

VECAN 2022 Workshop Series: *Climate Progress? A Mid-Session Legislative Update* - February 16th, 2022

Allie Webster: Allie Webster, NVDA and Peacham Energy Committee

Kimberly Hornung-Marcy: She/her Live in Williston, active with Sustainable Williston and 350Vt Burlington node.

Catherine Crawley: ^^Stowe Energy Committee^^

Dana Clawson: Dana Clawson, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Hartford

Sam Lash: Sam Lash, CVRPC (and Williston TEC)

Steve Crowley, South Burlington, Sierra Club: Steve Crowley, South Burlington Energy Committee and VT Sierra Club

Jud Lawrie: jud Lawrie UU climate justice team

Sarah Bruce - Hartland EC: Sarah Bruce - Hartland EC

Deirdre Holmes: Deirdre Holmes, Charlotte Energy Committee and CCRPC TAC (transportation advisory committee)

SPENCE PUTNAM-Weybridge: Spence Putnam, Weybridge Energy Committee and Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County (CEAC)

Greta Hasler, VNRC (she/her):

<https://vermontconservationvoters.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2-1-2022-VCV-Common-Agenda.pdf>

Gene Kraus Bethel: Gene Kraus Selectboard. Bethel

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): As Lauren said, please drop any questions you might have in the chat! We are going to do quick, high-level highlights on some core climate and energy policies under consideration this session and save any non-clarifying questions for the end... for a robust Q&A.

Gene Kraus Bethel: What involvement has BIPOC communities, individuals had in developing Environmental Justice Bill?

Gene Kraus Bethel: Does low income include low-middle class? How is it defined? Sebbi

Anne Dolivo 350VT: Shouldn't those with disabilities be included?

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG: Anne: that is a really important point - are you referring to the 3 demographic criteria for EJ populations? The thinking behind that was that it would address disproportionate historical impact using three really strong predictive proxies for environmental health disparities. That's not to say that disabilities don't factor in as well - that is one of the reasons the bill encourages the Advisory Council (along with the Interagency Council on EJ) to revise the definition of EJ population based on deeper understanding gathered through their work together. And the EJ mapping tool could overlay issues that include social vulnerability factors such as ability. Here is a tool that some of our Drs. Bindu Panikkar and Qing Ren at UVM Rubenstein school came up with for vulnerability mapping -- it is not being officially used by the state but it gives you an idea of what the "official" statewide EJ mapping tool might look like.

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG:

<https://uvm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=68a9290bde0c42529460e1b8dee8368>

Kimberly Hornung-Marcy: Are LGBTQIA not included in Climate Justice bill?

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG: Kimberly: LGBTQIA are not specifically named in the environmental justice bill, but I am interested in your thoughts on that

Laural Ruggles: Does the work outlined in S.148 need money to make it happen? And if so, where in the budget does the money come from?

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG: Laural: yes S.148 will require money - both to stand up the advisory council on EJ and provide resources for agencies and departments to do the work. Right now Senators are consulting with the Joint Fiscal Office, Agency heads, and REJOICE reps to get a fiscal note/estimate of cost/sources, which should be presented in Senate Natural on Friday morning

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): Or, Sebbi: If you can answer them in the chat too, that'd be great. Thanks! and, yes, please keep the Qs coming...

Jeff Forward, Richmond: I am interested in learning about H.518, the Municipal Energy Resiliency Bill sponsored by Rep. Sabilia. How is it fairing and where does it stand?

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): I'm gonna cover that, Jeff! Shortly!

Vince O'Connell: What quantifiable success has engagement with the communities addressed in the EE bill produced so far and has this info been used to adapt outreach?

Vince O'Connell: Sorry, I meant Environmental Justice bill.

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG: Vince: thanks for the question. I would encourage you to browse REJOICE's findings from their community engagement work over the past few years: <https://environmentaljusticevt.org/rejoice/>. Key themes include engagement in plain language, translation for individuals with limited English proficiency, connecting through trusted community liaisons, and supporting people to show up to meetings. For example, paying folks for sharing their expertise, providing child care at meetings, and food. I hope that at least starts to answer the question!

Lauren Hierl: IIA = Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (known sometimes as the bipartisan infrastructure bill)

Will Dodge, Essex Energy Committee: I assume that "complete streets" includes bike safety infrastructure (i.e., dedicated lanes, new paths, bridges, signage, etc.)?

