

From: Gendron, Maggie
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:36 PM
To: Moore, Julie
Cc: Coster, Billy; Brackin, Stephanie; Batchelder, Jason; Ramirez-Richer, Emma
Subject: FW: Vermont Public: S.259/Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program

Julie – Who do you want to talk to Abagael Giles re: S.259, Senator Watson Climate Superfund Recovery at ANR - essentially create a system whereby the state would collect funds from fossil fuel companies, to pay for damages their products caused by contributing to climate change.

She is hoping to connect tonight.

Maggie

From: Abagael Giles <agiles@vermontpublic.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:32 PM
To: Gendron, Maggie <Maggie.Gendron@vermont.gov>
Subject: Vermont Public: S.259/Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hi Deputy Secretary Gendron,

I'm reaching out for a story I'm working on about a bill that was introduced in the Senate – S.259.

It would create the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program in the office of Climate Action at ANR and essentially create a system whereby the state would collect funds from fossil fuel companies, to pay for damages their products caused by contributing to climate change.

I spoke with a legal expert who told me this sort of work would likely be very resource intensive, and wanted to see if the Agency had interest in weighing in about capacity for this.

We'd like to publish a story tomorrow afternoon so would love to connect with someone between now and then if that's possible.

Best,

Abagael

Abagael Giles (She/Her/Hers)
Reporter, Environment & Climate Change | [@AbagaelGiles](#)
Vermont Public
P: (802) 654-4365 | M: (802) 238-6358
agiles@vermontpublic.org | [@AbagaelGiles](#)

From: Abagael Giles <agiles@vermontpublic.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:43 PM
To: Gendron, Maggie
Subject: Re: Vermont Public: S.259/Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program

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Terrific! Thank you!

If possible, it would be great to connect with someone before 1 p.m. tomorrow!

Best,

Abagael

From: Gendron, Maggie <Maggie.Gendron@vermont.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:37 PM
To: Abagael Giles <agiles@vermontpublic.org>
Subject: RE: Vermont Public: S.259/Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program

Good evening!

Let me see if I can track the right person down to chat with you. What is the deadline tomorrow to make an afternoon story?

Maggie

From: Abagael Giles <agiles@vermontpublic.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:32 PM
To: Gendron, Maggie <Maggie.Gendron@vermont.gov>
Subject: Vermont Public: S.259/Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program

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Hi Deputy Secretary Gendron,

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It would create the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program in the office of Climate Action at ANR and essentially create a system whereby the state would collect funds from fossil fuel companies, to pay for damages their products caused by contributing to climate change.

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Reporter, Environment & Climate Change | [@AbagaelGiles](#)

Vermont Public

P: (802) 654-4365 | M: (802) 238-6358

agiles@vermontpublic.org | [@AbagaelGiles](#)

From: Sarah Mearhoff and Shaun Robinson <finalreading@vtdigger.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 6:31 PM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Final Reading: Big oil, deep pockets?

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January 16, 2024

Final Reading



Big oil, deep pockets?

Climate change is expensive.

Case in point: It's going to take more than \$600 million to recover from last summer's flooding, and even more to build infrastructure that can help Vermont survive the floods of the future, which, thanks to a warming atmosphere, are almost sure to come.

According to the ominously-named Vermont Atlas of Disaster report, the Green Mountain State ranks fifth in the nation for per-capita spending on climate disasters. And conversations among lawmakers this year make clear that Vermont taxpayers don't have much more to give.

Dozens of municipalities have reported budget deficits related to the summer's flooding, Sen. Anne Watson, D-Washington, vice chair of the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, said at a press conference on Tuesday.

"But let's be clear," she said. "Vulnerable Vermonters, mom and pop businesses, and small cities and towns are not the cause of this damage. That came from climate change."

So, who should pay?

A slew of state lawmakers — 20 out of 30 senators and 87 out of 150 representatives — are invoking a precept from kindergarten: The person who made the mess should clean it up.

In this case, that's the fossil fuel industry.

Those 100-plus lawmakers have sponsored two companion bills, H.809 in the House and S.259 in the Senate, that would establish a climate change "superfund." At Tuesday's press conference, some of them held signs that said "make big oil pay." The issue is also a priority for environmental groups in the state, including Vermont Public Interest Group and Vermont Conservation Voters.

The idea is to target companies that produced fossil fuels between the start of 2000 and the end of 2019 resulting in the emission of at least one billion metric tons of greenhouse gasses. Each of those companies would be held liable for its proportion of the cost of those emissions to the state. The "cost recovery" payments would go into the "climate superfund" earmarked for infrastructure projects that help Vermont adapt to climate change.

Sen. Dick Sears, D-Bennington, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, said he would have "absolutely opposed" such a bill 20 years ago. Chemical contamination in the Bennington area, which has permanently altered the lives of some of his constituents, changed his mind.

"Who's going to pay for the damage done?" Sears said. "Is it going to be the taxpayer? Is it going to be the homeowner or the small business? Or is it going to be the company that contributed to the problem? I say it should be the company that contributed to the problem."

Ok — so send the bill to the fossil fuel giants. Easy, right?

Not so much. First, Gov. Phil Scott isn't sure where he stands. His spokesperson, Jason Maulucci, told VTDigger on Tuesday that the governor has not yet evaluated the bills.

And if Scott is on board — or if the bill were to survive his veto — it would still likely face legal opposition from the well-resourced fossil fuel industry.

Rep. Martin LaLonde, D-South Burlington, who is a lawyer himself, said lawmakers "can't judge, in the end, whether this is going to make it all the way

