



# 2013 Program Priorities

## Protect Narragansett Bay

Narragansett Bay is Rhode Island's greatest natural treasure. Yet even as we have made great progress addressing many threats to the Bay and other waterways, some challenges remain and new threats have emerged—including plastic pollution. As the Ocean State, we must do all we can to preserve our Bay for future generations.

Environment Rhode Island supports:

- Protecting Narragansett Bay by banning plastic bags. With hundreds of millions of disposable bags used each year, plastic pollution is threatening seabirds, shellfish, and other wildlife in the Bay and the ocean beyond. As the Ocean State, Rhode Island should take the lead with this simple but critical step to protect our marine ecosystems.
- Reducing other waste ending up in our land and water through a redeemable deposit on glass and plastic beverage bottles (aka “the Bottle Bill”), and requiring producers to assume responsibility for disposal and recycling of products containing toxic materials.
- Reducing nitrogen pollution from lawn fertilizers—a leading threat to water quality in Narragansett Bay and the waters that feed it.
- Providing adequate resources for clean water programs—including funds to help communities end sewage overflows and for enforcement of our clean water laws.

## Repower Rhode Island

Too much of our energy is being wasted, and too much of that energy comes from dirty sources that harm our environment and our health. But by tapping the power of the sun and the wind, and by using less energy in the first place, we can move Rhode Island toward a future that gets 100 percent of its energy from clean sources that don't pollute and never run out.

Environment Rhode Island supports:

- Increasing solar energy in Rhode Island by setting a goal of 50,000 solar roofs by 2030, and making this possible by improving access to solar energy through financing programs, net metering and tax credits, an expanded and ambitious distributed generation program with a carve-out for small-scale projects, and by making it easier for local governments, residents and businesses to develop solar energy.
- Facilitating the development of wind energy, including offshore wind, such as through tax credits and production incentives.
- Increasing overall renewable energy by strengthening the state's renewable energy standard and other policies so that Rhode Island gets at least 30 percent of its energy from renewables by 2030.

## Environment Rhode Island's mission

*We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress. That's the idea behind Environment Rhode Island. We focus on protecting Rhode Island's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.*



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## Get Rhode Island off oil

Our dependence on oil pollutes the air we breathe with smog that causes respiratory problems, especially in the young and elderly; it enriches multinational oil companies and totalitarian regimes while taxing our families at the pump; and it produces more global warming pollution than any other energy source in the state. We can do better than continue to depend on dirty, dangerous and increasingly expensive oil.

Environment Rhode Island supports:

- The timely formation of the legislatively created Petroleum Savings & Independence Advisory Commission, and its drafting by April 2013 of a plan to reduce Rhode Island's consumption of oil by at least 30 percent from 2007 levels by 2030 and by at least 50 percent by 2050.
- Establishing a sustainable funding mechanism to improve and expand public transit in the state, thereby providing convenient alternatives to personal vehicles while securing transportation options for our communities.
- Facilitating consumer adoption of electric and hybrid vehicles through the development of electric vehicle infrastructure in the state.
- Establishing systems benefit charges for renewable energy and energy efficiency for oil heat customers, modeled after existing programs for natural gas heat and electricity.

## Reduce global warming

With our miles of coastline and high vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise and extreme weather is a particular threat to Rhode Island. If we don't tackle the pollution that contributes to climate change, Rhode Island faces even greater threats. To prevent the worst impacts of global warming, Environment Rhode Island supports:

- Strengthening the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) by ensuring that it reduces emissions by at least 20 percent from current levels by 2020 and that revenues are invested in programs to promote energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Taking global warming seriously by passing legislation that commits Rhode Island to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent below current levels by 2020 and, at least 80 percent by 2050.
- Making sure all energy and transportation policies, including the recommendations of the new Rhode Island State Energy Plan, take into account the long-term social and environmental costs of global warming and fossil fuel dependence, and the benefits of clean energy and transportation options.