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July 12, 2017

Governor Gina Raimondo  
State House  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Governor Raimondo:

Our state will be hosting a meeting of the nation's governors in Providence, and we realize there is much to discuss. We are pleased that the agenda includes a session on dealing with the consequences of climate change, something that is very appropriate for a meeting held in the Ocean State.

Climate change poses an urgent threat to our health, safety, economy, and quality of life here in Rhode Island, and it is progressing faster than anticipated. So it is essential that we accelerate our transition to 100% renewable energy.

Fortunately, renewable energy sources such as wind and solar are coming online faster than anticipated, so that some goals that seemed out of reach just a few years ago are now attainable. Therefore, we urge you as our governor at the National Association of Governors' meeting to ask all governors, and especially the New England governors, to commit to doing the following:

1. Power all sectors of our economy, including transportation, with 100% renewable energy by 2035;
2. Reject all proposals for additional fossil fuel infrastructure, including pipelines;
3. Eliminate fracking and other forms of extreme energy extraction such as mountaintop removal mining, deep-sea drilling, and the transport of tar sands;
4. For Rhode Island: appoint a chief Climate Mitigation Officer to facilitate this transition;
5. Ask all New England governors to divest in fossil fuel investment;
6. Push for Congress to a) fully fund research on climate change and climate solutions; and b) fulfill our pledge to the United Nations' Green Climate Fund to support adaptation and mitigation efforts in developing countries.

We realize this will not be easy, given the entrenched power of the fossil fuel industry, but this crisis tolerates no waiting. With our federal government refusing to act, the nation's governors must step up and demonstrate the required courage and leadership, as the nation's mayors have just done. In joining the U.S. Climate Alliance, you have signaled that you want Rhode Island to be a leader in fighting climate change. Now is the time to make good on that promise and to help instill that promise in others.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. P. Nightingale". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Peter Nightingale

For:

American Friends Service Committee–South East New England  
Burrillville Land Trust  
Climate Action RI  
Fossil Free Rhode Island  
Nature's Trust Rhode Island  
Our Revolution RI  
Rhode Island Interfaith Power and Light  
Sisters of Mercy Ecology  
United Against Clear River Energy Center  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County– Green  
Task Force