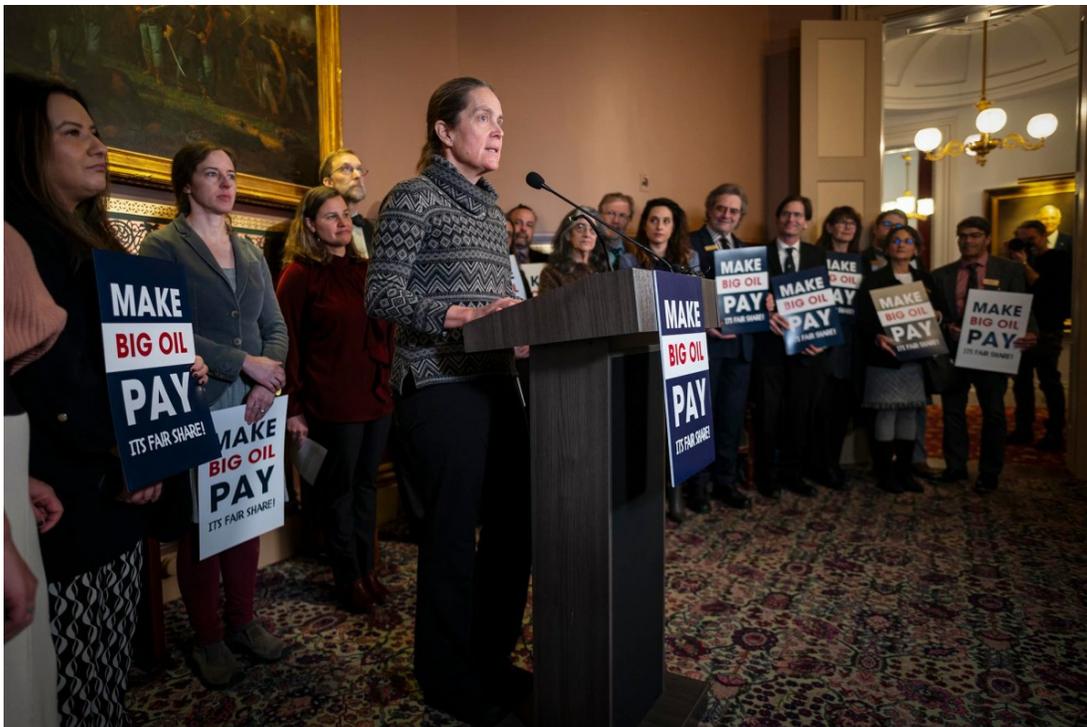
through the court cases.”

Still, he said lawmakers have worked with the Vermont Attorney General’s Office and legislative counsel, “and we’re all confident that we have a very good case to make.”

He hopes another rule from school days will win out.

“We have done our homework,” he said.

— *Emma Cotton*



Rep. Amy Sheldon, D-Middlebury, chair of the House Environment and Energy Committee, speaks at a press conference in support of a bill that would make big oil companies pay for the costs of climate change at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Tuesday. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

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After Barre City suffered extreme damage from the July 2023 floods, constituents began to approach Rep. Jonathan Williams, D-Barre City, saying they had no idea they lived in a home at risk of flooding.

Vermont is among a minority of states lacking a mandatory **flood risk disclosure law** for real estate transactions, leaving prospective homebuyers and renters with limited information as they decide where to live. But a number of state lawmakers are pushing this session to change that.

[Read more here.](#)

— *Carly Berlin*

State Auditor Doug Hoffer sued Attorney General Charity Clark and her office in November after he said they failed to provide him with a legal opinion he had sought in the course of conducting an audit related to the city of Burlington.



State Auditor Doug Hoffer, left, and Attorney General Charity Clark. File photos by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

“We all have things to do that we do not want to do,” reads Hoffer’s lawsuit, filed in Chittenden County Superior civil court in Burlington. “The Attorney General has a statutory duty to provide legal opinions to officers of the State of Vermont. This is an action to enforce that duty.”

The Vermont Attorney General’s Office filed a motion last month seeking to dismiss the lawsuit, which called the action “unfortunate and legally unsound.”

[Read more here.](#)

— *Alan Keays*

Meanwhile, the results of the [Burlington audit](#) in question are out.

Hoffer announced Tuesday that he found “substantial mistakes” in a review of **Burlington’s downtown tax increment financing district**.

Tax increment financing, used throughout the state, allows municipalities to borrow money to pay for public infrastructure projects and pay back the debt using increased property tax revenues that result from the projects.

In a [separate review one year ago](#), Hoffer found the city had made errors to the tune of millions of dollars in its waterfront TIF district.

“The Downtown TIF audit shows once again that even Vermont’s largest municipality struggles with the complexity of the TIF program,” Hoffer said in a press release that accompanied the full report on Tuesday.

In response, Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger pushed back on one of the audit’s key findings, calling it “bogus.”

[Read more here.](#)

— *Patrick Crowley*

ON THE MOVE

Since 2020, Vermont lawmakers have [been trying](#) to **ban the sale of flavored tobacco**.

Seeking to protect children and youth from getting hooked on enticing flavors in vaping liquid, legislators drafted bills that would prohibit stores from selling all flavored tobacco products.



Sen. Ginny Lyons, D-Chittenden Southeast, listens to discussion on the Senate floor at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Feb. 1, 2023. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

In past years, the legislation faltered amid the Covid-19 pandemic, stiff opposition from retailers and the tobacco industry, and a surge of turnover in the Statehouse. But this year, a ban appears to have a strong tailwind. The bill, [S.18](#), passed the Senate last year and landed in the House Human Services Committee, where it is scheduled for a review and markup later this week.

Now, backers hope it can finally become law.

[Read more here.](#)

— *Peter D'Auria*

When South Hero decided to implement a **local option tax**, no one anticipated it would take two years.

Now town and state officials said they're confident that the town is in the final stretch of securing the state's approval — a far more complex process than they had anticipated. Last week a House committee took up [H.554](#), which would authorize the town's charter and allow the local option tax to go into effect.

In March 2022, residents of the Grand Isle County town voted to approve a 1% local option tax on meals and alcohol sales. When it headed to the Legislature for approval last year, local officials learned that state law required that the change be made in the town's charter.

However, like most towns in Vermont, South Hero didn't have a charter.

[Read more here.](#)

— *Auditi Guha*

CORRECTIONS SECTION

The surname of University of Vermont Extension Program’s maple expert, Mark Isselhardt, was misspelled in Friday’s newsletter. We regret the error.

WHAT WE'RE READING

[Barre “cliffhangers” in limbo as city considers landslide buyouts](#), *VTDigger*

[Buckle up: Lawmakers pitch traffic cameras as safety solution](#), *Seven Days*

Thanks for reading!



Sarah Mearhoff
Statehouse Bureau Chief



Shaun Robinson
State Government & Economy
Reporter

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From: Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:02 AM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: FW: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

FYI.

Also, here's the two "Make Big Oil Pay/ Climate Superfund" bills: [S.259](#) and [H.809](#). We're working with VPIRG, VNRC, and others to advance the legislation and I'd gladly serve as a liaison to share any feedback/critique/questions that you have once you've reviewed.

