



ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL OF RHODE ISLAND

November 3, 2011

Honorable Joshua Miller,
State Senator, District 28
Honorable Christopher R. Blazewski,
State Representative, District 02
Attn: Carmen Acosta
State House, Room 212
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: ECRI Appointments to the Rhode Island Climate Change Commission
Created Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws 28-84-3(a)**

Dear Senator Miller and Representative Blazewski:

On behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI), I am writing to advise you, in your capacities as co-chairs of the Rhode Island Climate Change Commission, created pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws 23-84-3(a), that the ECRI Board of Directors unanimously voted to appoint Ms. Meg Kerr of ECRI and Ms. Jane Kenney Austin of Save The Bay to be the representatives of environmental non-profit organizations on the Commission.

In June of 2010, the General Assembly passed the Rhode Island Climate Risk Reduction Act of 2010, which, in part established the Climate Change Commission to identify some of the most critical Rhode Island issues that will have to be addressed in response to climate change. The Climate Risk Reduction Act authorizes ECRI to appoint two members of the Commission who shall be representatives of environmental non-profit organizations in Rhode Island.

ECRI appoints Ms. Meg Kerr of ECRI and Ms. Jane Kenney Austin of Save The Bay and believes that both will be excellent members of this Commission.

Ms. Kerr is an environmental scientist with 30 years experience working on river and watershed management and policy with special expertise in water quality assessment and monitoring. Watershed Program Manager for the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP), a job she started in November 2006. Meg's responsibilities include co-leading Watershed Counts, a collaborative initiative to develop indicators of ecological health for the Narragansett Bay (www.watershedcounts.org); co-leading the Land & Water Partnership, which works to strengthen and build connections among grassroots conservation organizations and hosts the annual *Land and Water Conservation Summit*; and participating in the leadership teams for the

Coalition for Water Security and the Coalition for Transportation Choices. Meg currently serves as president of the Environment Council of RI's Education Fund. Meg has broad experience in environmental planning and management. Prior to joining NBEP, she served as chair and staff to the Rhode Island Rivers Council. She worked for the University of Rhode Island Coastal Resources Center (1989-2003) where she developed and managed the "River Rescue" program, which used volunteer water quality monitoring to build local stewardship for Rhode Island's urban rivers. She worked for the U.S. EPA in Washington DC (1986-1989) coordinating state water monitoring and promoting volunteer based monitoring programs. She began her career at the North Carolina Department of Environmental Management (1980-1986) where she supervised the water quality assessment and modeling group responsible for developing effluent limitations for NPDES (point source discharge) permits and developed River Watch, a program to promote local stewardship for rivers and streams. Meg has a MS in environmental biology from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and a BS in aquatic biology from Brown University.

Ms. Austin is Senior Policy Analyst for Save The Bay. Since 2004, she has worked to advance Save The Bay's legislative agenda and to strengthen the policies that preserve and protect Narragansett Bay. She links Save The Bay with key partners and institutions including the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program and the Environment Council of RI. Recent areas of attention include water quality, climate adaptation and passage of the 2010 bond issue to acquire Rocky Point. She has served on the Warwick School Committee and the Board of Common Cause RI. Jane's academic background includes undergraduate degree in Economics from Princeton, and Masters degrees from Harvard (MBA) and Brown (Political Science).

Should you need it, contact information for both Meg Kerr and Jane Kenney Austin is below. Please feel free to contact me at tjedele@clf.org or (401) 351-1102, ext. 2011 if you have any questions.

On behalf of ECRI, we look forward to engaging, through our representatives, in the challenging issues identified by the Commission and to finding solutions to climate change.

Very truly yours,



Tricia K. Jedele, President
Environment Council of Rhode Island

cc.: ECRI
Caitlin Thomas-Henkel, Deputy Director, Senate Policy Office
Beth Cotter, Director of Policy, House Policy Office

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