

On January 22, 2016, as part of a broader interview in which he said he supports the Invenergy plant, Senator Whitehouse also said that his view on Invenergy is not opposed by “the larger environmental community,” from whom there has been “no blowback whatsoever.” Senator Whitehouse is mistaken on this last point. ECRI is the united voice of Rhode Island’s environmental community; it is the coalition of all 62 small, medium, and large environmental organizations in the state. ECRI was an early opponent of the Invenergy plant, unanimously approving the below statement at its public September 14th, 2015 board meeting, and ECRI continues to be a strong and consistent opponent.

While ECRI has deep respect for Senator Whitehouse’s work in the U.S. Senate to address climate change, ECRI regrets that in his Jan. 22 interview Senator Whitehouse misrepresented the views of Rhode Island’s environmental community.

To be clear: ECRI strongly opposes the proposal to build a new, long-lived fossil-fuel plant in Rhode Island, because building this plant would make it impossible for the state to meet its short-, medium-, and long-term goals for carbon-emission reductions.

September 14th, 2015 Statement:

Climate change is the most urgent problem facing Rhode Island and, indeed, the world. One of the major causes of climate change is the burning of fossil fuels, like coal, oil and natural gas, to make energy. In this context, the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) strongly opposes the proposal to build a new, long-lived natural gas fueled electricity generator in Burrillville. ECRI supports the quickest transition to clean, renewable energy and greater energy efficiency; this is not the time to be building new fossil fuel-fired power plants.

The Environment Council of Rhode Island is the voice of the environmental community in Rhode Island. It is a coalition of all 62 small, medium, and large environmental groups in the state.