From: Elena Mihaly
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 2:03 PM
To: Ellermann, Katelyn (she/her) <Katelyn.Ellermann@vermont.gov>
Cc: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>; Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Gonda, Jordan <Jordan.Gonda@vermont.gov>; Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>; pblair@just-zero.org
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Dear Katelyn,

Thanks for your email. Firstly, we'd be happy to comply with your request that we 'cc' the appropriate legal contact on any future email correspondence with Agency staff regarding this or other permits that we're tracking. For this permit, we'll assume that's you.

Second, regarding meeting with the Agency, it was our hope that we could have an opportunity to sit down with Agency staff who have been steeped in working on this permit to discuss the substantive concerns we raised in our comments related to the proposed PFAS treatment methodology.

We understand that the Agency cannot accept additional comments now that the comment period has closed. But that's not what we're asking for here. You wrote that the Agency will use its best professional judgment in interpreting comments –including potential clarification if warranted. We're requesting a meeting with you simply so the Agency staff can engage with us directly to help interpret our comments and/or to clarify anything we (or the experts) state therein. In my experience, this kind of informal in-person (or Zoom) dialogue can often resolve concerns much better than just relying on paper/email exchanges.

It is of course the Agency's prerogative whether to meet, but I wanted to provide our rationale for making that request. Thanks for your continued partnership in this permit review process.

Sincerely,
Elena

From: Ellermann, Katelyn (she/her) <Katelyn.Ellermann@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 7:58 AM
To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>; Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>; pblair@just-zero.org
Cc: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>; Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Gonda, Jordan <Jordan.Gonda@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

CAUTION: Email from outside CLF.

Good morning Attorneys Bosworth, Mihaly, and Blair:

I'm writing to follow up on the below plans for a meeting with the Agency's Watershed Management Division/Wastewater Program on the New England Waste Services of Vermont, Inc. Pretreatment Permit No. 3-1406. First, thank you for your submitted December 20, 2023 comment letter and attachments. We also appreciate the offer to discuss them. Given the public comment period has closed, however, the Agency will hold off on the plan to meet at this time. We are focused on reviewing extensive comment, including careful consideration of the joint CLF-Just Zero comments. The Agency will use its technical expertise and best professional judgment in interpreting comments and considering their impact on the proceeding, including potential clarification of comments if warranted.

Going forward, we'd like to encourage that permit-specific communications with the Agency come through the Agency's legal points of contact, such as Ed McNamara (ANR General Counsel), Jordan Gonda (DEC General Counsel), or myself. If you already have a line of communication with non-legal staff on a topic, please also kindly copy one of us attorneys.

Thanks again for your input on No. 3-1406 and your willingness to discuss.

Sincerely,
Katelyn Ellermann



Katelyn Ellermann (she/her) | Associate General Counsel
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620-3520
802-522-7125 (cell) | Katelyn.Ellermann@vermont.gov
Connect with us on our [website](#).

The Agency of Natural Resources supports telework, and there are times when I may be working from another office location. I am available to connect by phone and email. I am also available to connect in-person upon request.

Written communications to and from state officials regarding state business are considered public records and may be subject to public scrutiny.

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From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 4:29 PM
To: Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>; Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Good afternoon Amy and all,

I hope you're doing well and I just wanted to circle back and see if we could solidify a time.

Looks like 1/29 at 9am is the preferred time for Elena, and all of us seem to have stated availability then, does that still work for your team?

Many thanks for coordinating this!

My best,

Nora Bosworth, Esq.

Staff Attorney, Zero Waste Project
Conservation Law Foundation
Pronouns: she/her

53 Exchange St. #200
Portland, ME 04101

P: 207-210-6439 x.5017

E: nbosworth@clf.org

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From: Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:12 PM

To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>; Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>

Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>

Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Hi All,

Thanks for including me. I can meet on 1/29 at 9AM (preferred) or 1/30 at 11AM.

Thank you!

Elena

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 5:07 PM

To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>

Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>; Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>

Subject: Re: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Hi all-

I'm looping in Elena Mihaly as I know she hopes to be able to attend as well.

Elena, right now the proposed times are 1/29 at 9 or 10, or 1/30 at 11. Either works for me and Peter.

Best,

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From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 5:04 PM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: Re: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Hi Amy - I can do any of those times as well :)

Whichever works best for you.

Best,

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From: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 4:49:26 PM
To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

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Hi Nora,

Unfortunately, it doesn't look like the 18th will work on our end and given the short week 1/15-19, calendars are tight. What about Monday 1/29 at 9 or 10am or Tuesday 1/30 at 11am?

Amy

Amy L. Polaczyk, PhD | Program Manager (she/her)
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
Watershed Management Division, Wastewater Management Program
Davis 3, 1 National Life Dr | Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
802-490-6185 (cell)
<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/wastewater>

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:05 AM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

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Hi Amy,

Wow, that's a lot of input! I am unfortunately out of the country next week, would it be possible/ practical to schedule a time the following week, 1/16-1/19?

CC'ing Peter Blair from Just Zero as he will want to attend as well. Personally, I can move things around the week of 1/16-1/19 to accommodate your schedules. Otherwise, I have **1/18** very open.

All my best,

Nora Bosworth, Esq.

Staff Attorney, Zero Waste Project
Conservation Law Foundation
Pronouns: she/her

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From: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:01 AM
To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

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Good morning Nora,

We received nearly 200 pages of comments and are reviewing those now. I do think setting up a time to talk would be helpful, so perhaps we can identify a time in a week or so that will work for all of us to meet? Thank should give us enough time to digest the comments, including the input from CLF.

Thanks-
Amy

Amy L. Polaczyk, PhD | Program Manager (she/her)
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
Watershed Management Division, Wastewater Management Program
Davis 3, 1 National Life Dr | Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
802-490-6185 (cell)
<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/wastewater>

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 9:56 AM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Subject: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

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Good morning Amy and Happy New Year – I hope you got some restful time off.

I was writing to inquire if we have a date by which the Dep't will reach a decision on Casella's Pilot Plan / application to amend Permit 3-1406?

I also wanted to reextend Peter Blair's offer to meet with us to discuss the concerns we raise in our comment / expert report, if it would be helpful.

All my best and thanks as always for your help,

Nora Bosworth, Esq.

Staff Attorney, Zero Waste Project
Conservation Law Foundation
Pronouns: she/her

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From: Moore, Julie
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:06 AM
To: McNamara, Ed
Subject: FW: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?



Julia S. Moore, P.E. | Secretary (she/her)
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
1 National Life Dr, Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620-3901
802-828-1294 office
julie.moore@vermont.gov
anr.vermont.gov

The Agency of Natural Resources supports telework and there are times when I may be working from another location. I am generally available to connect by phone and email during business hours. I am also available to meet in-person upon request.

