

2025-85

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING A NATURAL GAS  
MORATORIUM ON AQUIDNECK ISLAND**

**WHEREAS**, Aquidneck Island is among Rhode Island's most rapidly developing regions, with over 1,100 anticipated residential units and numerous commercial and industrial projects, including low-income housing, and;

**WHEREAS**, an economic impact analysis commissioned in 2025 shows that a natural gas connection moratorium would impose substantial costs on residents; up to \$53,300 for all-electric conversions with weatherization, coupled with a 25% increase in monthly energy bills as compared to gas customers, thereby reducing household purchasing power and straining affordability, and;

**WHEREAS**, the same analysis demonstrates that a moratorium could deter or halt new housing and commercial projects, resulting in an estimated loss of \$13 million in earnings for Newport County, 172 fewer jobs, and more than \$568,000 in reduced state and local tax revenue, and;

**WHEREAS**, Middletown has consistently emphasized the need for non-infrastructure energy alternatives such as energy efficiency, demand response, and heating electrification before the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board (EFSB) and the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and;

**WHEREAS**, expert testimony submitted on behalf of Middletown to the EFSB and PUC has shown that non-infrastructure solutions can meet demand without a blanket moratorium, and that customers are already moving toward electrification in response to robust state and federal incentives; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rhode Island Act on Climate requires that state and local decision-makers prioritize greenhouse gas reductions through efficiency and electrification rather than blunt measures that impose inequitable economic burdens.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Council of the Town of Middletown hereby:

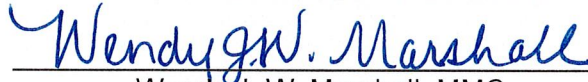
1. **Formally opposes** the imposition of a natural gas connection moratorium on Aquidneck Island, recognizing the disproportionate economic and social burdens it would impose on residents, businesses, and the regional economy.
2. **Supports** instead the immediate and accelerated deployment of non-infrastructure solutions such as energy efficiency, demand response, and electrification as the appropriate

pathway to reduce gas demand consistent with Rhode Island's Act on Climate long-term energy planning objectives.

3. **Urges** Rhode Island Energy, the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission, and the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board to prioritize investment in demand-side resources and full utilization of available federal incentives, rather than reliance on either permanent moratoria or expanded fossil fuel infrastructure.
4. **Directs** that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission, the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board, the Aquidneck Island municipalities of Newport and Portsmouth, and the members of Middletown's General Assembly delegation.

OCTOBER 6, 2025

READ AND PASSED IN COUNCIL

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy J. W. Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Wendy J. W. Marshall, MMC  
Town Clerk