



ENERGIZERI

Economic and Climate Resilience Act

CLIMATE CHANGE IN RI

Every time that humans burn natural gas, coal, or oil to generate electricity, fuel our cars, or heat and cool our homes, we're contributing to a massive buildup of polluting greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. Greenhouse gases act like a blanket around the planet, causing rapid temperature increases and intensifying extreme weather events.

Sea Level and Extreme Weather

- Climate change causes sea level rise when glaciers melt and water expands. Sea level rise increases flooding in Rhode Island, and will cause some areas of the state to be underwater.
- Additionally, climate change increases evaporation, adding water vapor into the air and causing more frequent extreme weather events, such as Superstorm Sandy in 2012 and the Bomb Cyclone in 2017.

Public Health

- Increased temperature, humidity, and ground-level ozone concentrations lead to a greater likelihood of developing respiratory conditions such as asthma.
- Warmer temperatures increase the probability of disease transmission by ticks and mosquitos.

Decline of Fish Stocks

- Winter sea surface temperatures of Narragansett Bay have risen 4° F since the 1960s. Increased temperatures have also led to decreased oxygen levels, threatening the Bay's critical ecosystems and fish stocks.

Tourism

- Climate change threatens the natural health and beauty of Rhode Island's bay, ocean, and coastlines, which are central elements of the state's tourism industry.
- Sea level has already risen 10 inches at the Newport tide gauge since 1938. Coastal storm surges are now impacting more properties because rising sea levels allow flooding to reach farther inland.

ENERGIZE RI: A BOLD SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is a global issue, which means each town, city, state, and nation must do its part to both reduce carbon pollution and build resilience. Given the polarization of climate change in Congress and the climate denialist platform of the federal Administration, it is especially imperative that states take action. Through enacting bold policies like the Energize RI Act, Rhode Island can be a national leader in fighting climate change and serve as a model for other states.

In 2014, RI enacted standards that would reduce emissions by 80% by 2050. In order to achieve our statewide goals and international commitments, we must place a fair price on carbon pollution that accurately takes into account the costs of its social and environmental damages. An economy-wide carbon price would enable Rhode Island to invest in renewable energy and climate resilience programs, such as building more offshore wind farms and green infrastructure projects.

It is not too late to address climate change. The worst impacts can be avoided if we act urgently, responsibly, and vigorously. Let's work together to pass the Energize RI Act in 2018!



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info@energizeri.org

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