

2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI)

The Environment Council of Rhode Island is a coalition of more than 60 Rhode Island organizations that advocate for policies to protect and enhance the environment. Our policy priorities would address some of Rhode Island's most pressing environmental issues.

Act On Climate (S0078/H5445) PASSED!

Sponsored by Sen. Euer and Rep. Carson, this landmark legislation creates a framework for meeting net-zero carbon emissions goals by 2050.

Power RI with 100% Renewable Electricity by 2030 (S0629/H5762)

S0629/H5762, sponsored by President Ruggiero and Rep. Ruggiero, would update the existing Renewable Energy Standard to reach 100% renewable electricity by 2030.

**Passed the Senate on June 1st*

Protect bill-saving energy efficiency programs (S0634/H6144)

RI's nation-leading energy efficiency programs are slated to expire in 2023 unless they are extended by statute. Sponsored by Sen. Sosnowski and Rep. Ruggiero.

**Passed the Senate on June 1st*

Regulate toxic PFAS in water (S107/H5523) and packaging (S110/H5356)

PFAS "forever chemicals" are toxic to ecosystems and humans, but these chemicals are found everywhere in RI's water and food packaging. Once in the environment, they never break down. These bills (Felag/Speakman and Seveney/Cortvriend) would regulate PFAS levels in water and ban PFAS in packaging.



For more information, please visit environmentcouncilri.org or reach out to ECRI's VP of Policy, Kai Salem, at kai@greenenergyconsumers.org.



Energy & Climate Legislation

- **S0339/H5966 (Sosnowski/Handy):** Updates appliance efficiency standards to save residents and businesses on their water, gas, and electricity bills while reducing water and energy waste.
- **S0035/H5967 (Pearson/Vella-Wilkinson):** Creates the Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resiliency fund to provide climate resiliency grants to cities and towns.
- **S0474/H6169 (DiMario/Speakman):** Closes a loophole that allows co-location of solar projects. This bill would prevent solar projects larger than 10MW from being built in open space/forests.
- **S0872/H6310 (DiMario/Cortvriend):** The TEAM Community Act allows Rhode Island to join the regional Transportation and Climate Initiative, which would reduce transportation emissions and generate \$20+ million annually for investment in clean, equitable transportation solutions.
- **S0584/H5809 (Sosnowski/Slater):** Establishes a Percentage Income Payment Plan to reduce the burden of utility bill payments on low income energy consumers.

Water & Toxics Legislation

- **S0107/H5523 (Felag/Speakman):** Requires health-based standards for toxic PFAS chemicals in water.
- **S0110/H5356 (Seveney/Cortvriend):** Bans toxic PFAS chemicals in food packaging.
- **S0702/H5641 (Miller/Kislak):** Prohibits the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, which have proven to be harmful to insects, including bees, and have ripple effects throughout ecosystems.

Forests & Open Space Legislation

- **S0172/H5259 (Euer/Edwards):** Allows towns to protect land by designating land as a public trust.
- **S0094/H5472 (DiPalma/Craven):** Improves enabling legislation for conservation easements.
- **S0470/H5760 (Ciccone/Speakman):** Creates a Rhode Island forest conservation commission that will identify strategies to protect and maintain state forests.

Waste

- **S0036/H5138 (Miller/Bennett):** Reduces the use of polystyrene foam containers.
- **S0037/H5358 (Ruggerio/McEntee):** Plastic Waste Reduction Act to reduce the use of retail plastic bags. *(Passed in Senate)*
- **S0038/H5376 (Sosnowski/Donovan):** Prohibits the release of balloons. *(Passed in House)*
- **S0106 and S0220/H5280 (Calkin and Valverde/McEntee):** Creates a refundable deposit for bottles.
- **S0562/H5133 (Miller/Bennett):** Creates a refundable deposit for nips.
- **S0155/H5131 (McCaffrey/Bennett):** "Ask-first" law for plastic straws. *(Passed in Senate)*
- **S0527/H5923 (Valverde/Caldwell):** Prohibits new high-heat waste processing (pyrolysis).
- **OPPOSE S0254/H5446 (Lombardo/Tobon):** Creates loophole allowing the polluting, toxic process of high-heat plastics incineration (pyrolysis).

Other Legislation

- **S0464/H5625 (Lawson/Cortvriend):** Supports climate literacy in K-12 schools.
- **S0105 (Euer):** Protects environmental justice communities from polluting facilities.
- **S0540/H5674 (Mack/Morales):** Establishes Green Justice Zones for special protection from pollution.
- **S0318/H5093 (McNamara/Archambault):** Protects pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users through fines and sanctions.
- **S0760/H5919 (DiPalma/Cortvriend):** Amends Green Buildings Act amendments.