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LC003306  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- 2021 ACT ON CLIMATE

Introduced By: Senators Rogers, E Morgan, and de la Cruz

Date Introduced: January 23, 2026

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 42-6.2-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-6.2 entitled "2021 Act  
2 on Climate" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **42-6.2-2. Purpose of the council.**

4           (a) The council shall have the following duties:

5           (1) Assess, integrate, and coordinate climate change efforts throughout state agencies to  
6 reduce emissions, strengthen the resilience of communities and infrastructure, and prepare for the  
7 effects on climate change, including, but not limited to, coordinating vulnerability assessments  
8 throughout state government;

9           (2)(i) No later than December 31, 2025, and every five (5) years thereafter, submit to the  
10 governor and general assembly an updated plan, following an opportunity for public comment, that  
11 includes strategies, programs, and actions to meet economy-wide enforceable targets for  
12 greenhouse gas emissions reductions as follows:

13           (A) Ten percent (10%) below 1990 levels by 2020;

14           (B) Forty-five percent (45%) below 1990 levels by 2030;

15           (C) Eighty percent (80%) below 1990 levels by 2040;

16           (D) Net-zero emissions by 2050.

17           No action shall be brought pursuant to: subsection (a)(2)(i)(B) of this section before 2031,  
18 pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(i)(C) of this section before 2041, and pursuant to subsection  
19 (a)(2)(i)(D) of this section before 2051.

1           (ii) The plan shall also include procedures and public metrics for periodic measurement,  
2 not less frequently than once every five (5) years, of progress necessary to meet these targets and  
3 for evaluating the possibility of meeting higher targets through cost-effective measures.

4           (iii) The plan shall address in writing the annual input that is provided to the council by its  
5 advisory board, as set forth in § 42-6.2-4, and its science and technical advisory board, as set forth  
6 in § 42-6.2-5, in their reports to the council.

7           (iv) If a plan directs an agency to promulgate regulations, then the agency must do so by  
8 either issuing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking, as set forth in § 42-35-2.5, no later than  
9 six (6) months after the plan is released or by issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking, as set forth  
10 in § 42-35-2.7, no later than one year after the plan is released, unless the plan specifies another  
11 timeframe for an advance notice of rulemaking or a notice of rulemaking.

12           (v) The plan shall include an equitable transition to climate compliance for environmental  
13 justice populations, redress past environmental and public health inequities, and include a process  
14 where the interests of and people from populations most vulnerable to the effects of climate change  
15 and at risk of pollution, displacement, energy burden, and cost influence such plan.

16           (vi) The plan shall identify support for workers during this equitable transition to address  
17 inequity in the state by creating quality and family-sustaining clean energy jobs that pay wages and  
18 benefits consistent with or that exceed area wage and labor standards. The plan shall provide for  
19 the development of programs that directly recruit, train, and retain those underrepresented in the  
20 workforce, including women, people of color, indigenous people, veterans, formerly incarcerated  
21 people, and people living with disabilities.

22           (vii) The requirements under this subsection shall be subject to the enforcement provisions  
23 of § 42-6.2-10 effective in 2026.

24           (viii) No later than December 31, 2022, the council shall submit to the governor and the  
25 general assembly an update to the greenhouse gas emission's reduction plan dated "December  
26 2016" which shall not be subject to the requirements of subsections (a)(2)(ii) through (a)(2)(vi) of  
27 this section. No action shall be brought pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(viii) of this section before  
28 2023;

29           (3) Advance the state's understanding of the effects on climate change including, but not  
30 limited to: sea level rise; coastal and shoreline changes; severe weather events; critical  
31 infrastructure vulnerability; food security; and ecosystem, economic, and health impacts, including  
32 the effects of carbon pollution on children's health;

33           (4) Identify strategies to prepare for these effects and communicate them to Rhode  
34 Islanders, including strategies that incentivize businesses, institutions, and industry to adapt to

1 climate change;

2 (5) Work with municipalities to support the development of sustainable and resilient

3 communities;

4 (6) Identify and leverage federal, state, and private funding opportunities for emission

5 reduction and climate change preparedness and adaption work in Rhode Island;

6 (7) Advise the governor, the general assembly, and the public on ways to ensure that Rhode

7 Island continues to be a national leader in developing and implementing strategies that effectively

8 address the challenges on climate change;

9 (8) Work with other New England states to explore areas of mutual interest to achieve

10 common goals; ~~and~~

11 (9) Identify and facilitate opportunities to educate the public about climate change and

12 efforts throughout state agencies and municipalities to address climate change-; ~~and~~

13 (10) Evaluate and make recommendations for the use of carbon emissions removal

14 technology as an alternative approach to reducing carbon emissions and meeting the climate goals

15 as set forth in this chapter.

16 (b) The council is encouraged to utilize the expertise of Rhode Island universities and

17 colleges in carrying out the duties described in subsection (a) of this section, specifically to ensure

18 that the state's efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change are based on the best available

19 scientific and technical information, and to optimize the contribution by the universities and

20 colleges of their expertise and experience in research, analysis, modeling, mapping, applications to

21 on-the-ground situations, technical assistance, community outreach, and public education.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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- 1           This act would require the executive climate change coordinating council to evaluate and  
2   make recommendations for the use of carbon emissions removal technology as an alternative  
3   approach to reducing carbon emissions and meeting the climate goals set forth in the act on climate.  
4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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