

State News for NSPE Members

Rhode Island Delegation Delivers \$3.8 Million for Port Infrastructure at Quonset

US Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse and US Representative Seth Magaziner recently announced \$3.8 million in federal funding through the US Department of Transportation's Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) to construct a ramp at the Port of Davisville's Pier 1, [Newport Buzz reports](#). This ramp will accommodate stern offload roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) vessels that carry automobiles and other wheeled cargo.

Quonset Development Corporation, which manages the Port of Davisville, is currently in the process of reconstructing the perimeter of Pier 1. The new award will support continued improvements to Pier 1, including the construction of a stern ramp that will accommodate a growing and diverse fleet of ro-ro vessels that are more commonly being used for cargo transfer due to a shortage of other kinds of transport vessels.

The Port of Davisville, Rhode Island's only public port, is a key part of the Quonset Business Park, which is home to more than 200 companies and over 13,000 jobs. Last year, the delegation secured \$11.25 million through PIDP to support upgrades to the port's North Berth at Pier 1. In 2020, an additional \$11.14 million was secured under PIDP for the first phase of improvements to Pier 1. [Read more.](#)

House Commission to Study Feasibility of Solar Panels on Highway Medians

A new study commission is meeting this fall to investigate the idea of building ground-mounted solar arrays on the median strips found along interstate highways and Route 146, [according to ecoRI News](#). As part of its authority, the commission, chaired by Rep. Robert Phillips (D-Woonsocket) who also sponsored the bill creating the panel in 2022, will also study and provide recommendations for solar carports in state parking lots and in other public locations.

In some ways median strips are the perfect sites for solar. Many are already relatively flat and ready for building thanks to interstate construction, and barring trees or wetlands, there isn't much else that's allowed to be placed on median strips. It is illegal for the public to tread on them.

A preliminary list compiled by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation identified 15 potential sites for solar placement along interstates, totaling about 330 acres. Building solar on all identified sites could provide more than 100 megawatts of renewable energy, using the latest solar density estimates from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. [Read more.](#)

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Check Out the Latest Issue of *PE*

Future Forward

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and nanotechnology are revolutionizing the world. But these technologies are developing at a pace much faster than can be effectively absorbed into critical engineered infrastructure. The NSPE Emerging Technologies Committee is laser focused on ensuring that new technologies can benefit society and the profession with minimal risk to safety and security.



Claiming a Seat at the Table

Does it ever seem like your ideas go unnoticed? Do you sometimes feel like you have stalled in your organization? Does it seem like your team is not getting the support it needs? If you want to “claim a seat at the table,” how you show up, use your influence, and communicate can be the difference between winning opportunities or not.

[Access the full issue online.](#) Members who subscribe to the digital edition of *PE* can also access the current and back issues.

Engineers Week 2024 — Welcome to the Future!

Founded by NSPE in 1951, [Engineers Week](#) (February 18–24, 2024) is dedicated to ensuring a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce. The latest theme for Engineers Week — **Welcome to the Future!**

— seeks to inspire the next generation to play a vital role in innovating solutions to global challenges that impact future generations. By working together to develop new technologies, products, and opportunities, engineers create new possibilities that make the world a better place.



Engineers Week is a time for you to:

- Celebrate how engineers make a difference in our world.
- Add your voice to the conversation about the need for engineers, technicians, and technologists.
- Engage students in engineering.

[Access promotional resources.](#)

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