Help raise money for Vermonters impacted by flood damage and show your Vermont pride with *Vermont Strong* and *Tough Too* license plates and socks. [Click here to purchase your Vermont Strong gear](#) or visit DMV.Vermont.gov/VermontStrong23.

Impacted Vermonters can find resources and referrals by visiting [Vermont.Gov/Flood](#).

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Good morning Attorneys Bosworth, Mihaly, and Blair:

I'm writing to follow up on the below plans for a meeting with the Agency's Watershed Management Division/Wastewater Program on the New England Waste Services of Vermont, Inc. Pretreatment Permit No. 3-1406. First, thank you for your submitted December 20, 2023 comment letter and attachments. We also appreciate the offer to discuss them. Given the public comment period has closed, however, the Agency will hold off on the plan to meet at this time. We are focused on reviewing extensive comment, including careful consideration of the joint CLF-Just Zero comments. The Agency will use its technical expertise and best professional judgment in interpreting comments and considering their impact on the proceeding, including potential clarification of comments if warranted.

Going forward, we'd like to encourage that permit-specific communications with the Agency come through the Agency's legal points of contact, such as Ed McNamara (ANR General Counsel), Jordan Gonda (DEC General Counsel), or myself. If you already have a line of communication with non-legal staff on a topic, please also kindly copy one of us attorneys.

Thanks again for your input on No. 3-1406 and your willingness to discuss.

Sincerely,
Katelyn Ellermann



Katelyn Ellermann (she/her) | Associate General Counsel

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

1 National Life Drive, Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620-3520

802-522-7125 (cell) | Katelyn.Ellermann@vermont.gov

Connect with us on our [website](#).

The Agency of Natural Resources supports telework, and there are times when I may be working from another office location. I am available to connect by phone and email. I am also available to connect in-person upon request.

Written communications to and from state officials regarding state business are considered public records and may be subject to public scrutiny.

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From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 4:29 PM
To: Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>; Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Good afternoon Amy and all,

I hope you're doing well and I just wanted to circle back and see if we could solidify a time.

Looks like 1/29 at 9am is the preferred time for Elena, and all of us seem to have stated availability then, does that still work for your team?

Many thanks for coordinating this!

My best,

Nora Bosworth, Esq.
Staff Attorney, Zero Waste Project
Conservation Law Foundation
Pronouns: she/her

53 Exchange St. #200
Portland, ME 04101

P: 207-210-6439 x.5017
E: nbosworth@clf.org
www.clf.org

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From: Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:12 PM
To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>; Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>

Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Hi All,

Thanks for including me. I can meet on 1/29 at 9AM (preferred) or 1/30 at 11AM.

Thank you!
Elena

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 5:07 PM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>; Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>
Subject: Re: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Hi all-

I'm looping in Elena Mihaly as I know she hopes to be able to attend as well.

Elena, right now the proposed times are 1/29 at 9 or 10, or 1/30 at 11. Either works for me and Peter.

Best,
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 5:04 PM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: Re: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

Hi Amy - I can do any of those times as well :)

Whichever works best for you.

Best,

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From: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 4:49:26 PM
To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

CAUTION: Email from outside CLF.

Hi Nora,

Unfortunately, it doesn't look like the 18th will work on our end and given the short week 1/15-19, calendars are tight. What about Monday 1/29 at 9 or 10am or Tuesday 1/30 at 11am?

Amy

Amy L. Polaczyk, PhD | Program Manager (she/her)
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
Watershed Management Division, Wastewater Management Program
Davis 3, 1 National Life Dr | Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
802-490-6185 (cell)
<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/wastewater>

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:05 AM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>; Peter Blair <pblair@just-zero.org>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hi Amy,

Wow, that's a lot of input! I am unfortunately out of the country next week, would it be possible/ practical to schedule a time the following week, 1/16-1/19?

CC'ing Peter Blair from Just Zero as he will want to attend as well. Personally, I can move things around the week of 1/16-1/19 to accommodate your schedules. Otherwise, I have **1/18** very open.

All my best,

Nora Bosworth, Esq.
Staff Attorney, Zero Waste Project
Conservation Law Foundation
Pronouns: she/her

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E: nbosworth@clf.org
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From: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:01 AM
To: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Cc: Collins, Heather <Heather.Collins@vermont.gov>; LaFlamme, Pete <Pete.LaFlamme@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

CAUTION: Email from outside CLF.

Good morning Nora,

We received nearly 200 pages of comments and are reviewing those now. I do think setting up a time to talk would be helpful, so perhaps we can identify a time in a week or so that will work for all of us to meet? Thank should give us enough time to digest the comments, including the input from CLF.

Thanks-
Amy

Amy L. Polaczyk, PhD | Program Manager (she/her)
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
Watershed Management Division, Wastewater Management Program
Davis 3, 1 National Life Dr | Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
802-490-6185 (cell)
<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/wastewater>

From: Nora Bosworth <nbosworth@clf.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 9:56 AM
To: Polaczyk, Amy <Amy.Polaczyk@vermont.gov>
Subject: Amendment to 3-1406 - Timeline?

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Good morning Amy and Happy New Year – I hope you got some restful time off.

I was writing to inquire if we have a date by which the Dep't will reach a decision on Casella's Pilot Plan / application to amend Permit 3-1406?

I also wanted to reextend Peter Blair's offer to meet with us to discuss the concerns we raise in our comment / expert report, if it would be helpful.

All my best and thanks as always for your help,

Nora Bosworth, Esq.
Staff Attorney, Zero Waste Project
Conservation Law Foundation
Pronouns: she/her

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Portland, ME 04101

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From: Lazorchak, Jane
Sent: Friday, February 16, 2024 6:51 AM
To: Lazorchak, Jane
Subject: FW: VBSR's ClimateReadyVT Program
Attachments: VBSR.Memo.ClimateReadyVT..pdf

Morning Climate Council,

This was sent in to our Office and may be of interest to you all. I am forwarding on their behalf.

Best,
Jane

From: Kristin Warner <kristinw@vbsr.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2024 10:21 AM
To: Lazorchak, Jane <Jane.Lazorchak@vermont.gov>; Wolz, Marian <Marian.Wolz@vermont.gov>; Veltrop, Sophi <Sophi.Veltrop@vermont.gov>; ANR - CAO <ANR.CAO@vermont.gov>
Subject: VBSR's ClimateReadyVT Program

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kristinw@vbsr.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello there,

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) is a statewide, nonprofit business association with a mission to leverage the power of business for positive social and environmental impact.

