seen the introduction of a number of bills that attempt to address waste in Rhode Island. **Senator Joshua Miller** and **Representative David Bennett** sponsored S-14B/H-5090A, which was passed to prohibit the continuing use of Styrofoam food containers. **Sen. Valverde** and **Representative Carol Hagan McEntee** introduced the Beverage Bill Recycling Act (S-753/H-5502), which unfortunately failed to pass out of committee, like so many previous attempts. **Rep. McEntee’s** H-5502 was replaced with a Sub A calling for a joint commission to study a potential future bottle bill. Near the end of the 2024 session, after favorable

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recommendations from that commission, the same authors submitted a modified bill, the Bottle Deposit Recycling Act (S-3144/H-8312) which again failed to pass. This led to a joint resolution (S-3159/H-8354) by **Senator Mark McKenney** and **Rep. McEntee** to extend the life of the Bottle Bill Commission. Dozens of beverage distribution company representatives sent written testimony to the House Environment Committee opposing passage of the 2024 bottle bill.

We must stop creating and using single-use products that inevitably become waste.

We thank **Senator Linda Ujifusa** and **Rep. McGaw** for introducing bills to prohibit high heat waste facilities in both 2023 (S-131/H-5142) and 2024 (S-2303/H-7357). Unfortunately, this legislation has yet to become law, and the absence of such a law invites industry lobbyists to promote so-called “advanced recycling” facilities.

Also in 2023, **Sen. Miller** and **Rep. Boylan** proposed S-15A/H-5471 to limit state government usage of plastic food containers. This also failed to pass in both years. 2024 bills proposing extended producer responsibility for packaging (H-7023, sponsored by **Rep. Bennett**), and a ban on plastic microparticles (S-2300/H-7515, sponsored by **Senator Sandra Cano** and **Rep. Boylan**) also failed to pass.

Land, Forest, and Shore

In 2023, 4 of the 6 ECRI-supported bills in this category passed and became law.

After several years of effort, **Sen. DiMario** and **Rep. Speakman** sponsored and successfully passed S-6894/H-5853, a bill that reformed the siting of solar energy facilities in Rhode Island. The bill manages competing interests by protecting the state’s core forests while still encouraging development of the clean solar energy we need to replace fossil fuels. This legislation can serve as a promising example of successful compromise between parties representing diverse interests, including conservation organizations, solar developers, and organized labor.

S-418/H-5914, introduced by **Sen. DiPalma** and **Rep. Craven**, strengthens the law around conservation easements to protect federal, state, and philanthropic investments in conservation and ensure that land is protected in perpetuity.

In 2023, **Representative Megan Cotter** introduced a resolution (H-6342) calling for a commission to address the growing threat of wildfires, which damaged more acres of Rhode Island forests in 2023 than any other cause. In 2024, the 12-member Forest Management Commission convened, chaired by Rep. Cotter and made up of conservation, forestry, and fire experts. The commission heard testimony and presentations over a 6-month period and finalized a report on April 1, 2024. The report provides recommendations on how the state can better manage forestland and prevent

*Legislative***HIGHLIGHTS**

future fires, including funding and capacity increases, programmatic changes, and ongoing discussion of best practices.

Two bills introduced in 2023 sought to make changes to the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC). **Sen. DiMario's** S-501 would have created a full-time staff attorney position at the CRMC, shifting the agency away from reliance on outside counsel with potential conflicts of interest, but failed to pass. **Rep. Handy** introduced an identical bill (H-5966) which was ultimately amended to instead change the CRMC's leadership structure. The bill, which did become law, replaced the Commissioner of Coastal Resources Management with an Executive Director of Coastal Resources Management, appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

In 2024, 4 of the 8 ECRI-supported bills in this category passed and became law. These include: S-2151/H-7431, sponsored by **Sen. DiMario** and **Rep. Speakman**, which corrects minor typographic errors in the 2023 solar siting legislation, discussed above; S-2185A/H-7376A, sponsored by **Sen. Gu** and **Rep. Cortvriend**, which requires written acknowledgment by buyers of coastal real estate of the public's right to shore access. This bill provides transparency in efforts to avoid often conflicting views of public and private shoreline access; and H-7361, sponsored by **Representative Samuel Azzinaro**, which creates a House commission to study erosion of Rhode Island's beaches. In the face of climate change, coastal erosion, and sea level rise, it is

imperative to discuss how to preserve one of Rhode Island's most valuable assets—our coastline.

Sen. Gu and Rep. Cortvriend's S-2928/H-8148, which sought to replace the current CRMC with a State Department of Coastal Resources, failed to pass this year despite widespread support from environmental advocates. The CRMC desperately needs to be reformed, as it is critically important to have a professional staff and director leading the agency responsible for protecting our coastlines and the marine environment on which our state thrives. We hope that the General Assembly will pass legislation to reform the CRMC in 2025.

After S-2928/H-8148 failed to pass, **Senator V. Susan Sosnowski** introduced H-3149. This resolution calls for a thorough study of the CRMC by the Department of Administration. We hope that the study will help provide insight into how structural changes to the CRMC can benefit the state and help protect our coastal resources.

In a huge win for conservation, S-2732/H-7294, sponsored by **Senator Matthew LaMountain** and **Representative Scott Slater**, and supported by ECRI for several years, passed during the 2024 session. This bill prohibits captive hunting—the practice of importing animals to be hunted within a closed-in area. Bringing native or non-native species into the state can introduce contagious, lethal diseases to natural wildlife and disturb ecosystems. We are grateful to the General Assembly for passing this law to protect the health of wildlife in Rhode Island.

*Legislative***HIGHLIGHTS****Resilience**

No resilience bills were passed in 2023, but Governor McKee's executive order reestablishing the position of Chief Resilience Officer was a welcome development. ECRI is excited to have Rhode Island's new Chief Resilience Officer, Kim Koriath, carry out this essential work. The Act on Coasts, S-2298A/H-7022A, introduced by **Sen. Gu** and **Representative Tina Spears** details the duties of Rhode Island's Chief Resilience Officer in creating, maintaining, and updating the statewide coastal resilience plan to include climate change impacts, and creates an advisory board.

The Fiscal Year 2025 budget includes an appropriation of \$750,000 for a statewide coastal resiliency plan. Rhode Island's last resiliency plan, Resilient Rhody, was published in 2018 and requires thorough updates to ensure the most vulnerable communities are able to withstand our changing climate. The budget also includes \$10 million for the Municipal Resilience Program to offer assistance to communities to address flooding, strengthen public safety, and be better prepared to deal with the impacts of climate change.

S-2043A/H-7246A, sponsored by **Senator Pamela Lauria** and **Rep. Boylan**, was the only other ECRI-supported resilience bill to pass in 2024. It amends the Long-term Economic Development Act by adding analysis of climate change, sea level rise, and coastal resilience to the data that must be considered in the state's Strategic Plan for Economic Development Policy, and by adding the Director

of DEM and the Executive Director of CRMC to the Economic Development Planning Council. This bill highlights the undeniable overlap between our environment and our economy. As Rhode Island bears the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, coastal erosion, and more, ensuring that we consider climate change in economic development conversations is imperative.

