



Consumer Federation of America

Via email

March 18, 2021

To: Representative David Bennett, Chairperson
c/o Louis Mansolillo, Committee Clerk
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI

RE: Support for H 5966, a bill to Establish Minimum Energy and Water Efficiency Standards

Dear Chair Bennett and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is writing in regards to H 5966, legislation which would establish energy and water efficiency standards for certain products sold in Rhode Island. By way of background, CFA is an association of more than 250 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education. We have long advocated for cost-effective energy and water efficiency standards at the state and federal levels as they benefit consumers through lower utility bills. Efficiency standards also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, a key contributor to climate change.

We support H 5966 as it enables the state of Rhode Island to establish minimum energy and water efficiency standards which in turn helps to protect consumers. The bill includes standards for computers, common household products such as air purifiers, lighting products known as general service lamps, faucets, toilets and showerheads as well as standards for commercial products such as commercial dishwashers, ovens and fryers. According to the Appliance Standards Awareness Project (ASAP), by 2035 the efficiency standard for faucets and showerheads alone would save almost \$20 million annually in utility bills, all at zero cost to consumers. This bill is an excellent opportunity to reduce energy and water waste, lower consumer utility bills, cut greenhouse gas emissions and reduce air pollution. Additionally, when the commercial and industrial sectors are included, consumers will indirectly benefit thanks to reduced operating costs lowering the costs of goods and services.

If H 5966 is adopted, additional data provided by ASAP indicate the annual savings by 2035 for Rhode Island consumers and businesses to be:

- \$52 million on utility bills;
- 94 gigawatt hours of electricity;
- 1.6 billion gallons of water;
- and 36,000 metric tons of carbon.

With the average payback period of products covered by the bill being well less than a year, low-income homeowners will directly benefit from installing more efficient household appliances, since they are responsible for their utility bills. Low-income tenants, as well, would benefit through the lower utility bills they will pay as landlords will be purchasing more efficient replacement appliances for their rental properties.

In closing, we believe the time is ripe to pass this legislation – it is a win-win-win for Rhode Island. H 5966 will cut unnecessary energy and water waste, save consumers and businesses money, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. CFA urges you to adopt this beneficial, pro-consumer bill and to forge the way for the Ocean State to be a leader in energy and water efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Eckman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard Eckman
Energy Research Associate
Consumer Federation of America