Jeff Forward, Richmond: How are they dealing with the loss in gas tax revenues from EVs?

Robb Kidd-Sierra Club(He-Him): Jeff- The loss of gas tax revenues is only limited at this time, for EVs pay a higher purchase and use tax for the cost of the vehicle is higher than Gas powered vehicles. EVs are only at 1% of the market right now, so the shortfalls are also caused by higher gas mileage vehicles. There are ideas that will need to dive more deeply into next year for the overall transportation fund is projected for a major shortfall without federal funding.

Bob Atchinson (he, him): Imagine that from Gov. Phil.....

Jeff Forward, Richmond: We must get to the point of thinking about bikes and pedestrians first and cars second, particularly in village and city settings.

Charlotte Kennedy: We are in our mid eighties and own a hybrid vehicle. We average about 55 mpg over 12 months. How would we now whether it is economical to buy an E.V instead of keeping what we have since we hope this current vehicle will be our last one?

Vince O'Connell: How is the increased electricity demand from vehicle and heating electrification being coordinated with resulting increased transmission and clean power production requirements?

Robb Kidd-Sierra Club(He-Him): Vince: As 80%-90% of electric vehicle charging is done at home, the utilities are encouraging charging at nonpeak times by incentivizing with special rates. We also we need to strengthen the Renewable Energy Standard to ensure it is clean power.

Richard Butz/Bristol Energy/VTIPL: Why do we continue to tolerate so-called "clean natural gas"?

Jud Lawrie: what about 350vt criticism of clean heat std draft

Bob Atchinson (he, him): Those are too little, too late goals for 2040 and 2050.

Gene Kraus Bethel: The percentages are based on a misleading beginning point when considering "Renewable Sources" and greenwashing. eg HydroQuebec and RECs

SPENCE PUTNAM-Weybridge: We need to sunset any form of combustion heat in favor of solar or wind if we want to reach these goals.

Bob Atchinson (he, him): RNG=BS

Gene Kraus Bethel: Who will own the credits? Currently RECs tend to be owned and revenue producers for utilities.

Will Dodge, Essex Energy Committee: Where does geothermal fall on the "progressively cleaner" scale for alternatives to carbon-based heat?

Bruce Lierman: Does this legislation emphasize ANR role in certifying clean energy sources?

Carl Bucholt: Why is there no mention of wind energy? I realize some people are offended by the visual effects, but we can not get off fossil fuel without wind as well as solar.

Sarah Bruce - Hartland EC: What are the similarities and differences between CHCs and RECs? Will these CHCs follow the same path as RECs that today seem very problematic?

Gene Kraus Bethel: I used to live in Appalachian coal country. In those places, we just remove the mountain tops to get coal. Don't tell me that Wind Turbines spoil the view.

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG: Amen, Gene

Sally Burrell: phase out credit accounting... soon

Bob Atchinson (he, him): In transportation, how about a disincentive for Single Occupancy Vehicles, (SOV's)? This would lead to consuming less power for transportation.

Gene Kraus Bethel: Does S"OV include, motorcycles, snowmobiles, etc?

Richard Butz/Bristol Energy/VTIPL: H.518 is super important to the towns.

Sally Burrell: motorcycles and snow mobiles are especially polluting. So should be treated in line with emissions.

Vince O'Connell: Robb, energy production planning isn't made on demand assumptions, rather on predicted peak demand. Tariff incentives can't be relied on to meet ISO-NewEngland and FERC's 120% peak demand rule. How is the expected large capacity demand increase being addressed for transmission and production? Is storage addressed?

Mark Kennedy: Do municipalities need to apply for funding and tech support, or will State automatically reach out to communities and offer support and funding?

Mark Kennedy: Over what period of time will the funding and tech support be available?

SPENCE PUTNAM-Weybridge: Does this funding (H.518) include school buildings? If not, is there any bill that includes funding for schools?

Bruce Lierman: Could any of that 48M be used for local match on grants RFPs?

Marcey Carver: ARPA funds are state funds or are towns having to use some of their arpa funds? is there a match for the grants

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): I do not believe a match is required. They are grants to communities.

Richard Butz/Bristol Energy/VTIPL: Does 518 fund energy audits and weatherization of municipal buildings as well as fuel switching?