In a letter submitted to Secretary Clouser on August 25, 2023, Speaker Krowinski urged the Vermont Climate Caucus to prioritize climate adaptations and resiliency recommendations after the historic flooding, specifically naming toolkits aimed at Vermont's business community.

We write to share a program VBSR is piloting that meets this call to action: In the fall of 2023, VBSR partnered with Reframe Lab, a Vermont-based consultancy, to develop [ClimateReadyVT](#), a program designed to **help small businesses in Vermont adapt to our changing climate and prepare for climate-related business disruptions.**

Attached is a short overview of the ClimateReadyVT program. We want you to be aware of our work with you and we invite any dialogue on the subject matter. We invite you to share this information with the full Climate Council. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for the work that you do on behalf of our environment and our communities.

Best,
Kristin

Kristin Warner
Pronouns: *She/Her*
Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR)
Cell: (802)498-4560
kristinw@vbsr.org



From: Roxanne Vought, Executive Director, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR)
To: Members of the Vermont Climate Council, House Committee on Environment & Energy, Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Speaker Krowinski.
Re: ClimateReadyVT Progress Report
Date: February 15, 2024

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) is a statewide, nonprofit business association with a mission to leverage the power of business for positive social and environmental impact. VBSR is the oldest state-level socially responsible business association in the nation, home to the highest number of certified B Corporations per capita and represents over 700 member businesses across 46 industries.

In a letter submitted to Secretary Clouser on August 25 of 2023, Speaker Krowinski urged the Vermont Climate Caucus to prioritize climate adaptations and resiliency recommendations after the historic flooding. In her letter, Speaker Krowinski identifies the need for *toolkits aimed at Vermont's business community and preparing individual businesses for adaptation and greater resiliency*.

We write to share a program VBSR is piloting that meets this call to action: In the fall of 2023, VBSR partnered with Reframe Lab, a Vermont-based consultancy, to develop [ClimateReadyVT](#), a program designed to **help small businesses in Vermont adapt to our changing climate and prepare for climate-related business disruptions**. We worked collaboratively with a network of trusted stakeholders to design and plan this comprehensive climate adaptation and resilience program for Vermont small businesses - with no cost to participants. Vermont Community Foundation and Mascoma Bank have funded the pilot, and several other funding partners have been recommended to us for consideration.

ClimateReadyVT is a Product of Diverse Partnership:

The program's format and content were informed by a broad base of expertise, including the experience of developing [VBSR's Flood Recovery Guide for Businesses](#), our partners in developing that resource, and by consulting with the following individuals and organizations on the concept of ClimateReadyVT:

- Liz Schlegel, formerly with the Institute for Sustainable Communities, which produced the [Vermont's Roadmap to Resilience](#) in 2013, following Hurricane Irene
- UVM Extension Farming & Climate Change Program
- Vermont Small Business Development Center
- Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
- Vermont Small Business Administration
- Sarah Waring, USDA
- Vermont Outdoor Business Association
- Vermont Professionals of Color
- Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund
- Vermont Community Foundation
- Pennywise Foundation
- Mascoma Bank
- VBSR Public Policy Committee
- VBSR Board of Directors

After an extensive assessment of the need, we identified the following themes for the program's content:

- Performing a Risk Assessment
- Identifying Hazard Mitigation Strategies
- Understanding which local, state, and federal resources are available to support businesses
- Understanding how legal, financial, and insurance services can assist businesses
- Guidance for communicating internally and externally re: business disruptions and continuity
- Guidance for supporting owners/employees during climate-related businesses disruptions, including tools and methods for emotional resilience, mental health, and wellness
- Business Continuity Planning incorporating the knowledge and learnings above

The core elements of ClimateReadyVT include:

- Eight virtual program sessions, complemented by an in-person closing session aimed at building relationships with regionally focused business support organizations, including the Regional Development Corporations and regional Chambers of Commerce.
- Content delivered by subject matter experts in a variety of relevant areas, including the Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBDC), Vermont Emergency Management, Vermont Law School, and OGGI BE (an expert on emotional resilience and climate anxiety).
- Access to curated resources, including risk indexes and the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit
- Creating a customized Climate Risk Assessment and "Roadmap to Resilience" for each business
- Peer learning, including case studies, scenario planning, learning from and with a network of peer business owners and/or managers, and small group learning, including "peer councils" organized by industry
- Trauma-informed program design and facilitation, led by professional facilitators
- 1:1 counseling sessions and relationship building with VtSBDC advisors (optional)

ClimateReadyVT in Motion:

The application period opened in the fall of 2023, with a total of 14 organizations (10 businesses and 4 nonprofits) participating in the pilot cohort. The program launched in November 2023 and will conclude in April 2024. We anticipate the next cohort will launch in fall 2024 with a larger group (20-25 projected).

We encourage the Vermont Climate Council to explore opportunities to partner with VBSR on this critical work and welcome the opportunity to speak directly to the Council representative on the successful launch of ClimateReadyVT. We thank you for your time and commitment to the future of Vermont's economy and the health of our people and planet.

"I appreciate the careful thought that has gone into this program – I am optimistic that this is the start of something that will help Vermont businesses with resilience in the future."

– Phyllis Ershowsky, Small Business Development Center and current ClimateReadyVT participant.

From: Gendron, Maggie
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 12:14 PM
To: Moore, Julie; O'Toole, Megan; Stevens, Rachel
Subject: Fwd: S.259 Redraft and Timelines
Attachments: GENERAL-#375320-v1-S.259 Senate Judiciary Committee Amendment.DOCX; GENERAL-#375325-v1-S.259 Timeline.DOCX

FYSA. Megan, I talked to Julie and she still harbors the same concerns and caution - but we don't want to get in the way of Sears right now. It will have to go to the House. Maggie

From: Michael O'Grady <MOGrady@leg.state.vt.us>
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 11:51:32 AM
To: Anthony Iarrapino <anthony@ilovt.net>; O'Toole, Megan <Megan.OTOole@vermont.gov>; Gendron, Maggie <Maggie.Gendron@vermont.gov>; Doyon, Ashlynn <Ashlynn.Doyon@vermont.gov>; Ben Edgerly Walsh <bwalsh@vpirg.org>
Subject: S.259 Redraft and Timelines

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Everyone

Attached is the unedited redraft of S.259, including its formatting as a committee amendment. Please look over and let me know if you would like changes.