2023-2024

BUDGET

2023 (Fiscal Year 2024)

The Governor's original budget proposed to scoop dollars from the state's energy efficiency program to **fund the EC4**, the interagency council tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Act on Climate. We opposed this proposal because, while the EC4 urgently needs funding, diverting funding from effective emissions reduction programs like our ratepayer-funded energy efficiency program is counterproductive to meaningful climate action. Thankfully, the final budget instead allocated \$4.5 million in funding from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative program to support the EC4, which had never before received funding.

2024 (Fiscal Year 2025)

The Green Bond is a critical way to allocate funding to environmental programs that improve the health of our land and waters. The original Green Bond proposal did not include funding for conservation that had typically been included in past bonds. ECRI was grateful that the General Assembly included this funding to support agricultural land, open space, and forest land in the final budget. We praise the advocacy of our many environmental colleagues and the General Assembly's supportive response to **Sen. DiPalma** and **Rep. Cotter's** request for an additional \$13 million of authorized bonds.

H-7774, **Rep. Alzate's** \$78 million budget appropriation to **fund the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)**, was a top ECRI priority during the 2024 legislative session.

This would have provided long-overdue support for our statewide public transit system. It also would have set us on a long-term path towards substantially improving service as outlined in the data-driven, publicly vetted, and state-adopted Transit Master Plan. In its place, the Governor proposed a one-time allocation of ARPA funding to help close RIPTA's \$18 million Covid-related deficit. The General Assembly added another \$5 million in one-time funding through a budget appropriation. The revised total of \$15 million averted further service cuts (following those in 2022) but failed to invest in increased frequency and hours of service, which drives ridership.

Sen. DiPalma and **House Minority Leader Michael Chippendale's** S-2958/H-7775 provided needed annual funds for the Rhode Island Conservation Committee. Unfortunately, some other important environmental initiatives were left unfunded. **The Bicycle Mobility Plan was again left without funds**, as H-7918, sponsored by **Representative Teresa Tanzi**, failed to pass. Previously granted but unspent **resilience funds were taken away from the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB)**, instead of remaining with RIIB for other use as proposed by S-2549/H-7999, sponsored by **Sen. DiMario** and **Rep. McEntee**.

2023-2024

GOV. MCKEE ADMINISTRATION

ECRI applauded Governor McKee for signing the Act on Climate into law in 2021. Since then, the administration has made some further steps in the right direction, including funding the EC4, issuing an offshore wind procurement, and implementing an executive order for state agencies to Lead by Example on climate.

One highlight of Governor McKee's leadership has come in the realm of clean transportation. On May 10, 2023, the McKee administration announced that Rhode Island would adopt the Advanced Clean Cars II and Advanced Clean Trucks regulations, which will progressively increase the number of zero-emission vehicles in Rhode Island. These regulations are vital for reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and align with the goals set forth in the Act on Climate. By 2027, 38% of vehicles delivered to Rhode Island must be zero-emission, ramping up to 100% by 2035.

However, to effectively combat the climate crisis, the administration must bolster its capacity by adequately funding the agencies responsible for implementing essential climate programs and policies. Although the offshore wind procurement called for up to 1,200 megawatts (MW) of new capacity, only one 200 MW project was selected, increasing the risk that the state will not procure enough offshore wind quickly enough to comply with the Act on Climate. Furthermore, the administration has lagged in achieving its Lead by Example goals, including quietly making regressive adjustments to electric vehicle targets.

Stronger leadership from the Governor's office is crucial for achieving the mandates of the Act on Climate and addressing Rhode Island's broader environmental challenges. ECRI urges the administration to build on its past accomplishments and take bold, decisive actions in the coming years to pursue the implementation of the Act on Climate.

2023-2024

ACTING ON CLIMATE AT STATE AGENCIES

The Act on Climate gives each state agency the authority and duty to take necessary actions to help the state meet its emissions reduction mandate. Some agencies have eagerly embraced first steps, while others have missed opportunities to integrate the Act on Climate in major decision making in 2023 and 2024. Below, we discuss a few state agencies whose response to the Act on Climate has been noteworthy in one way or another.

Department of Environmental Management

As chair of the EC4, DEM Director Terry Gray and the agency he leads play a crucial role in overseeing the implementation of the Act on Climate. One key responsibility of the EC4 under the Act on Climate was to update the 2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan by December 31, 2022. Following this, a comprehensive Climate Strategy must be developed in 2025 and then updated every five years. While the 2022 Update is a step in the right direction, modeling showed that full implementation of the plan would only reduce emissions by 40% by 2030—short of the required 45%. Looking ahead, we urge that the 2025 Climate Strategy include much more detail, such as sector-specific emissions reduction targets and estimates of the greenhouse gas reductions that would result from each recommended policy action.

That said, we commend DEM for their key role in adopting the Advanced Clean Cars II and Advanced Clean Trucks regulations, a significant step forward in tackling emissions from the transportation sector.

We also commend DEM for adopting its Environmental Justice Policy to address disproportionate environmental burdens on low-income communities and communities of color. DEM has also provided an environmental justice mapping tool that helps to identify the communities most affected by pollution, showing where resources and additional protections are most needed. In addition to these policies, DEM has made significant outreach efforts through initiatives like Climate Justice Hours, facilitating dialogue with communities on climate issues. Greg Ohadoma, formerly of OER, also contributed to advancing energy justice, highlighting the importance of cross-agency collaboration in achieving equity and sustainability.

On resilience, DEM is playing an instrumental role in helping communities prepare for the impacts of climate change. Chief Resilience Officer Kim Koriath has proven dedicated to achieving climate resilience through deep collaboration, community engagement, and stakeholder participation. In 2024, DEM offered \$1 million in grants through the Climate Resilience Fund, available to government and non-profit organizations for projects to improve coastal or inland resiliency. In the future, DEM can promote more equitable outcomes by providing grant support to community-based environmental justice organizations to help build their capacity to apply for this funding.

2023-2024

ACTING ON CLIMATE AT STATE AGENCIES

Office of Energy Resources

As an agency with expertise in energy policy, OER is uniquely positioned to lead on climate action. Thanks to historic federal investments in the clean energy transition, OER has launched several impactful initiatives, including Clean Heat Rhode Island, a heat pump incentive program; the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate Program, which supports the adoption of heat pump clothes dryers, electric stoves, and electric wiring; the Low-Income Solar for All program; the Power Up Rhode Island charging incentive program; and rebates for electric vehicles and e-bikes.

While we commend OER for effectively leveraging federal and state funding to implement these programs, it's clear that even larger initiatives and regulations will be necessary to meet the Act on Climate's goals. Additionally, more work must be done to ensure that members of Rhode Island's disadvantaged communities are aware of these programs and have the support they need to access them. As the clean energy industry continues to grow, more work must also be done to ensure that low-income and working-class Rhode Islanders are aware of clean energy career pathways and required training, and have the support necessary to access these opportunities.

Rhode Island Public Transit Authority

RIPTA has made significant strides in planning and securing funding for future improvements but faces major setbacks due to underfunding.

