

# Legislative & Budget Update 2026

June 2026

RIEC4

# FY2027 State Budget:

## Energy (Article #11)

- Addition of large-scale hydropower and nuclear as eligible energy resources to support the annual Renewable Energy Standard (RES)
  - Increased the percentage of existing and operational resources (renewables, nuclear, large-scale hydropower) to meet the annual renewable energy credits obligation with the RES, beyond new renewable resources that become operational in future years
  - Providing developers and owners of virtual net metering (VNM) systems with the option to opt into a fixed tariff for over 20 years, instead of the current year-to-year fluctuating structure
  - On or before 1/1/27, the Public Utilities Commissions (PUC) shall conduct a comprehensive review of the state's progress towards meeting the RES, the state's progress towards meeting the GHG reduction requirements + related topics; final report due to be completed by 12/31/27
- Transferred the federal Weatherization Assistance Program + staffing to Office of Energy Resources (OER) from the Department of Human Services
  - OER through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) program will provide funding support for the purchase of Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) buses that have secured federal funds by RIPTA
  - Codified the OER Lead by Example Energy Benchmarking Program of state buildings (greater than 25,000 square feet) into law
  - Lowering the megawatt capacity of the Virtual Net Metering (VNM) Program from 275 megawatts to 175 megawatts

# Legislation / Commissions

- [H7183/S2260](#): OER Energy Benchmarking Program for public and private buildings (>25,000 sq. ft.) The estimated implementation is between 2027 and 2031. *(Transmitted to the Governor's Office 6/18 – awaiting action)*
- [H7879A/S3080B](#): Thermal Energy Network & Jobs Act; advances the study and implementation of thermal energy networks in RI *(Transmitted to the Governor's Office 6/16 – awaiting action)*
- [H7344A](#): House Resolution Extending the Reporting & Expiration Dates of the Legislative Commission on Climate Change Impacts and Solutions; **extended to mid-2029**
- [S3343](#): Senate Resolution Extending the Reporting & Expiration Dates of the Legislative Commission on Oversight of the Act on Climate; **extended to mid-2027**

## • [Unsuccessful Initiatives](#)

- [H7269/S2359](#): Plug-In Solar
- [H7726/2801](#): Solar E-Permitting

# 2026 Green Bond (\$55M)

- **\$25M** – Resilient Rhody Infrastructure Fund
- **\$3M** – Agriculture lands preservation
- **\$3M** – Open space protection
- **\$3M** – Brownfields remediation/economic development
- **\$12M** – Facility improvements (DEM)
- **\$1M** – Local recreation projects
- **\$1M** – Marine infrastructure development
- **\$7M** – Narragansett Bay watershed restoration