Also attached is a table of the timeline.

Thanks

Mike

(Draft No. 2.1 – S.259)
3/14/2024 - MOG - 11:00 AM

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1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Judiciary to which was referred Senate Bill No. entitled
3 “An act relating to climate change cost recovery” respectfully reports that it
4 has considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking
5 out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

6 Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE

7 This act may be cited as the “Climate Superfund Act.”

8 Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. chapter 24A is added to read:

9 CHAPTER 24A. CLIMATE SUPERFUND COST RECOVERY PROGRAM

10 § 596. DEFINITIONS

11 As used in this chapter:

12 (1) “Agency” means the Agency of Natural Resources.

13 (2) “Climate change adaptation project” means a project designed to
14 respond to, avoid, moderate, repair, or adapt to negative impacts caused by
15 climate change and to assist human and natural communities, households, and
16 businesses in preparing for future climate-change-driven disruptions. Climate
17 change adaptation projects include implementing nature-based solutions and
18 flood protections; home buyouts; upgrading stormwater drainage systems;
19 making defensive upgrades to roads, bridges, railroads, and transit systems;
20 preparing for and recovering from extreme weather events; undertaking
21 preventive health care programs and providing medical care to treat illness or

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1 injury caused by the effects of climate change; relocating, elevating, or
2 retrofitting sewage treatment plants and other infrastructure vulnerable to
3 flooding; installing energy efficient cooling systems and other weatherization
4 and energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits in public and private buildings,
5 including schools and public housing, designed to reduce the public health
6 effects of more frequent heat waves and forest fire smoke; upgrading parts of
7 the electrical grid to increase stability and resilience, including supporting the
8 creation of self-sufficient microgrids; and responding to toxic algae blooms,
9 loss of agricultural topsoil, crop loss, and other climate-driven ecosystem
10 threats to forests, farms, fisheries, and food systems.

11 (3) “Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program” means the program
12 established by this chapter.

13 (4) “Coal” means bituminous coal, anthracite coal, and lignite.

14 (5)(A) “Controlled group” means two or more entities treated as a single
15 employer under:

16 (i) 26 U.S.C. § 52(a) or (b), without regard to 26 U.S.C.
17 § 1563(b)(2)(C); or

18 (ii) 26 U.S.C. § 414(m) or (o).

19 (B) For purposes of this chapter, entities in a controlled group are
20 treated as a single entity for purposes of meeting the definition of responsible

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1 party and are jointly and severally liable for payment of any cost recovery
2 demand owed by any entity in the controlled group.

3 (6) “Cost recovery demand” means a charge asserted against a
4 responsible party for cost recovery payments under the Program for payment to
5 the Fund.

6 (7) “Covered greenhouse gas emissions” means the total quantity of
7 greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere during the covered period,
8 expressed in metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, resulting from the use of
9 fossil fuels extracted or refined by an entity.

10 (8) “Covered period” means the period that began on January 1, 1995
11 and ended on December 31, 2024.

12 (9) “Crude oil” means oil or petroleum of any kind and in any form,
13 including bitumen, oil sands, heavy oil, conventional and unconventional oil,
14 shale oil, natural gas liquids, condensates, and related fossil fuels.

15 (10) “Entity” means any individual, trustee, agent, partnership,
16 association, corporation, company, municipality, political subdivision, or other
17 legal organization, including a foreign nation, that holds or held an ownership
18 interest in a fossil fuel business during the covered period.

19 (11) “Environmental justice focus population” has the same meaning as
20 in 3 V.S.A. § 6002.

21 (12) “Fossil fuel” means coal, petroleum products, and fuel gases.

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1 (13) “Fossil fuel business” means a business engaging in the extraction
2 of fossil fuels or the refining of petroleum products.

3 (14) “Fuel gases” or “fuel gas” means:

4 (A) methane;

5 (B) natural gas;

6 (C) liquified natural gas; and

7 (D) manufactured fuel gases.

8 (15) “Fund” means the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program Fund
9 established pursuant to section 599 of this title.

10 (16) “Greenhouse gas” has the same meaning as in section 552 of this
11 title.

12 (17) “Nature-based solutions” means projects that utilize or mimic
13 nature or natural processes and functions and that may also offer
14 environmental, economic, and social benefits while increasing resilience.
15 Nature-based solutions include both green and natural infrastructure.

16 (18) “Notice of cost recovery demand” means the written
17 communication from the Agency informing a responsible party of the amount
18 of the cost recovery demand payable to the Fund.

19 (19) “Petroleum product” means any product refined or re-refined from:

20 (A) synthetic or crude oil; or

21 (B) crude oil extracted from natural gas liquids or other sources.

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1 (20) “Program” means the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program
2 established under this chapter.

3 (21) “Qualifying expenditure” means an authorized payment from the
4 Fund to pay reasonable expenses associated with the administration of the
5 Fund and the Program and as part of the support of a climate change adaptation
6 project, including its operation, monitoring, and maintenance.

7 (22) “Responsible party” means any entity or a successor in interest to
8 an entity that during any part of the covered period was engaged in the trade or
9 business of extracting fossil fuel or refining crude oil and is determined by the
10 Agency attributable to for more than one billion metric tons of covered
11 greenhouse gas emissions during the covered period. The term responsible
12 party does not include any person who lacks sufficient connection with the
13 State to satisfy the nexus requirements of the U.S. Constitution.

14 (23) “Strategy” means the Resilience Implementation Strategy adopted
15 by the Agency.

16 § 597. THE CLIMATE SUPERFUND COST RECOVERY PROGRAM

17 There is hereby established the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program
18 administered by the Climate Action Office of the Agency of Natural
19 Resources. The purposes of the Program shall be all of the following:

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1 (1) to secure compensatory payments from responsible parties based on
2 a standard of strict liability to provide a source of revenue for climate change
3 adaptation projects within the State;

4 (2) to determine proportional liability of responsible parties;

5 (3) to impose cost recovery demands on responsible parties and issue
6 notices of cost recovery demands;

7 (4) to accept and collect payment from responsible parties;

8 (5) to develop, adopt, implement, and update the Strategy that will
9 identify and prioritize climate change adaptation projects; and

10 (6) to disperse funds to implement climate change adaptation projects
11 identified in the Strategy.

12 § 598. LIABILITY OF RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

13 (a)(1) A responsible party shall be strictly liable for a share of the costs of
14 climate change adaptation projects and all qualifying expenditures supported
15 by the Fund.

