

2021 Act On Climate

Senator Euer ([S-78](#)) & Representative Carson ([H-5445](#))

The 2021 Act On Climate bill uses science, transparency, equity, and accountability to ensure that Rhode Island reduces its greenhouse gas emissions to **net zero by 2050**. This brings us in line with mandatory, enforceable emission reductions already in place in neighboring Massachusetts.

Background: The Resilient Rhode Island Act of 2014

Seven years ago, climate activists won passage of the Resilient Rhode Island Act of 2014. The state's first-ever comprehensive climate bill, it called for reductions of carbon emissions of 45% by 2035 and 80% by 2050 below 1990 levels. These carbon emission reduction goals are out of date and lack accountability and transparency. The Resilient Rhode Island Act created the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) as the coordinating body to oversee government response to the climate crisis. But it required only limited input for the EC4's one emissions reduction plan.

What's New?: The 2021 Act On Climate

The 2021 Act On Climate bill updates the Resilient RI Act in several critical ways:

Science: Updates our climate targets in accordance with the latest science regarding what is needed to avert climate disaster. It creates achievable targets every ten years, with a 45% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030; an 80% reduction by 2040; and a requirement of net-zero emissions by 2050.

Transparency: Concrete plans to meet the emission reductions targets will be issued by the EC4 every five years. There will be public comment on the plans, and the plans will address the input provided to the EC4 by its advisory bodies. There will be public metrics and a dashboard, updated at least annually, to track emissions reductions and the sources of energy Rhode Island is using.

Equity: Plans will include an equitable transition for environmental justice populations and a process for environmental justice communities to provide input on the plans. Plans will identify support for workers in the transition as well as the development of programs to recruit, train, and retain women, people of color, Indigenous people, veterans, formerly incarcerated people, and people living with disabilities in jobs related to a clean energy economy.

Accountability: Makes the state's greenhouse gas emissions reductions legally binding. If the state fails to follow the law, it can be enforced by a court order.

Act On Climate has broad support:

Climate Jobs Rhode Island and its members

The Rhode Island AFL-CIO
The Rhode Island Buildings & Construction Trades Council
SEIU District 1199NE
Teamster Local 251
Fuerza Laboral
NEARI
RICOSH
The Nature Conservancy
Green Energy Consumers Alliance
The Audubon Society of Rhode Island
Clean Water Action
Groundwork Rhode Island
Rhode Island Environmental Education Association
The Acadia Center

Others

Citizens' Climate Lobby
Climate Action Rhode Island (350 RI)
Jewish Alliance of Greater RI
Northeast Clean Energy Council
National Wildlife Federation
National Grid
RI Food Policy Council
RI Medical Society
U.S. Green Building Council Rhode Island