Greta Hasler, VNRC (she/her): All upcoming VECAN webinars can be found here:
<https://vecan.net/vecan-2022-workshop-series/>

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): This is the not-quite-final but close version of H.518 —
<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/WorkGroups/House%20Energy%20and%20Technology/Bills/H.518/Drafts.%20Amendments.%20and%20Legal%20Documents/H.518~Rebecca%20Wasserman~%20Draft%201.6.%202-10-2022~2-11-2022.pdf>

Ariel Arwen: Since the Clean Heat bill promotes heat pumps, shouldn't it include increasing solar?

Steve Crowley, South Burlington, Sierra Club: Ariel, two parts to this, First, it's really important to assess the GHG impact of the electricity correctly, to accurately count the improvement. Second, The RES system, net metering, etc., are also a huge and broken system. That's important, but another battle, probably next session.

Vince O'Connell: How does, if at all, the bill address the capture latency of so called renewable wood heat? Does the bill specify only waste wood for pellet production?

Bruce Lierman: A nuke plant would be very carbon friendly. How would environmental impact of waste be accounted?

Mark Kennedy: Is wood heat from up to date wood stoves considered "clean" heat? If wood heat is included as clean heat, will money and tech support be available to people to upgrade their wood heat sources and produce the least amount of emissions possible?

Bob Atchinson (he, him): First, it is necessary to set the PUC and PSD straight and recognize that their policies in the 2017 RES, has done damage to increasing solar installs on a residential level. The big solar developers are having a field day.

Vince O'Connell: Does the bill specify electricity production to be "carbon free" or "renewable"? If renewable, how is it defined?

Chris Anderson: Who are the people on the TAG? Who appoints those people?

SPENCE PUTNAM-Weybridge: Will the PUC have to listen to the tech advisors, or is that optional.

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): Here is the latest available draft of the bill (a new one likely available today) — that may help answer some questions, RE: TAG composition and more.

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): Clean Heat Standard Draft Bill:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/WorkGroups/House%20Energy%20and%20Technology/Bills/22-0398/Drafts.%20Amendments.%20and%20Legal%20Documents/W~Ellen%20Czajkowski~DR%2022-0398.%20Draft%209.2.%202-10-2022~2-15-2022.pdf>

Chris Anderson: Thanks, Johanna

Vince O'Connell: thanks

Carl Bucholt: How should an energy committee start, as far as accessing the funding for the Municipal Energy program?

Yves Gonnet: If a town has already done a complete assessment of its needs who should it reach out to for funding under h.518?

Richard Butz/Bristol Energy/VTIPL: Rose Wall of EVT is going to do an assessment of bristol Buildings next week.

Carl Bucholt: Is there a template, or form, for an energy committee to use to assess a town's energy assessment on their buildings?

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): Carl: We are thinking about that very thing ... talking about and considering it, yes! please stay in touch and stay tuned. Your input would be welcome...
jmiller@vnrc.org or ghasler@vnrc.org

Ann Janda, CCRPC: Efficiency Vermont should be able to help with questions regarding building assessments.

<https://www.encyvermont.com/services/energy-assessments/business-energy-assessments>

Bob Atchinson (he, him): HOV lanes on the interstate would do it, and London actually bans SOV's. Yes Carrots are better than sticks.

Jeffrey Grout: Good tool for EC to track buildings energy consumption is Energy Star Portfolio manager. It is standardized and has a bunch of training vidieos. Most input requires minimal past experience.

<https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/benchmark>

Tim Yandow: Thank you, everyone for this great presentation. I need to scoot.

Bob Atchinson (he, him): Even a heavy EV, such as a Tesla X or a soon to come F150 lightning, uses much more electricity to charge than say, a Bolt, E Golf, or Kona, etc.

Linda Gray, Norwich: we need more climate/energy champions in the legislature -- so think about running or supporting a good candidate

Jeff Forward, Richmond: Jeffrey, yes the EPA Portfolio Manager software program is a very useful tool to track building energy consumption. A great tool for EC's to take on for their town.

Mark Kennedy: Thank you!

Laural Ruggles: Thank you

Johanna Miller, VNRC (she/her): Thank you all!

Sebbi Wu, he/him, VPIRG: reach me at swu@vpig.org if you'd like to discuss further!!