In 2023, RIPTA completed its Action Plan for Electrification and Service Growth, building on the Transit Master Plan, which aims to achieve 80% of the state's target for reducing vehicle miles traveled and emissions by 2050. Since 2021, RIPTA has secured several federal grants, including \$22.37 million for electrifying bus service on Aquidneck Island, \$13.5 million for electric buses and expanded service, and \$5 million for improved safety and access to bus stops. However, chronic underfunding has led to service cuts since 2022 due to stagnant wages and a resulting driver shortage. This decline in service, which worsened in 2024, risks triggering a "public transit death spiral," further delaying Transit Master Plan implementation, hindering climate progress, and exacerbating environmental, health, and economic impacts on Rhode Island's underserved communities.

Department of Transportation

In November 2023, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) completed its Carbon Reduction Strategy, initially developed without public input. However, after advocacy groups called for community involvement, RIDOT opened a public comment period, resulting in a revised plan that included greater investment in multimodal, non-car infrastructure. Despite these improvements, RIDOT acknowledges that its current programs are insufficient to significantly reduce transportation emissions. Their forecast shows that a more aggressive shift toward reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing adoption of alternative modes of transportation is necessary to meet state climate mandates.

2023-2024

ACTING ON CLIMATE AT STATE AGENCIES

Additionally, the plan lacks a clear method for measuring project-level emission impacts. The Department's lack of staff capacity to address the Act on Climate exacerbates the issue. This year, RIDOT hired only an entry-level environmental planner, and there remains just one person in charge of bike and pedestrian initiatives. Their transit office has been significantly understaffed, limiting their ability to meet the demand for sustainable transportation planning. In contrast, other state DOTs, like MassDOT, have offices of active transportation/complete streets, funding programs for these initiatives, and much more robust transit planning capacity.

Public Utilities Commission

As the agency charged with regulating the state's electric and gas utilities, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will play a critical role in the state's transition to clean electricity and clean heat. Thankfully, the PUC has shown that it takes its responsibilities under the Act on Climate seriously, and has thoughtfully approached its duty to apply the statute in ruling on the matters that come before it. For instance, in a docket on gas infrastructure, safety, and reliability, the PUC ordered Rhode Island Energy to suggest criteria for identifying segments of the gas system that should be decommissioned. Conducting this type of analysis will be critical in managing the transition off of gas. Importantly, the PUC has opened an investigation into the future of gas distribution in Rhode Island in light of the Act on Climate.

In this ongoing docket, the PUC is examining (with significant stakeholder input) potential pathways to eliminating emissions from Rhode's Islands gas system by 2050. It is expected to produce a report with recommended actions by the end of 2024.

The Energy Facility Siting Board (EFSB), which is chaired by the chair of the PUC, has similarly demonstrated commitment to fulfilling its responsibilities under the Act on Climate. In rejecting a petition to fast-track the expansion of a propane terminal in Providence, the EFSB rested its decision partially on the failure of the applicant to consider the climate impacts of its planned expansion. Recently, the EFSB included climate-related conditions when granting a license to seasonally operate a liquefied natural gas facility on Aquidneck Island, including a requirement to pursue policies to reduce gas demand on the island.

The Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC), an agency that regularly appears before the PUC and is charged with looking out for the interests of utility ratepayers, has disappointingly not shown the same commitment to helping the state meet its responsibilities under the Act on Climate.

2023-2024

ACTING ON CLIMATE AT STATE AGENCIES

Office of the Attorney General

Over the past two years the Office of Attorney General Peter Neronha has demonstrated that it views Act on Climate implementation as a priority. The Office, particularly the Environment and Energy Unit led by Alison Carney, has been active in a number of state processes and agency dockets to advocate for strong climate policy and minimize any ratepayer impacts related to climate action. They have intervened and participated in a number of relevant dockets at the PUC, including dockets on the future of gas, advanced utility meters, and gas infrastructure spending. They have also intervened in siting dockets at the EFSB, arguing for robust analysis of climate impacts in licensing decisions. The Office has submitted comments on processes including the development of EC4's 2022 Climate Plan Update, DEM's PCAP Priorities, and RIDOT's Carbon Reduction Strategy Grant.

Additionally, the Attorney General's Office continues to pursue its case against major oil and gas companies for damages associated with climate change (*Rhode Island v. Chevron, et al.*), and regularly partners with Attorney General's offices from across the country to review and potentially challenge or defend federal agency actions related to climate.

2023-2024

LOOKING AHEAD



While we have achieved some significant wins in areas such as resilience, solar siting, and the regulation of toxic chemicals like PFAS, a critical gap remains in our approach to emissions reduction. Specifically, **we lack comprehensive policies targeting the building sector**, one of the three key areas—alongside transportation and electricity—that we must address to meet the goals of the Act on Climate. Given this, we anticipate that building decarbonization will rise to the top of ECRI’s priority list in 2025. Another key priority will be ensuring sustained funding for RIPTA, which is vital for reducing vehicle miles traveled and fully realizing the climate and public health benefits that come with expanding public transit.

Going forward, **it is essential that we prioritize equity and justice in all our initiatives**. The green and clean future we envision must be racially equitable and developed in collaboration with communities and laborers. Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, we are committed to protecting both people and the environment. This involves working collectively across sectors to ensure that legislative progress reflects the urgency of climate action and implements innovative, intersectional solutions that improve the lives of Rhode Islanders while safeguarding our land, air, and water resources for future generations.

APPENDICES

Overview

Members of the Rhode Island House and Senate are elected every two years to serve two-year terms. The General Assembly's annual sessions begin in early January and last approximately six months. ECRI issues a new Green Report Card after the second session concludes and before elections for choosing members for the next term. Our biennial Green Report Cards are available on ECRI's website and are provided to legislators and the press. In addition to state legislators, ECRI also considers the environmental policies and practices of the Governor, the administration, and environmentally relevant state agencies. These important activities are discussed but not scored.

The Green Report Card is based on those bills selected by ECRI for its annual legislative agenda. As they are introduced, bills are identified by ECRI's Policy Committee, with advice from ECRI members and the environmental community. Inclusion on the agenda requires approval by ECRI's full board. The agenda bills are followed through the legislative session and their progress is monitored, facilitating ECRI and ECRI members' participation through written and verbal testimony at committee hearings as well as ongoing communications with legislators, in hopes of gaining support or opposition consistent with ECRI's position.

Summary of Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Legislative Scorecard (passes and fails, by category, in 2023 & 2024)
- Appendix 2 - 2023 Legislative Agenda with results
- Appendix 3 - 2024 Legislative Agenda with results
- Appendix 4 - Senate Rankings
- Appendix 5 - House Rankings

Appendix 1 is ECRI's Legislative Scorecard, which indicates how our selected bills fared in 2023 and 2024. In each year, we selected 50 bills for our support agenda. 32% passed in 2023 and 28% in 2024. They ranged from relatively minor to very important.

