

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

20-01

January 17, 2020

ADVANCING A 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY FUTURE FOR RHODE ISLAND BY 2030

WHEREAS, Rhode Island and the world face significant environmental, economic, energy, and public health challenges from the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is committed to mitigating economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions and their effect on climate change, while spurring new and innovative opportunities for investment and job growth throughout the state's clean energy economy; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's clean energy sector has seen a 74% increase in jobs since 2014, demonstrating that protecting against climate change and strengthening our economy are complementary goals; and

WHEREAS, the Resilient Rhode Island Act establishes targets for Rhode Island to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020, to 45% below 1990 levels by 2035, and to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4), in its December 2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan, made clear that a business-as-usual approach to reducing economy-wide greenhouse gases is insufficient to meet Resilient Rhode Island Act emission reduction targets; and

WHEREAS, a clean, affordable, and reliable electric grid is paramount if Rhode Island is to effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions across *all* sectors of the economy, including heating and transportation; and

WHEREAS, the EC4 has also found that, to achieve state emissions reduction targets, the electric grid needs to be almost fully carbon-free; and

WHEREAS, a clean and affordable future electric grid will require a diverse combination of responsibly-developed resources to power our economy while maintaining reliability, including, but not limited to, offshore wind, solar, on-shore wind, and storage; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Rhode Island joined the United States Climate Alliance, a bipartisan coalition of governors committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement, now numbering 25 states in total; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island has taken significant steps to reduce carbon emissions in the electric sector, including, but not limited to, implementation of a Renewable Energy Standard, the Renewable Energy Growth Program, the Renewable Energy Fund, and creation of an Efficient Buildings Fund and Commercial PACE program at the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is home to the first operational offshore wind farm in North America, located off the coast of Block Island; and

WHEREAS, in March 2017, I challenged the state to accelerate its clean energy portfolio ten-fold by December 2020, to 1,000 MW; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island has responded to that challenge and now counts more than 800 MW of renewables in its energy supply portfolio, and remains on-track to add more clean energy resources to its supply; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is a founding member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the nation's first market-based cap-and-trade program to reduce emissions from the power sector; and

WHEREAS, through existing clean energy development, programs, and competitive market procurements, Rhode Island's electric supply will be more than one-third renewable by the middle of the next decade; and

WHEREAS, our clean energy future will rely not only on new renewable resources, but also on a lasting commitment to cost-effective energy efficiency, which is the cleanest

and most affordable means to reduce Rhode Island's overall consumption of electricity; and

WHEREAS, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) ranks Rhode Island third in the nation for its energy efficiency policies and programs; and

WHEREAS, in March 2017, I directed state agencies to develop a more dynamic regulatory framework to enable Rhode Island and its utilities to advance a cleaner, more affordable and reliable energy system for the 21st century and beyond; and

WHEREAS, this charge led to the formation of a Power Sector Transformation initiative that identified the importance of controlling long-term energy costs while building a more flexible grid to integrate more clean energy generation; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 19-06 (July 8, 2019) directs state agencies to lead a Heating Sector Transformation with the goal of reducing emissions from the heating sector while ensuring that Rhode Islanders have access to safe, reliable and affordable heating; and

WHEREAS, in December 2018, Rhode Island announced it was joining a coalition of nine states and the District of Columbia to design a regional program that would lower carbon emissions from the transportation sector and invest proceeds into more sustainable transportation solutions and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, there is no greater threat to Rhode Island, our planet, and our way of life than global climate change, and the time to act with urgency is upon us.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gina M. Raimondo, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby order and direct the following:

1. The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER) shall conduct economic and energy market analysis and develop viable policy and programmatic pathways to meet one hundred percent (100%) of the state's electricity demand with renewable energy resources by 2030.
2. OER's analysis shall consider how acceleration of the state's renewable energy supply can leverage market competition to reduce ratepayer costs and energy price volatility while creating economic development opportunities in Rhode Island's burgeoning clean energy economy.

3. The Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC) and Department of Environmental Management (DEM) shall support OER in this effort.
4. OER shall provide periodic public updates on its work to the EC4.
5. OER shall provide the Governor with a specific and implementable action plan to achieve this goal, due by December 31, 2020, which shall include recommended programmatic, legislative, and/or regulatory initiatives that can be advanced beginning in 2021.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

So Ordered:

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

Dated: January 17, 2020