In July 2019, Governor Raimondo signed Executive Order 19-06, charging the Rhode Island Department of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC) and the Office of Energy Resources (OER) to work together to develop a strategy to advance clean, affordable, and reliable heating. This executive order makes Rhode Island the first state to actively reshape the heating sector, which produces 35% of the state’s emissions.

**Climate Framework and Laws** Under the *Resilient Rhode Island Act of 2014*, Rhode Island intends to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020, 45% by 2035, and 80% by 2050. Rhode Island’s Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) is responsible for overseeing progress towards these targets. In a 2017 executive order, *Reaffirming Rhode Island’s Commitment to the Principles of the Paris Climate Agreement*, Governor Gina Raimondo called upon state agencies to take all necessary actions to reduce GHG emissions in line with the *Resilient Rhode Island Act*, the Lead-by-Example program established by Executive Order 15-17, and any other applicable laws. Additionally, Executive Order 19-06, issued in July 2019, launched a heating-sector transformation in Rhode Island aimed at advancing the state’s development of clean, affordable, and reliable heating technologies.

**Power Generation** In February 2019, Governor Raimondo announced the filing of a contract for Revolution Wind, a new 400-megawatt (MW) offshore wind farm. The project builds on the success of Rhode Island’s Block Island Wind, North America’s first offshore wind farm. The governor set an ambitious goal to increase Rhode Island’s clean-energy portfolio tenfold by 2020 (to 1,000 MW) and create 20,000 clean-energy jobs.
throughout the state by 2020. Rhode Island is on track to meet the 1,000-MW goal with 371 MW currently achieved and has already experienced an astonishing 74% growth in its clean-energy workforce since 2014. In March 2019, the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources announced a new set of initiatives to encourage solar carports and solar projects located on brownfields. $2 million has been earmarked for these initiatives, made possible thanks to Rhode Island’s participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

**Energy Efficiency** Rhode Island’s energy-efficiency programs generated $483 million in total benefits in 2018, while preventing nearly 1.15 million metric tons of GHG emissions. Rhode Island ranks third nationally in energy efficiency according to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) scorecard. The Office of Energy Resources actively supports public-sector energy efficiency through its Lead-by-Example initiatives, including offering financial incentives for LED streetlight adoption by municipalities and supporting cost-effective investments that have already reduced state government energy consumption by more than 10%.

**Transportation** Rhode Island is investing approximately $10 million in Volkswagen Settlement funds in zero-emissions electric buses for its public transportation fleet. With this initiative, Rhode Island’s bus fleet will be about 36% low- and zero-emission vehicles. An additional $1.5 million in Settlement funds will be utilized to enhance Rhode Island’s current network of public charging infrastructure throughout main highway corridors. Rhode Island’s *Beneficiary Mitigation Plan* acknowledges the connection between vehicle emissions and environmental justice, stating that settlement funds will be prioritized in urban, high-traffic-volume areas, and/or along bus routes that may connect environmental justice communities. Rhode Island is also expanding public transit through downtown Providence by connecting Rhode Island Hospital, one of the city’s largest employers, to Providence’s train station with new routes that will provide service every five minutes, utilizing the state’s first bus-only lanes.

**Resilience** In September 2017, Governor Raimondo appointed a chief resilience officer to drive climate resilience efforts across the state, both within government and in collaboration with business, academic, and nonprofit partners, with the mission to develop a statewide *Climate Resilience Action Strategy*, which was submitted to the governor on July 2, 2018. The report, called *Resilient Rhody*, provided recommendations across a variety of areas including transportation, water/coastal areas, power, and emergency preparedness and is now being implemented. In April 2019, the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank announced that five municipalities will participate in the initial round of its Municipal Resilience Program, which will provide technical assistance and the ability to apply for implementation funds.

**Climate Finance** Rhode Island has a variety of programs that help fund or remove barriers towards energy efficiency, renewable energy, and resilience projects. Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank actively supports and finances investments in infrastructure that enhance the environment through a variety of means, including the issuance of bonds. Since inception, the Bank has invested over $2 billion in environmental infrastructure projects across the state. Most recently, the Bank’s authority was expanded to include financing of resilience projects for local, state, and federal infrastructure.

**Natural and Working Lands** Rhode Island’s Department of Environmental Management (DEM), in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, offers guidance on how landowners can properly manage forest areas and maintain healthy local ecosystems through its Forest Stewardship Program. DEM also works cooperatively with the USDA Forest Service on the Forest Legacy Program to preserve forests and stem the loss of the traditional values provided by forested lands through conservation easements or land purchases. Since its inception, the program has protected 3,583 acres in 22 parcels in Rhode Island. In April 2019, the state—in partnership with American Forests—received a $650,000 grant to develop strategies for advancing statewide urban and community forestry. The initiative builds staff capacity and targets urban forest projects that improve public health outcomes and mitigate climate change.