Note: In two cases bills were preempted by executive actions that achieved the same result. For scoring purposes, we considered these bills to have passed. This is because the bills are likely to have helped prompt equivalent action from the executive branch. The two bills are: S-195/H-6055 (2024), requiring Rhode Island to adopt California emissions standards for cars and light trucks; and H-6056 (2023), re-establishing the position of Coastal Resilience Officer.

APPENDICES (CONT.)

Appendices 2 and 3 are comprehensive reviews of ECRI's agenda bills for the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions. All of ECRI's agenda bills are listed, along with their legislative progress and outcomes. The bills are grouped by categories. The multi-line entry for each bill includes a brief "nickname", the bill numbers of the Senate and House companion bills, the prime sponsor in each chamber, the category assigned by ECRI, the committee to which the bill was referred, the committee action, the results of any deciding floor vote, and the final outcome. These appendices are color-coded. Bills in green cells passed. Those in pink failed.

Appendix 4 presents the combined scores and letter grades of Senators, based on their sponsorships and roll call votes in 2023 and 2024. We graded 36 of the 38 senators. Senator Maryellen Goodwin passed away on April 15, 2023. Senator Jacob Bissaillon replaced her in a special election that November. His 2024 scores are recorded, but ECRI requires two full years for rankings. Senator Frank Lombardo passed away on February 21, 2024. The points he acquired are posted, but he too is not assigned a ranking. We credited 5 extra sponsorship points to Senate President Dominick Ruggerio for his overall influence on bill creation and passage in the Senate during 2023 and 2024.

Appendix 5 presents the combined scores and letter grades of Representatives, based on their sponsorships and roll call votes in 2023 and 2024. Point scoring and grading follows the methodology described above. All 75 Rhode Island State Representatives qualified for scoring and grading. Since the House is twice as large as the Senate, the number of legislators in each letter grade group is approximately twice as large in the House. This should be considered when comparing the two chambers. We credited 5 extra sponsorship points to House Speaker Joseph Shekarchi for his overall influence on bill creation and passage in the House during 2023 and 2024.

METHODOLOGY AND INTERPRETATION

Ranking of Legislators

We believe that small differences in the total score or ranking rarely indicate significant differences among legislators' environmental support. This also holds for differences in letter grades, especially when combined scores are close, as in the middle grades where point scores are clustered closely together.

Legislators who are environmental champions have A+ grades. Those with A grades are also strong supporters of ECRI's legislative agenda. Both groups' high scores result from bill sponsorship as well as consistent votes for agenda bills. Many legislators with B and C grades had excellent voting records, though they were less frequently primary sponsors for agenda bills. Those with D and F grades often voted against ECRI priority and other agenda bills. Some of these legislators also sponsored legislation opposed by ECRI. A full workbook containing methodology, voting records, sponsorship records, and point assignments to determine ECRI Green Report Card rankings is available upon request and on the ECRI website.

METHODOLOGY AND INTERPRETATION

This edition of the ECRI Green Report Card differs from the last because we included credit for co-sponsorship in 2023 and 2024. The bulk of co-sponsoring of ECRI agenda bills was by legislators with high prime sponsorship scores, and thus higher grades—A+ and A primarily. The inclusion of co-sponsorship did not have an inordinate influence on the standing of these environmental champions, but we do value the teamwork and collaboration of individuals who are strong supporters as well as prime sponsors. Teamwork helps us provide better support for Rhode Island's environment.

ECRI's Methodology for Assessing Legislative Actions

ECRI ranks Rhode Island State Senators and Representatives according to actions on the bills that it supports: roll call votes and bill sponsorship. Each bill has a single primary sponsor and may have up to 9 listed co-sponsors. In 2023 and 2024, ECRI assigned 4 points for each priority bill sponsorship, and 3 points for each support agenda bill sponsorship. For listed co-sponsors, 1 point was assigned for each co-sponsored bill. Information on bills, including sponsorship details, is available on the General Assembly's website (<https://status.rilegislature.gov/>).

Points for votes and sponsorship have positive values for bills that ECRI supports and negative values for those we oppose. Votes in opposition to ECRI's position receive negative points. For example, a Representative who votes against an ECRI-supported bill receives -3 points. If she sponsors a bill ECRI opposes, she again receives -3 points. Co-sponsor points are negative if the legislator co-sponsors a bill to which ECRI is opposed.

Scores for the first and second year of each session are combined, to produce a single numerical score, and a single letter grade, for each legislator.

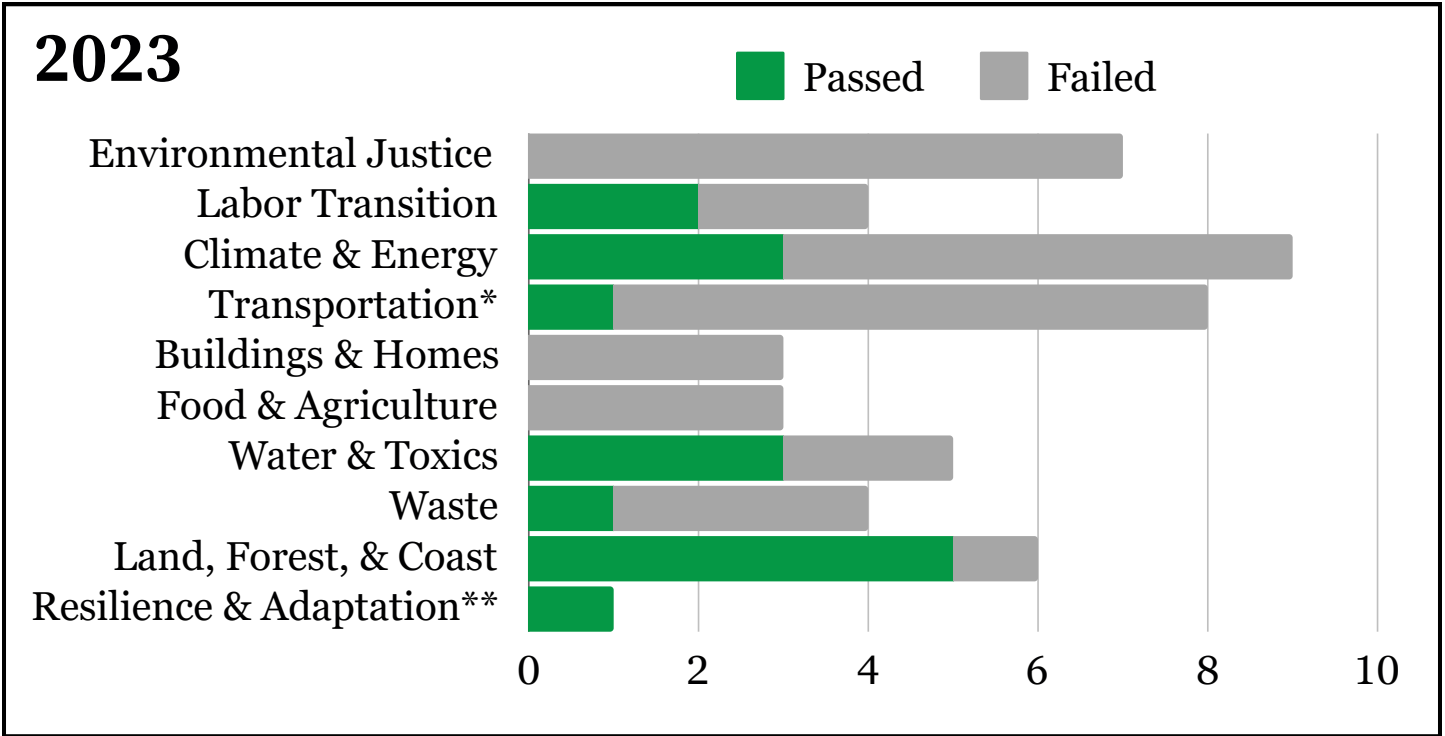
Point totals are used to rank the member, from highest to lowest. According to their point scores, legislators are divided into grade groups labeled A+, A, B, C, D and F. The groups are roughly equal in size but adjusted so that members with equal scores remain in a single group.

