WHEREAS, Rhode Island is on a path to achieving a 100 percent renewable energy by 2033 and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050; and

WHEREAS, By achieving a clean energy future, the State's carbon emission footprint and dependency on fossil fuel will be addressed; and

WHEREAS, Renewable energy will provide residents of the State with healthier environments and improved quality of life; and

WHEREAS, The State's energy sector continues to grow and evolve with new technological advancements that require updating of existing solar programs; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby respectfully requests the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to undertake a docket to review and analyze solar energy development in Rhode Island. The review and analysis shall include, but not limited to:

1) Comparing and contrasting the various solar energy development programs offered through the electric distribution company’s tariffs, excluding Block Island Utility District and Pascoag Utility District; and

2) Performing a cost-benefit analysis of investment in a range of solar project types and conducting an analysis of the different allocation of costs and benefits to participants and non-participants caused by increased investment in the project types from the programs offered through the electric distribution company’s tariffs; and be it further
RESOLVED, This Senate requests that in addition to direct cost and benefits, the PUC factors into consideration: environmental justice, electric service reliability, affordable consumer rates, incentives for projects, interconnection cost and historic net metering rates, programmatic rules and cost differences, addressing the developers' need for a reliable source of revenue which provides a reasonable foundation for financing their projects against the need to assure that ratepayers are not paying more than necessary to achieve the targets set in the Renewable Energy Standard, and electric load growth scenarios to address targets of the Act on Climate greenhouse gas emission reductions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Senate further requests that for each type of solar energy development program, the PUC shall analyze whether expansion of each program encourages investment in solar projects, where benefits exceed cost, and whether sustainability and stability of each program can be maintained without unreasonable burden to ratepayers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Senate also requests that the PUC conducts public meetings to ensure meaningful public engagement and allows for a minimum of thirty (30) days for public comment; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Senate requests a report on review and analysis that shall make reasoned recommendations of which solar energy development program or programs, combination of programs, or new programs are or are not the most reasonable and effective means of procuring the best value for solar resources at the overall best rate to Rhode Island ratepayers through 2030; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby further requests that the PUC report its findings and recommendations to the Senate on or before December 1, 2023; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Chairman of the Public Utilities Commission.

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