



The Economics of Clean Energy in Rhode Island

Jobs, Savings, Investment, Competitiveness, and the Costs of Inaction

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Jobs

- There were 2,328 clean-energy jobs and 237 clean-energy businesses in Rhode Island as of 2007. This only counts direct jobs and not the many indirect jobs in industries that support the clean energy economy.
- The number of clean-energy jobs in Rhode Island grew by 0.7 percent between 1998 and 2007, while jobs overall grew by 0.6 percent.
- Rhode Island will see \$500 million in new public and private investment due to programs and incentives under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and American Clean Energy and Security Act. These investments will lead to 4,540 net new clean-energy jobs in Rhode Island—even assuming some potential job losses in the fossil fuel sector as workers transition into the clean energy economy.
- Rhode Island needs these good-paying, private sector jobs—the state’s unemployment rate was at 12.8 percent as of August 2009.
- Green jobs in Rhode Island were distributed among the following sectors in 2008:
 - Conservation and pollution mitigation: 59.7 percent
 - Environmentally friendly production: 9.1 percent
 - Training and support: 9.5 percent
 - Energy efficiency: 10.9 percent
 - Clean energy: 10.8 percent

Consumer energy bill savings

- The average American family's annual spending on oil, gas, and electricity increased by \$1,100 under the Bush administration's energy policies. But American electricity and fuel bills would go down under the consumer protection provisions in the ACES bill.
- Emissions allowances allocated in the ACES bill for state efficiency programs alone will save Rhode Islanders \$723 million between 2012 and 2020.
- The average household in Rhode Island will see a monthly savings of \$4.50 on their electricity bill by 2020 due to ACES' consumer protection and energy-efficiency provisions.
- Households in Rhode Island will also save \$8.88 on gasoline each month by 2020 due to lower oil prices and more fuel-efficient vehicles under ACES.

Investment and innovation

- The clean energy economy is already growing in Rhode Island. Private companies in Rhode Island invested \$22.8 million in clean energy from 2006 – 2008 through venture capital funds.
- An additional \$500 million of public and private investment would flow into clean energy and energy efficiency in Rhode Island under the clean-energy investment provisions in the ACES bill and the ARRA stimulus package.
- Rhode Island's 237 clean-energy businesses patented 51 new clean-energy technologies in 2007 alone. Passing a strong clean-energy jobs bill this session is the best thing congress can do to unlock even more innovation and entrepreneurship across Rhode Island and the nation.
- Save the Bay in Providence focuses on research and advocacy dedicated to protecting Narragansett Bay.

American competitiveness and energy independence

- The people of Rhode Island spent more than \$1.2 billion on imported crude oil in 2007 alone—more than \$1,142 per person.
- Without comprehensive clean-energy reform, Rhode Island taxpayers will spend \$110 million more over the next 10 years to subsidize wealthy oil and gas companies, and this is on top of their already record profits.

Costs of inaction

- The CBO predicted in May 2009 that climate change would cause decreases in future U.S. gross domestic product of between 3 and 5 percent, and global GDP of as much as 10 percent by the end of the century.
- Rising sea levels will erode Rhode Island's 400 miles of densely populated coastline, inundating roads, homes, and other infrastructure. The costs of a 20-inch sea level rise to coastal properties in the Northeast could amount to between \$8 and \$58 billion by 2100. Evacuation effort estimates for the Northeastern coastal region range from nearly \$2 billion to over \$6.5 billion.
- Rhode Island farmers—who produce over \$90 million annually for the state—will lose ground to droughts and agricultural pests. Rising temperatures will reduce Rhode Island's hay and pasture yields by as much as 39 percent, and its potato yields by 66 percent by 2100.
- Rhode Island's lobster fisheries will sharply decline, and cod will disappear entirely from the state's waters by the end of the 21st century.