The Significance of Votes

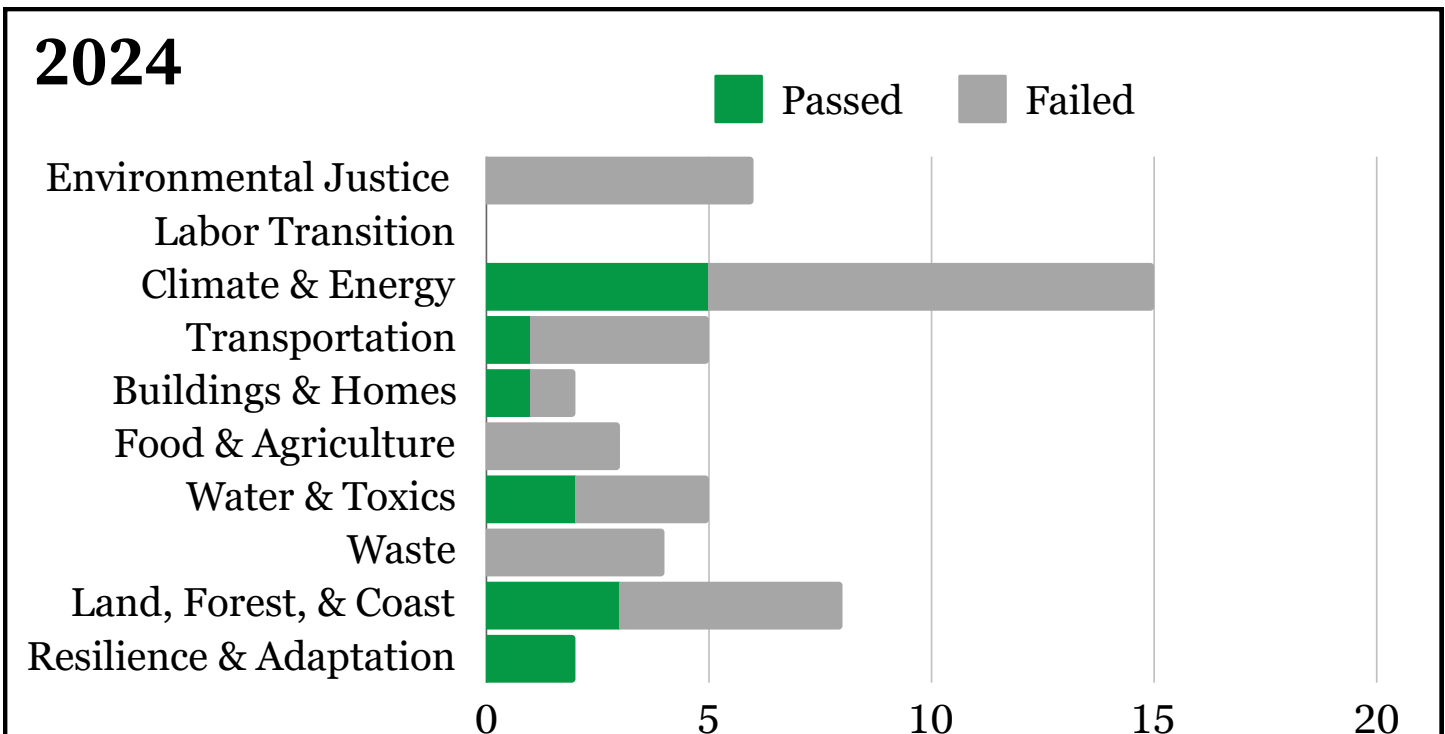
In Rhode Island's General Assembly, roll call votes are almost always anticlimactic. They are very rarely close. It is easy to see that controversial bills almost never reach a vote. Committees may hold bills back, never advancing them to the full chambers. The leaders control these processes. Without leadership support, bills do not move forward from the committees. The related discussions and decisions lack transparency.

Appendix 1:

LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD



*ACC2 & CCA were adopted by Governor McKee's Executive Order. The bills were dropped.
 **Chief Resilience Officer position achieved with Governor McKee's Executive Order



Appendix 2:

2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

PRIORITY BILLS					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Bottle Bill (Study Commission)	S753 Valverde	S. Special Leg	HFFS		Study Passed
	H5502A McEntee	H. Env & Nat.	Rec. Advance	P 35-0	
Solar Siting Reform	S684A DiMario	S. Env & Ag	Rec Adv.	P 30-5	Passed & Signed
	H5853A Speakman	H. Corporations	Rec Adv.		
Environmental Justice	S770 Euer	S. Env & Ag	Rec Adv.	P 32 - 5	Failed
	H6196 Alzate	H. Env & Nat.	HFFS		
Green Justice Zones	S909 Mack	S. Judiciary	o		Failed
	H6357 Morales	H. State Govt.	o		
Building Energy Standards	S166 Gu	S. Commerce	HFFS		Failed
	H5425 Kislak	H. Env & Nat.	HFFS		
Update Building Codes to meet 2024 IECC	S855 Gu	S. Commerce	Adv Sub A	Passed 30-6	Passed & Signed
	None	n/a	n/a	Passed 61-0	
CA Vehicle Emissions Standards	S195 DiMario	S. Env & Ag		<i>Executive Order</i>	Equivalent
	H6055 Cortvriend	H. Env & Nat.			
Farmland Preservation Funds	S560 DiPalma	S. Finance	HFFS		50% Funding
	H6018 McGaw	H. Finance	HFFS		

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Equity Impact Statement	H5763 Kislak	H. State Govt.	HFFS		Failed
	None				
Budget Equity Explanation	S527 Acosta	S. Finance	Heard		Failed
	H6110 Cortvriend	H. Finance	HFFS		
Racial Impact Assessment	S636 Mack	S. Judiciary	Introduced		Failed
	None				
Utility Support (PIPP)	S518 Sosnowski	S. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	H5847 Slater	H. Corp	HFFS		
Fare-Free RIPTA	S234 Kallman	S. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	H5622 Felix	H. Finance	HFFS		

Appendix 2:

