



## Energy Reporting & Building Performance Standards for Rhode Island

[H5425/S0166](#): *An Act Relating to Public Property and Works – The Green Buildings Act*, Tackles emissions from large existing buildings by requiring energy reporting and subsequently building performance standards. This bill would provide Rhode Island’s building owners, state agencies, and policymakers with necessary data on emissions from large buildings and lay the groundwork for emissions reductions from the building sector in line with the Act on Climate.

According to the Department of Environmental Management’s 2019 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory, the building sector makes up almost 30% of all GHG emissions in the state, and we do not currently have a clear path on how to reduce these emissions. A Building Performance Standard is the number one policy we can implement this year to reduce emissions from large existing buildings. Tackling these emissions is critical to achieve the Act on Climate’s mandate of net-zero by 2050 as around 70% of our building stock then is already in place today.

**Building Energy Reporting**: Requires large buildings to report their energy usage and Greenhouse Gas Emissions to a central data repository.

- Buildings Required to Report:
  - State buildings larger than 10,000 sq ft
  - For Commercial and residential buildings, the definition of large buildings gradually declines, starting at buildings larger than 25,000 sq ft and declining to buildings larger than 15,000 sq ft over time.
- This provides the state with data that can guide the development and implementation of programs to reduce the energy use of large buildings.
- Helps building owners measure their emissions, compare with their neighbors, and implement ways to reduce their energy usage.

**Building Performance Standards:** Requires the Office of Energy Resources (OER) to set declining standards of emissions for large buildings.

- Standards would be set by building type
- Gives building owners a clear 5-year timeline reporting cycle for when they must reduce emissions.
- Building owners have the option to pay an Alternative Compliance Fee, which is paid into a fund that helps to create incentives and programs for additional carbon emissions reductions in the built environment.
- OER shall establish a deadline extension and hardship waiver process

### **RI would follow larger markets**

There are currently 33 states and municipalities working on Building Performance Standards, and this policy has already been passed in New York City, Maryland, Washington DC, Boston, and several international countries. Providence took the first step of this policy by adopting building energy reporting. In a small state such as Rhode Island, it makes less sense to implement it on a local basis, given that the Act on Climate is statewide. If we want to meet the Act on Climate, we must reduce our emissions from large existing buildings. This legislation will put us on track to do just that.

### **Contact**

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