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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL OF RHODE ISLAND UNVEILS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES ON EARTH DAY,  
CELEBRATES THE ANNIVERSARY OF 2021 ACT ON CLIMATE, AND PREPARES FOR EARTH DAY AT THE  
STATE HOUSE**

PROVIDENCE— On this Earth Day, the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) celebrates the first anniversary of the landmark 2021 Act on Climate, which was enacted last Earth Month. The Act on Climate has launched a new phase of climate action in Rhode Island. It has already started working to phase out fossil fuels in our state, increase renewable energy, and clean up our air and water. We thank the state leaders who have made this legislation possible.

**The Strides to Act On Climate Since ECRI’S Last Green Report Card:** Every two years, the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI) publishes a Green Report Card to evaluate the records of Rhode Island lawmakers on environmental issues and weigh in before elections. In the 2019 – 2020 Green Report Card, we issued an “Incomplete” to the General Assembly as a whole, highlighting the complete failure to address Rhode Island’s pressing environmental issues for three years running. This year, we are pleased to reflect on the impressive action on climate and environmental legislation that occurred in the 2021 session. In 2021, the General Assembly, led by House Speaker Joe Shekarchi, Senate President Dominick Ruggerio, House Majority Leader Chris Blazewski, Senate Majority Leader Michael McCaffrey, Senate Environment Chair Dawn Euer, and House Environment Chair David Bennett, responded to that call and forged ahead on policy that puts Rhode Island on track to address climate change. The General Assembly passed the [Act on Climate legislation](#), ECRI’s sole priority for two years running, as well as numerous other pieces of energy and environmental legislation.

**The Upcoming ECRI Green Report Card To Be Released Summer 2022:** As ECRI unveils its 2022 Legislative Priorities, we look forward to issuing a 2021 – 2022 Green Report Card that honors the leadership on [ECRI’s legislative agendas](#) and sets Rhode Island on a visible path to reduce emissions and strengthen energy reliability with the necessary policies. We are eager to recognize the numerous policymakers who continue to work tirelessly to address the climate crisis and advance policy actions like those recommended by the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)’s report released this month: Climate [Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change](#). We urge legislators to pass our top priorities this year to ensure that the 2021 – 2022 Green Report Card reflects action from the General Assembly.

## ECRI's 2022 Legislative Priorities

**100% by 2030 Renewable Energy Standard (H7277/S2274)** – This legislation, sponsored by Senate President Dominick Ruggiero and House Innovation Chair Deb Ruggiero, is the #1 thing the General Assembly can do to put Rhode Island on track to meeting the 2030 climate goal. Getting to 100% renewable electricity by 2030 will accelerate the state's renewable energy industry, creating good green jobs in offshore wind and keeping energy dollars in state. For the second year, this is a top priority of the Environment Council and its [Climate Crisis Campaign](#).

**Funding from ARPA and State Budget for environment/climate implementation (FY23 Budget)** - ECRI supports increased funding for agencies, including RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), RI Office of Energy Resources, and RI Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), to staff environmental protection and Act on Climate implementation. However, we strongly oppose any scoops from energy efficiency funds (our most cost-effective emissions reductions program), even to create other climate funds. We also support the Green Bond ballot question to authorize bond money going to environmental protection.

**Incentivize solar in developed areas and protect conservation areas (H7531)** – H7531 (Rep. Speakman) rebalances solar incentive programs to encourage solar development on brownfields, schools, carports, and other developed land. It also aligns state goals for climate resilience, clean energy deployment, and forest conservation by protecting core forests from energy development.

**Environmental Justice Communities (S2087/H8036)** – This legislation, sponsored by Senate Environment Chair Dawn Euer and Rep. Karen Alzate, creates a definition of environmental justice areas and requires evaluation of cumulative impacts before future polluting facilities can be sited in these areas. This is critical to the successful implementation of the Act On Climate as the state works toward centering the voices and input of environmental justice and frontline communities and workers in the stakeholder engagement process.

**2022 Earth Day at The State House is Back: May 4<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 PM!** ECRI will be holding its annual Earth Day at the State House with a short speaking program featuring Attorney General Peter Neronha. Our advocates will be talking to legislators about our top solutions to move the needle on climate action and environmental protection. The event is free and open to the public.

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### About the Environment Council of Rhode Island

The Environment Council of Rhode Island is a coalition of organizations and individuals whose mission is to serve as an effective voice for developing and advocating policies and laws that protect and enhance the environment. [www.environmentcouncilri.org](http://www.environmentcouncilri.org)