2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

LABOR TRANSITION					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Labor Stds for Renewable Energy Projects	S771 Britto	S. Env	Rec Adv	P 37 - 0	Passed & Signed
	H5493 Potter	H. Corp	6.12	P 63 - 7	
Wage Theft Penalties	S1079 Kallman	S. Labor	Rec Adv	P 31 - 5	Passed & Signed
	H5902 Craven	H. Judiciary	6.12	P 70 - 2	
Green & Healthy Schools	S537 Pearson SubA	S. Finance	SubA - HFFS		Failed
	H6008 Handy	H. Finance	HFFS		
Climate Education for Workforce	S551 Lawson	S. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	H6105 Cortvriend	H. Finance	HFFS		

CLIMATE & ENERGY					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Climate Education for Youth	S558 Lawson	S. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	H6106 Cortvriend	H. Finance	HFFS		
Net Metering Rule Revisions	S506 Valverde	S.Env	HFFS		Failed
	H5033 Potter SubA	H. Corp		H passed	H Passed
Renewable Ready	S504A DiMario	S. Env	Rec Advance	S passed	S Passed
	H6388 Speakman	H. Env	HFFS		Failed
Mercury Reduction & Education	None				Passed
	H5550A Handy Sub	H.Env	Rec. Advance	P 72 - 1	& Signed
Utility Revenue Decoupling Amendment	S468 Sosnowski	S. Commerce		P-consent	Passed & Signed
	H5849 Solomon	H. Corp	Rec Advance	P 71-0	
Renewable Energy Storage	None				Failed
	H5850 Handy	H. Corp	HFFS		Failed
Solar Neighborhoods	None				Failed
	H5851 Boylan	H. Corp	HFFS		Failed

CLIMATE RESILIENCE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Establishes a Coastal Resilience Officer	NA				Done Through Exec Order
	H6056 Spears	H. Env.	HFFS		

Appendix 2:

2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

TRANSPORTATION					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
State Vehicle Emissions Reduction	S30 Ujifusa	S. Finance	postponed		Failed
	H5198 McGaw	H. Finance	HFFS		
RES. Reduced Cost for Off-Peak EV Charging	None				S.Res Passed
	S962 DiMario	To Consent		P - Consent	
Rural RIPTA Route Review	S921 DiMario	S. Housing	HFFS		Failed
	H6259 McEntee	H. Finance	HFFS		
Rideshare Vehicle Surcharge	S59 Kallman	S. Commerce	HFFS		Failed
	H5621 Dawson	H. Finance	HFFS		
Electric Bicycle Regulations	S326 Euer	S. Judiciary	HFFS		Failed
	H5220 Kislak	H. Corp	Rec. Adv.	H. Passed	
Bicycles Exempt from Sales Tax	None				Failed
	H5627 Handy	H. Finance	HFFS		
\$25M Funds for Bike Mobility Plan	None				Failed
	H6020 Tanzi	H. Finance	HFFS		

BUILDINGS AND HOMES					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
All Electric Building Act	None				Failed
	H5600 Cortvriend	H. Muni Gov	HFFS		
Home-Heating GHG Reduction Act	None				Failed
	H5623 Cortvriend	H. Finance	HFFS		
Middle Housing in > 20K Cities	S307 Mack	S. Housing	HFFS		Failed
	H5938 Henries	H. Muni Gov	HFFS		

FOOD & AGRICULTURE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Pollinator-Friendly Roadside Plants	S31 Miller	S. Housing & MG	HFFS		Failed
	5551 Cortvriend	H. Env	HFFS		
Food Waste Recycling	S201 Valverde	S. Env	HFFS		Failed
	H5171 Cortvriend	H. Env	HFFS		
Tax Exemptions for Small Farmers	None				Failed
	S862 Mack	S. Finance	HFFS		

Appendix 2:

2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

WATER & TOXICS					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Lead Poisoning Prevention Act	S2B Ruggerio	S. Health & HS	Rec. Adv.	P 35 - 0	Passed & Signed
	H5007A O'Brien	H. Finance	Rec. Adv.	P 73 - 0	
Lead Service Lines	None				Failed
	H5318 Morales	H. Finance	HFFS		
Lead Pipe Registration	S804 Euer	S. Judiciary	Rec. Adv.	P 31 - 6	Passed & Signed
	H6239 Ackerman	H. Judiciary	Rec. Adv.	P 59 - 11	
Water Treated for High PFAS Levels	S724A Felag	S. Health	Rec. Adv.	P 36 - 0	Passed & Signed
	H5861A Speakman	H. Env.	Rec. Adv.	P 72 - 0	
Comprehensive PFAS Ban	S196 Kallman	S. Env	HFFS		Failed
	H5673 Cortvriend	H. Env	HFFS		

WASTE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Prohibits New High Heat Waste Facilities	S131 Ujifusa	S. Judiciary			Failed
	H5142 McGaw	H. Env	HFFS		
Prohibits Styrofoam Food Containers	S14B Miller	S.Env	Rec. Adv.	P 32 - 5	Passed & Signed
	H5090A Bennett	H.Env.	Rec. Adv.	P 58 - 11	
Ban Plastic Food Boxes by State	S15A Miller	S. Env.	Rec. Adv.	P 34 - 3	Res. Passed
	H5471 Boylan	H. Finance	HFFS		Failed

LAND, FOREST, & COAST					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Non-Voting CRMC Executive Director	S501 DiMario	S. Env	HFFS	Concurred	Passed* & Signed
	H5966A Handy	M H State Govt	HFFS	P 65 - 8	
Funds for RI Conservation Comms	S244 DiPalma	S. Finance	HFFS		Funded in Budget
	H5324 Chippendale	H. Finance	HFFS		
Liberal interpretation of Conservation Restrictions	S418 DiPalma	S. Judiciary	Rec. Adv.	P 37 - 0	Passed & Signed
	H5914 Craven	H. Judiciary	Rec. Adv.	P 70 - 0	
Prohibits Canned Hunting	S607 LaMountain	S. Env	HFSS		Failed
	H5864 Slater	H. Env.	Rec. Adv.	P 72-1	H Passed
Study - Forest Management to Prevent Wildfires	NA				Passed
	H6342 Cotter	H. Env.	Rec. Adv.	P 70 - 0	

Appendix 3:

2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

PRIORITY BILLS					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Building Decarbonization Act	S2952A Kallman	S. Environment	Rec. Pass	S. Passed A	STUDY only
	H7617A Kislak	H. Environment	Rec. Pass	H. Passed	EC4 Report
Environmental Justice Act	S2535 Euer	S. Environment	HFFS		Failed
	H8127 Alzate	H. Environment	No hearing		
FUND RIPTA + Transit Master Plan: \$78M					Limited Funds \$15 million
	H7774 Alzate	H. Finance	HFFS		

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Extend Utility Termination Moratorium	S2036 Murray	S. Commerce	Pass	37 - 0	Passed & Signed
	H7017 Morales	H. Corp.	Pass	70-0	
Utility Support (PIPP)	S2366 Sosnowki	S. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	H7286 Slater	H. Corp.			
Green Justice Zone Act	S2292 Mack	S. Env.	No Hearing		Failed
	None				
Equity Impact Assessment /Budget Equity Impact Act	S2668 Mack	S. Judiciary	No Hearing		Failed
	None				
Warnings & Shelters for Extreme Heat & Cold	S2405 Mack	S. Housing	HFFS		Failed
	H7463 Tanzi	H. Municipal	HFFS		