16 (2) For purposes of this section, entities in a controlled group:

17 (A) shall be treated by the Agency as a single entity for the purposes
18 of identifying responsible parties; and

19 (B) are jointly and severally liable for payment of any cost recovery
20 demand owed by any entity in the controlled group.

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1 (b) With respect to each responsible party, the cost recovery demand shall
2 be equal to an amount that bears the same ratio to the cost to the State of
3 Vermont and its residents, as calculated by the State Treasurer pursuant to
4 section 599c of this title, from the emission of covered greenhouse gases
5 during the covered period as the responsible party's applicable share of
6 covered greenhouse gas emissions bears to the aggregate applicable shares of
7 covered greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the use of fossil fuels
8 extracted or refined during the covered period.

9 (c) If a responsible party owns a minority interest of 10 percent or more in
10 another entity, the responsible party's applicable share of covered greenhouse
11 gas emissions shall be increased by the applicable share of covered greenhouse
12 gas emissions for the entity in which the responsible party holds a minority
13 interest multiplied by the percentage of the minority interest held by the
14 responsible party.

15 (d) The Agency shall use the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's
16 Emissions Factors for Greenhouse Gas Inventories as applied to the best
17 publicly available fossil fuel volume data for the purpose of determining the
18 amount of covered greenhouse gas emissions attributable to any entity from the
19 fossil fuels attributable to the entity.

20 (e) The Agency may adjust the cost recovery demand amount of a
21 responsible party who refined petroleum products or who is a successor in

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1 interest to an entity that refines petroleum products if the responsible party
2 establishes to the satisfaction of the Agency that:

3 (1) a portion of the cost recovery demand amount was attributable to the
4 refining of crude oil extracted by another responsible party; and

5 (2) the crude oil extracted by the other entity was accounted for when
6 the Agency determined the cost recovery demand amount for the other entity
7 of a successor in interest of the other entity.

8 (f) The Agency shall issue the cost recovery demands required under this
9 section not later than six months following the adoption of the rules required
10 under subdivision 599a(b)(2) of this title.

11 (g)(1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a
12 responsible party shall pay the cost recovery demand amount in full not later
13 than six months following the Secretary's issuance of the cost recovery
14 demand.

15 (2)(A) A responsible party may elect to pay the cost recovery demand
16 amount in nine annual installments in accordance with this subdivision (2).

17 (B) The first installment shall be paid not later than six months
18 following the Secretary's issuance of the cost recovery demand and shall be
19 equal to 20 percent of the total cost recovery demand amount.

20 (C) Each subsequent installment shall be paid one year from the
21 initial payment each subsequent year and shall be equal to 10 percent of the

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1 total cost recovery demand amount. The Secretary, at the Secretary's
2 discretion, may adjust the amount of a subsequent installment payment to
3 reflect increases or decreases in the Consumer Price Index.

4 (D)(i) The unpaid balance of all remaining installments shall become
5 due immediately if:

6 (I) the responsible party fails to pay any installment in a timely
7 manner, as specified in Agency rules;

8 (II) except as provided in subdivision (ii) of this subdivision
9 (g)(2)(D), there is a liquidation or sale of substantially all the assets of the
10 responsible party; or

11 (III) the responsible party ceases to do business.

12 (ii) In the case of a sale of substantially all the assets of a
13 responsible party, the remaining installments shall not become due
14 immediately if the buyer enters into an agreement with the Agency under
15 which the buyer assumes liability for the remaining installments due under this
16 subdivision (2) in the same manner as if the buyer were the responsible party.

17 (h) The Agency shall deposit cost recovery payments collected under this
18 chapter to the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program Fund established
19 under section 599 of this title.

20 (i) A responsible party aggrieved by the issuance of a notice of cost
21 recovery demand shall exhaust administrative remedies by filing a request for

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1 reconsideration with the Secretary within 15 days following issuance of the
2 notice of cost recovery demand. A request for reconsideration shall state the
3 grounds for the request and include supporting documentation. The Secretary
4 shall notify the responsible party of the final decision by issuing a subsequent
5 notice of cost recovery demand. A responsible party aggrieved by the issuance
6 of a final notice of cost recovery demand may bring an action pursuant to Rule
7 74 of the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure in the Civil Division of the
8 Superior Court of Washington County.

9 (j) Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede or diminish in
10 any way existing remedies available to a person of the State at common law or
11 under statute.

12 § 599. CLIMATE SUPERFUND COST RECOVERY PROGRAM FUND

13 (a) There is created the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program Fund to
14 be administered by the Secretary of Natural Resources to provide funding for
15 climate change adaptation projects in the State. The Fund shall consist of:

16 (1) cost recovery payments distributed to the Fund under section 598 of
17 this title;

18 (2) monies from time to time appropriated to the Fund by the General
19 Assembly; and

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1 (3) other gifts, donations, or other monies received from any source,
2 public or private, dedicated for deposit into the Fund and approved by the
3 Secretary of Administration.

4 (b) The Fund may be used only:

5 (1) to pay:

6 (A) qualified expenditures for climate change adaptation projects
7 identified by the Agency in the Strategy; and

8 (B) reasonable administrative expenses of the Program; and

9 (2) to implement climate adaptation action identified in the State Hazard
10 Mitigation Plan.

11 (c) Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of 32 V.S.A. chapter 7,
12 subchapter 5, unexpended balances and interest earned by the Fund shall be
13 retained in the Fund from year to year.

14 § 599a. REPORTS; RULEMAKING

15 (a) On or before January 15, 2025, the Agency, in consultation with the
16 State Treasurer, shall submit a report to the General Assembly detailing the
17 feasibility and progress of carrying out the requirements of this chapter,
18 including any recommendations for improving the administration of the
19 Program.

20 (b) The Agency shall adopt rules necessary to implement the requirements
21 of this chapter, including:

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1 (1) adopting methodologies using the best available science and publicly
2 available data to identify responsible parties and determine their applicable
3 share of covered greenhouse gas emissions;

4 (2) requirements for registering entities that are responsible parties and
5 issuing notices of cost recovery demands under the Program; and

6 (3) the Resilience Implementation Strategy, which shall include:

7 (A) practices utilizing nature-based solutions intended to stabilize
8 floodplains, riparian zones, lake shoreland, wetlands, and similar lands;

9 (B) practices to adapt infrastructure to the impacts of climate change;

10 (C) practices needed to build out early warning mechanisms and
11 support fast, effective response to climate-related threats;

12 (D) practices that support economic and environmental sustainability
13 in the face of changing climate conditions; and

14 (E) criteria and procedures for prioritizing climate change adaptation
15 projects eligible to receive monies from the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery
16 Program.

