

2026 -- H 7081

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- NEXT GENERATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Boylan, Kislak, McGaw, Handy, Fogarty, Spears, Speakman, Cortvriend, and Carson

Date Introduced: January 14, 2026

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 23 of the General Laws entitled "HEALTH AND SAFETY" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 27.5

4 NEXT GENERATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS ACT

5 23-27.5-1. Short title.

6 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Next Generation Public Buildings
7 Act."

8 23-27.5-2. Next generation public buildings.

9 (a) All new construction of state and municipal buildings, including public school
10 buildings, open to the public commenced after January 1, 2028; all renovations and replacements
11 of a value in excess of fifty percent (50%) of existing public state and municipal buildings open to
12 the public commenced after January 1, 2028; and any extension or increase in floor area, number
13 of stories or height of a state or municipal building open to the public commenced after January 1,
14 2028, shall:

15 (1) Prohibit the use of combustion-based heating for air or water heating;

16 (2) Comply to the extent feasible with the goals provided in the provisions of chapter 6.2
17 of title 42 ("2021 act on climate"); and

18 (3) Comply with the provisions of chapter 27.3 of title 23 ("state building code") to include,

1 but not limited to, provisions in the Rhode Island conservation code as adopted from International
2 Energy Conservation Code ("IECC"), 2024 edition.

3 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, where no reasonable
4 or feasible alternative exists as determined by the executive climate change coordinating council
5 established pursuant to the provisions of § 42-6.2-1, systems for emergency back-up power, or
6 buildings specifically designed for occupancy of a laboratory, hospital, or crematorium, shall be
7 exempt; provided however, those buildings shall seek to minimize emissions and maximize health
8 and safety.

9 (c) A municipality may apply to the state building code standards committee for a waiver
10 of the provisions set forth in subsection (a) of this section in cases where the provisions would place
11 an undue hardship or burden on their compliance by the municipality.

12 (d) During any inspection of a public building or a place of public accommodation by an
13 inspector, building official, or other local official responsible for code enforcement, the inspector
14 or official may inspect for compliance with this section.

15 (e) The building codes standards committee shall adopt and promulgate all rules and
16 regulations required to implement the purposes of this section.

17 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- NEXT GENERATION PUBLIC BUILDINGS
ACT

- 1 This act would prohibit the use of combustion-based heating for air or water heating in any
- 2 state or municipal building open to the public constructed, altered or renovated on or after January
- 3 1, 2028. Systems for emergency back-up power, or buildings specifically designed for occupancy
- 4 of a commercial food establishment, laboratory, laundromat, hospital, or crematorium, shall be
- 5 exempt.

- 6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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