BUILDINGS & HOMES					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Establishes RI Clean Heat Standard Act	S2848 DiMario	S. Env	HFFS		Failed
	H7782 Cortvriend	H. Env.	HFFS		
Uniform Zoning Standards for Accessory Dwelling Units	S2630 Gu	S. Housing	HFFS	Pass 23 - 13	Passed and Signed
	H7062 Speakman	H. Municipal	Adv 10 - 2	Pass 51 - 7	
RI Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Act	S2638 Bissailon	S. Housing	HFFS		Failed
	H7699 Speakman	H. Municipal	HFFS		

Appendix 3:

2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

CLIMATE & ENERGY					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Utility Bill (Helps PUC Reduce GHG Emissions)	S2956 Euer	S. Env.	HFFS		Failed
	No House Bill				
State Agency GHG Emissions Reporting Act	S2541 DiMario	S. Env	Rec Pass	36 - 0	Failed
	H8043 Bennett	H. Env	HFFS		
2024 Energy Storage Act	S2499 Euer	S. Commerce	Adv 7-0	Pass 33-4	Passed & Signed
	H7811 Handy	H. Corp	HFFS	Pass 54-6	
Energy Capable School Buildings	S2168 Pearson	S. Fin	HFFS		Failed
	H7593 Cortvriend	H. Fin	HFFS		
Establishes Thermal Energy Network Infrastructure	None				Failed
	H7285 Cortvriend	H. Corp	HFFS		
Renewable Ready Program	S2293 DiMario	S. Env	Adv 8-0	Pass 32-0	Passed & Signed
	H7616 Speakman	H.Env -> Corp	Advance	Pass 70 - 1	
Reporting Damage to Utility Pipes	S2849 DiMario	S. Env	Adv 8-0	36 - 0	Passed & Signed
	H7427 DeSimone	H. Corp	Adv 12 - 0	75-0	
Battery Leaf Blowers – Rebates and Training	S2277 Zurier	S. Commerce	No Hearing		Some Funds from Budget
	H7495 Boylan	H. Finance	HFFS		
Climate Education For Students And Workforce	S2356 Lawson	S. Fin	HFFS		Failed
	H7496 Boylan	H. Fin	HFFS		
Res: Study Commission: Climate Impacts & Solutions	NA				Passed
	H7731 Cortvriend	H. Env.	Adv 11 - 0	74-0	
Oil Spill Prevention Fund to Share Support for EC4	S2332 DiMario	S. Fin	Adv, 10-0	Pass 31 - 6	Failed
	H7685 Cortvriend	H. Fin	HFFS		
Lead by Example: Bottles, Efficiencies, & EVs	S2543 Miller	S. Env	HFFS		Failed
	H7857 Boylan	H. Fin	HFFS		
EVs Replace State and Municipal Vehicles	S2595 DiMario	S. Fin	HFFS		Failed
	H7859 McGaw	H. Fin	HFFS		

Appendix 3:

2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

TRANSPORTATION					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Bond Funding for Bicycle Mobility Plan - \$25 million	None				Failed
	H7918 Tanzi	H Fin	HFFS		
RIPTA and MBTA - Dual Commuter-Rail Passes					Failed
	H7136 Lombardi	H. Corp	HFFS		
H Res: RIE & PUC to Develop EV Charger Incentives	S2510 Ujifusa	Sen. Commerce	no hearing		Failed
	H7353 McGaw	H. Corp.	HFFS		
Exempts Bicycles from Sales Tax					Failed
	H7674 Handy	H. Finance	HFFS		
Sets E-Bike Classes; DEM Regulates Bike Paths	S2829A Euer	S. Judiciary	Adv 9-0	Pass A 35-1	Passed and Signed
	H7713A Boylan	H. Corp.	Adv 11-0	Pass A 65-4	
Establishes Purchasing Co-Op for State and Municipal Evs	S2576 DiMario	S. Fin	HFFS		Failed
	H8010 McGaw	H. State Govt.	HFFS		
FOOD & AGRICULTURE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Creates Compost Fund with Grants	S2753 Valverde	S. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	H7856 Cortvriend	H. Finance	HFFS		
Tax Break for Urban and Small Farmers	S2335 Mack	S. Fin	HFFS		Failed
	H7684 McGaw	H. Fin	HFFS		
Restricted Receipt Fund for Farmers	S2941 DiPalma	Sen. Finance	HFFS		Failed
	None				
CLIMATE RESILIENCE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Economic Planning to Include Climate	2043 Lauria	S. Env	Adv. A	P: 35-1	Passed and signed
	7246 Boylan	H. State Govt	Adv A	P 57 - 10	
Act on Coasts – Coastal Resilience	2298 Gu	S. Env.	Adv A	P 37 - 0	Passed and signed
	7022 Spears	H. Env.	Adv A	P 74 - 0	
Extend Funding for RIIB Infrastructure Grants	2549 DiMario	S. Fin.	HFFS	Funds Removed by Budget	Failed
	7999 McEntee	H. Fin/	HFFS		

Appendix 3:

2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

LAND, FOREST, & COAST					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Minor Corrections in 2023 Solar-Siting Act	S2151A DiMario	S. Env	Adv A	P 35-0	Passed and Signed
	H7431A Speakman	H. Corp	Adv A	P 61-7	
Public Shore Rights Disclosed to Coastal Homebuyers	S2185 Gu	Sen Judiciary	Adv A	P 36-0	Passed and Signed
	H7376 Cortvriend	H. Judiciary	Adv A	P 68-0	
Supports DOT Planting Pollinator-Friendly Species	None				Failed
	H7296 McGaw	H. Env	HFSS		
House Resolution: Commission on Beach	NA				Passed Resolution
	H7361 Azzinaro	H. Env.	adv	P 66-0	
Replaces CRMC with State Dept of Coastal Resources	S2928 Gu	S. Env.	A HFFS	0	Failed
	H8148 Cortvriend	H. Env	HFFS	0	
Allows Conversion of Town Roads to Right-of-Ways	S2641 Gu	S. Judiciary	HFFS		Failed
	H7645 Cortvriend	H. Judiciary	Adv A	H passed A	
Fire Mitigation Plan - Forests Over 500 Acres	S2882 LaMountain	Sen Housing	HFFS		Failed
	H7728A Cotter	H. Env.	Adv A	H passed A	
Funding for State Conservation Programs	S2958 DiPalma	Sen Finance	HFFS		FUNDED IN BUDGET
	H7775 Chippendale	H. Finance	HFFS		
Creates Land Resource Geographic Info. System	THIS BILL WAS REPLACED BY 7985A / 2995 A (below)				Study Instead
Dept. of Administration to Study Cost of Land GIS	7985A Spears	H. Muni	Adv A 10-0	P 69-0	Passed and signed
	2995A Mack	Sen Housing		34-2	

