



## States' Biofuels Statutes

### STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

*This project was undertaken in partnership with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist, The Office of Energy Policy and New Uses. For information on the full project, visit [States' Biofuels Statutory Citations](#).*

*Current through the 2013 Legislative Session of the Rhode Island General Assembly.*

#### **§ 42-140.4-1. Establishment of commission--Purposes**

(a) There is hereby authorized, created and established an advisory commission to be known as “The Rhode Island petroleum savings and independence advisory commission” with the powers and duties set forth in this chapter.

(b) The purposes of this commission are to:

- (1) To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants from the associated use of petroleum;
- (2) To make recommendations to the governor, general assembly, and public utilities commission on how to reduce petroleum-based fuel consumption in Rhode Island;
- (3) To provide input into decisions regarding fossil fuels in the state and to inform the public and elected and appointed state officials of such opportunities, decisions, and implementation;
- (4) To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of state policies and programs to reduce petroleum-based fuel consumption; and
- (5) To consider and evaluate in-state marketing for advanced biofuels, electric cars, efficiency programs for heating oil customers, and low level blends of bio-diesel across segments of the heating and transportation sector in order to keep more energy dollars in Rhode Island.
- (6) To act on matters related to reducing petroleum consumption from the heating and transportation sectors in the state including, but not limited to, the creation of a petroleum savings and independence plan (“Plan”) that includes a report, drawing on existing data and studies rather than new analyses, on petroleum consumption in Rhode Island and the impact of petroleum dependence on the state. The report must consider:

(A) Future petroleum costs to the drivers, homeowners, industries, and businesses of Rhode Island;

(B) Environmental, public health, and national security consequences of Rhode Island's petroleum dependence;

(C) Local economic development opportunities, including job creation potential, of improving energy efficiency and moving to clean, renewable, in-state energy sources;

(D) Proposed targets for reducing Rhode Island's total petroleum consumption that equals the maximum economically achievable savings. The targets may not provide less than a thirty percent (30%) overall reduction in petroleum consumption from 2007 levels by 2030 and a fifty percent (50%) overall reduction from 2007 levels by 2050; and

(E) Recommendations of the near-term and long-range strategies to achieve significant reductions in petroleum consumption to the governor, speaker of the house, president of the senate, and public utilities commission. The recommendations shall include, but not be limited to the following:

(i) Promoting and incentivizing transportation alternatives to personal vehicle use, including expanding, investing in, and ensuring sustainable funding for public transportation including rail options, and offering incentives for commuters to use public transportation where available;

(ii) Promoting and incentivizing other practices to reduce fuel use in transportation, including fuel efficient vehicles and carpooling, and establishing rebates or other consumer incentives for retiring older, inefficient vehicles;

(iii) The rapid deployment of electric vehicles, through a combination of policies that include comprehensive planning with utilities, investments in electric vehicle infrastructure, and consumer tax incentives;

(iv) The implementation of "clean fuels" standards requiring transportation fuels above a certain emissions target to purchase offsets from fuel sources that produce lower carbon emissions;

(v) Coordinating land use and transportation planning where sensible to pursue "complete streets" policies that create walkable and bikeable communities with access to public transit options, and to encourage growth in areas accessible by walking, biking, and public transportation;

(vi) Where possible, measures to reduce fuel use in aviation;

(vii) Diversifying energy sources for heating by expanding renewable sources;

(viii) Creating programs to deliver home and commercial weatherization and efficiency improvements for households using oil for heat; and

(ix) Adopting other strategies that can help enable Rhode Island to achieve the oil reduction targets.

(c) The commission shall report to the general assembly by April 2013 with recommendations for

specific legislative and administrative actions. By February 2014, and by February every two (2) years thereafter, the advisory commission shall evaluate the state's progress toward meeting the petroleum-reduction goals and update the plan to make additional recommendations as necessary to ensure that the state meets such goals.

**Credits** [P.L. 2012, ch. 276, § 1](#), eff. June 19, 2012; [P.L. 2012, ch. 283, § 1](#), eff. June 19, 2012.

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#### **§ 42-140.4-2. Composition of the commission**

- (a) The commission shall consist of seventeen (17) voting members as follows:
- (1) The director of the department of environmental management, or designee;
  - (2) The administrator of the office of energy resources, or designee;
  - (3) The director of the department of transportation, or designee;
  - (4) A member of the energy efficiency & resource management council;
  - (5) A member of the renewable energy coordinating board;
  - (6) The director of the University of Rhode Island energy center, or designee;
  - (7) The director of the University of Rhode Island transportation center, or designee;
  - (8) Four (4) members of the Rhode Island general assembly:
    - (i) One representative from each party appointed by the speaker of the house; and
    - (ii) One senator from each party to be appointed by the president of the senate;
  - (9) Six (6) additional voting members shall be nominated and voted on by the commission's voting members, as set forth above, with expertise in:
    - (i) Environmental issues;
    - (ii) Residential and commercial heating oil;
    - (iii) Public transportation, transit-orientated development, and/or transportation policy;
    - (iv) Residential and low-income energy provision; and
    - (v) Biodiesel sector issues; and
    - (vi) Ethanol sector issues.

(b) Two (2) of those additional members selected pursuant to subsection (a)(9) of this section shall serve initial terms of three (3) years; two (2) of those additional members selected pursuant to subsection (a)(9) of this section shall serve initial terms of four (4) years; and two (2) of those additional members selected pursuant to subsection (a)(9) of this section shall serve initial terms of five (5) years. Thereafter, members selected pursuant to subsection (a)(9) of this section shall serve terms of five (5) years and may be reappointed. Any vacancy in the office of a member selected pursuant to subsection (a)(9) of this section shall be filled in the same manner as provided therein, and any such appointment shall be for the balance of the current term of that office.

**Credits** [P.L. 2012, ch. 276, § 1](#), eff. June 19, 2012; [P.L. 2012, ch. 283, § 1](#), eff. June 19, 2012.

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#### **§ 42-140.4-3. Powers and duties of the commission**

The board shall have the following powers and duties:

- (1) Develop short-term and long-term strategic plans with respect to strategies to reduce petroleum consumption from the home heating and transportation sectors in Rhode Island;
- (2) Identify, promote, and recommend policies to further reduce petroleum consumption in the state including, but not limited to, those issues set forth in this chapter; and
- (3) Consider such other matters as it may deem appropriate to the fulfillment of its purposes, and advise the governor, the general assembly, other parties, and the public with regard to matters pertaining to its purposes and duties, which advice may include findings and recommendations.

**Credits** [P.L. 2012, ch. 276, § 1](#), eff. June 19, 2012; [P.L. 2012, ch. 283, § 1](#), eff. June 19, 2012.