

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS



LOCAL 99

Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.
Business Manager

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March 8, 2022

Honorable Rep. David A. Bennett
Chairman
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
HouseEnvironmentandNaturalResources@rilegislature.gov
State House
Providence, RI

RE: Support of H-7277 AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS-RENEWABLE ENERGY

Dear Chairman Bennett,

As Business Manager of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 99, I represent 800 Women and Men who provide their skills for our now seventy-three signatory contractors in the Electrical Industry in the State of Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. I also am one of, if not the only voice for the men and women who are not yet fortunate enough to be represented by an electrical labor union in the state of Rhode Island.

I wish to express our **support for H-7277** for the following reasons.

The days are far past when a person could be taken seriously claiming there is no such thing as climate change. The facts are all around us. CO2 levels are sitting at over 400 parts per million, which is an exponential growth from the year 1950 high point of 300 parts per million which was only hit twice in 300,000 years. It is all about the data; so couple that data with the clear and obvious glacial retreat, warming oceans, record breaking heat levels, ocean acidification, and of course the largest threat to our coastal state which is sea level rise. Every one of those items is catastrophic to our world as we have come to know it. Unlike others I don't think we need to save the planet per se. I am quite certain when mother earth has had enough of our selfishness, she will burp us off and go on about her business. This is about saving the human race and all the species that walk, swim, fly, or creep upon it.

I really do not care one bit about the politics of this subject; I only care about solutions. Every capable human should be working to reset the clock and when we have done all we possibly can, we can cast blame upon anyone we see as the delusional obstructionist.

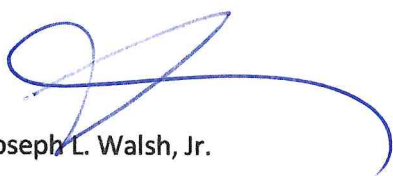
Now that we can no longer deny the problem, what are we going to do about it? We are going to have to make hard choices. We are going to have to do things we have not done before. We are going to have to be willing to live, work, and act differently than we did yesterday. We will have to rely on elected leaders such as yourself to get in the line of fire and fight for what we know is the only chance the children of our children will have. Will it be strange and maybe difficult sometimes? Certainly, but it sure beats the every possible alternative.

As we move into this new way of life, we must keep in mind that green jobs must be great jobs. We must always keep strong labor standards at the forefront of all legislation. A green economy is not a cheap economy, which means doing the right thing can have financial impacts on the average working family. Having the protection of respectable wages, dignified benefits, and the security of decent working conditions are critical for every man and woman that will be working in this industry.

I wish to urge *passage of H-7277* in a hope that this will help build momentum for Rhode Island to be a national leader in defending our world against the undeniable impacts of climate change.

In conclusion, thank you for your commitment to these most difficult challenges. What greater glory than saving our earthly home can there possibly be?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.

cc:

HouseEnvironmentandNaturalResources@rilegislature.gov

Paul Macdonald / Lobbyist

Esteemed Committee Members

RI AFL-CIO

Climate Jobs RI

BuildRI

Rhode Island Building and Construction Trades