WATER & TOXICS

Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Consumer PFAS Ban of 2024	S2152 Kallman	S. Env.	Adv A 6-0	P 37-0	Passed and SIGNED
	H7356 Cortvriend	H. Env	Adv A	P 71-0	
Requires Radon Testing and Mitigation for Sales of	S2090 Ruggiero	S. Housing	Adv 8-0	P 33-1	Failed
	H8335 Corvese	H. Corp	HFFS		
Prohibits Lawn-Care Pesticides Near Schools	2296 Miller	S. Env	HFFS		Failed
	7359 Carson	H. Env.	HFFS		
Prohibits 2nd-Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides	2745 Murray	S. Env.	HFFS		Failed
	7783 Kislak	H. Env.	HFFS		

Appendix 3:

2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

WASTE					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Beverage Container Deposit Recycling Act	S3144 Valverde	S. Env.	no hearing		Failed
	H8312 McEntee	H.Env	HFFS		
H RES: Extends & Amends Bottle-Bill Commission	S3159 McKenney	Sen Consent Cal		Consented	Passed Resolution
	H8345 McEntee	H. Env	Rec. Passage		
Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging	None				Failed
	H7023 Bennett	H. Env.	HFFS		
Prohibits New High Heat Waste Facilities	S2303 Ujifusa	S. Env.	HFFS		Failed
	H7357 McGaw	H. Env.	HFFS		
Bans Plastic Microparticles from Products	S2300 Cano	S. Env.	HFFS		Failed
	H7515 Boylan	H. Env.	HFFS		
Updates Food Packaging Act for PFAS, PVC, & Polystyrene	S2850B Valverde	S. Env.	Adv A&B	36-0; 37-0	Passed A&B and Signed
	H7619A Cortvriend	H. Env.	Adv A&B	67-0; 67-0	

BUDGET					
Bill	Bill Number & Sponsor	Committee	Committee Action	Floor Vote	FINAL
Conservation Funding in Green Bond	S2496 DiPalma	S.Fin			APPROVED for public vote
	H7550 Cotter	H. Fin			

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 SENATE RANKINGS

Senator	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
DiMario	35	44	47	126	A+
Euer	33	23	46	102	
Valverde	36	22	36	94	
Gu	37	23	27	87	
Miller	36	15	34	85	
Kallman	37	19	26	82	
Mack	37	28	17	82	
Sosnowski	37	12	23	72	A
DiPalma	37	22	13	72	
Murray	37	6	29	72	
Lawson	47	9	15	71	
Britto	36	3	24	63	
Pearson	37	6	16	59	B
LaMountain	36	6	16	58	
Lauria	37	3	18	58	
Ujifusa	35	12	10	57	
Acosta	37	3	12	52	
Ruggerio	36	11	5	52	

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 SENATE RANKINGS

Senator	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
Cano	35	3	13	51	C n=6
Zurier	35	3	10	48	
McKenney	37	0	9	46	
Ciccone	36	0	9	45	
Gallo	37	0	7	44	
Lombardi	37	0	7	44	
Bell	37	0	6	43	D n=6
Burke	37	0	6	43	
Tikoian	34	0	9	43	
Felag	31	3	7	41	
Picard	35	0	0	35	
Quezada	32	0	2	34	
Raptakis	18	0	0	18	F n=6
Paolino	3	0	0	3	
DeLuca	-1	0	0	-1	
de la Cruz	-3	0	0	-3	
Rogers	-3	0	0	-3	
Morgan	-4	0	0	-4	

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 HOUSE RANKINGS

Representative	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
Cortvriend	36	64	60	160	A+
McGaw	33	28	50	111	
Carson	35	3	66	104	
Speakman	36	22	41	99	
Kislak	36	17	45	98	
Handy	36	21	30	87	
Boylan	33	24	29	86	
Fogarty	34	0	45	79	
Spears	34	6	34	74	
McEntee	36	13	22	71	
Tanzi	29	9	32	70	
Bennett	34	9	26	69	
Cotter	36	9	24	69	
Morales	34	10	17	61	A
Alzate	33	12	13	58	
Ajello	34	0	22	56	
Donovan	36	0	14	50	

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 HOUSE RANKINGS

Representative	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
Casimiro	35	0	14	49	n=12
Knight	35	0	14	49	
Potter	30	6	13	49	
Edwards	28	4	16	48	
DeSimone	36	3	8	47	
Finkelman	36	0	10	46	
Henries	33	3	10	46	
Stewart	34	0	12	46	
Cruz	35	0	10	45	B n=12
Slater	32	9	4	45	
McNamara	34	0	10	44	
Abney	35	8	0	43	
Felix	28	3	12	43	
Hull	35	0	8	43	
Kazarian	36	0	7	43	
Craven	32	6	4	42	
Dawson	35	3	4	42	

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 HOUSE RANKINGS

Representative	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
Giraldo	36	0	6	42	
Blazejewski	36	0	4	40	
Caldwell	36	0	4	40	
Shekarchi	33	5	2	40	
Ackerman	34	3	2	39	C n=12
Corvese	34	3	2	39	
Diaz	29	0	10	39	
Kennedy	35	0	4	39	
Lombardi	34	3	2	39	
Solomon	36	3	0	39	
Sanchez	36	0	2	38	
O'Brien	34	3	0	37	
Batista	30	0	6	36	
Shallcross Smith	36	0	0	36	
Vella-Wilkinson	32	0	4	36	
Voas	36	0	0	36	

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 HOUSE RANKINGS

Representative	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
Fellela	35	0	0	35	D n=13
Messier	34	0	1	35	
Shanley	31	0	4	35	
Baginski	34	0	0	34	
Fenton-Fung	32	0	2	34	
Marszalkowski	34	0	0	34	
Biah	31	0	2	33	
Azzinaro	23	3	6	32	
Noret	31	0	0	31	
Serpa	31	0	0	31	
Cardillo	24	0	2	26	
Lima	24	0	2	26	
Casey	25	0	0	25	
Brien	21	0	2	23	F
Perez	22	0	0	22	
Phillips	21	0	0	21	
Chippendale	7	6	6	19	

Appendix 4:

2023-2024 HOUSE RANKINGS

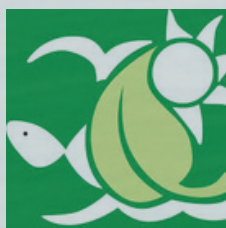
Representative	Votes	Bill Sponsor	Co-Sponsor	Combined Score	Letter Grade
Brien	21	0	2	23	F n=12
Perez	22	0	0	22	
Phillips	21	0	0	21	
Chippendale	7	6	6	19	
Costantino	15	0	0	15	
Place	11	0	4	15	
Nardone	8	0	6	14	
Newberry	14	0	0	14	
Morgan	10	0	0	10	
Rea	8	0	2	10	
Roberts	6	0	2	8	
Quattrocchi	0	0	0	0	

The Environment Council of Rhode Island is a coalition of organizations and individuals advocating for policies that protect and enhance the environment. ECRI works to create a healthier, more sustainable future for all Rhode Islanders through legislative action and community engagement.

www.environmentcouncilri.org

For questions about this report, please contact:

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**Environment
Council of
Rhode Island**