17 (c) In adopting the Strategy, the Agency shall:

18 (1) consult with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council;

19 (2) in consultation with other State agencies and departments, including
20 the Department of Public Safety’s Division of Vermont Emergency
21 Management, assess the adaptation needs and vulnerabilities of various areas

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1 vital to the State’s economy, normal functioning, and the health and well-being
2 of Vermonters;

3 (3) identify major potential, proposed, and ongoing climate change
4 adaptation projects throughout the State;

5 (4) identify opportunities for alignment with existing federal, State,
6 and local funding streams;

7 (5) consult with stakeholders, including local governments, businesses,
8 environmental advocates, relevant subject area experts, and representatives of
9 environmental justice focus populations;

10 (6) consider components of the Vermont Climate Action Plan required
11 under section 592 of this title that are related to adaptation or resilience, as
12 defined in section 590 of this title; and

13 (7) conduct public engagement in areas and communities that have the
14 most significant exposure to the impacts of climate change, including
15 disadvantaged, low-income, and rural communities and areas.

16 (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the existing authority
17 of a State agency, department, or entity to regulate greenhouse gas emissions
18 or establish strategies or adopt rules to mitigate climate risk and build
19 resilience to climate change.

20 § 599b. CLIMATE CHANGE COST RECOVERY PROGRAM AUDIT

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1 Once every five years, the State Auditor shall evaluate the operation and
2 effectiveness of the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program. The Auditor
3 shall make recommendations to the Agency on ways to increase program
4 efficacy and cost-effectiveness. The Auditor shall submit the results of the
5 audit to the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on
6 Judiciary and the House Committees on Environment and Energy and on
7 Judiciary.

8 § 599c. STATE TREASURER REPORT ON THE COST TO VERMONT OF
9 COVERED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

10 On or before January 15, 2026, the State Treasurer, after consultation with
11 the Interagency Advisory Board to the Climate Action Office, and with any
12 other person or entity whom the State Treasurer decides to consult for the
13 purpose of obtaining and utilizing credible data or methodologies that the State
14 Treasurer determines may aid the State Treasurer in making the assessments
15 and estimates required by this section, shall submit to the Senate Committees
16 on Appropriations, on Finance, on Agriculture, and on Natural Resources and
17 Energy and the House Committees on Appropriations; on Ways and Means; on
18 Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry; and on Environment and Energy
19 an assessment of the cost to the State of Vermont and its residents of the
20 emission of covered greenhouse gases for the period that began on January 1,
21 1995 and ended on December 31, 2024. The assessment shall include:

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1 (1) a summary of the various cost-driving effects of covered greenhouse
2 gas emissions on the State of Vermont, including effects on public health,
3 natural resources, biodiversity, agriculture, economic development, flood
4 preparedness and safety, housing, and any other effect that the State Treasurer,
5 in consultation with the Climate Action Office, determines is relevant;

6 (2) a categorized calculation of the costs that have been incurred and are
7 projected to be incurred in the future within the State of Vermont of each of the
8 effects identified under subdivision (1) of this section; and

9 (3) a categorized calculation of the costs that have been incurred and are
10 projected to be incurred in the future within the State of Vermont to abate the
11 effects of covered greenhouse gas emissions from between January 1, 1995
12 and December 31, 2024 on the State of Vermont and its residents.

13 Sec. 3. IMPLEMENTATION

14 (a) On or before July 1, 2025, the Agency of Natural Resources pursuant to
15 3 V.S.A. § 837 shall file with the Interagency Committee on Administrative
16 Rules the proposed rule for the adoption of the Resilience Implementation
17 Strategy required pursuant to 10 V.S.A § 599a(b)(3). On or before January 1,
18 2026, the Agency of Natural Resources shall adopt the final rule establishing
19 the Resilience Implementation Strategy required pursuant to 10 V.S.A
20 § 599a(b)(3).

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1 (b) On or before July 1, 2026, the Agency of Natural Resources pursuant to
2 3 V.S.A. § 837 shall file with the Interagency Committee on Administrative
3 Rules the proposed rules required pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 599a(b)(1) and
4 (b)(2). On or before January 1, 2027, the Agency of Natural Resources shall
5 adopt the final rule rules required pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 599a(b)(1) and
6 (b)(2).

7 Sec. 4. APPROPRIATIONS

8 (a) The sum of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the
9 Agency of Natural Resources in fiscal year 2025 for the purpose of
10 implementing the requirements of this act, including for personal services for
11 the position created pursuant to Sec. 5 of this act; costs associated with
12 providing administrative, technical, and legal support in carrying out the
13 requirements of this act and the Program; hiring consultants and experts; and
14 for other necessary costs and expenses.

15 (b) The sum of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the
16 Office of the State Treasurer in fiscal year 2025 for the purposes of hiring
17 consultants or third party services to assist in the completion of the assessment
18 required by 10 V.S.A. § 599c of the cost to the State of Vermont and its
19 residents of the emission of covered greenhouse gases. Notwithstanding the
20 authorized uses of the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program Fund
21 pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 599(b), the first \$300,000.00 deposited into the

(Draft No. 2.1 – S.259)
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1 Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program Fund shall be used to reimburse
2 the General Fund for the funds appropriated to the Office of the State Treasurer
3 under this section.

4 Sec. 5. AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES; POSITIONS

5 One three-year limited service position is created in the Agency of Natural
6 Resources for the purpose of implementing this act.

7 Sec. 6. 10 V.S.A. § 8003(a) is amended to read:

8 8003. APPLICABILITY

9 (a) The Secretary may take action under this chapter to enforce the
10 following statutes and rules, permits, assurances, or orders implementing the
11 following statutes, and the Board may take such action with respect to
12 subdivision (10) of this subsection:

13 * * *

14 (31) 10 V.S.A. chapter 124, relating to the trade in covered animal parts
15 or products; ~~and~~

16 (32) 10 V.S.A. chapter 164B, relating to collection and management of
17 covered household hazardous products; and

18 (33) 10 V.S.A. chapter 24A relating to the Climate Superfund Cost
19 Recovery Program.

20 Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

21 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

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3/14/2024 - MOG - 11:00 AM

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7 (Committee vote: _____)

8

9

Senator _____

10

FOR THE COMMITTEE

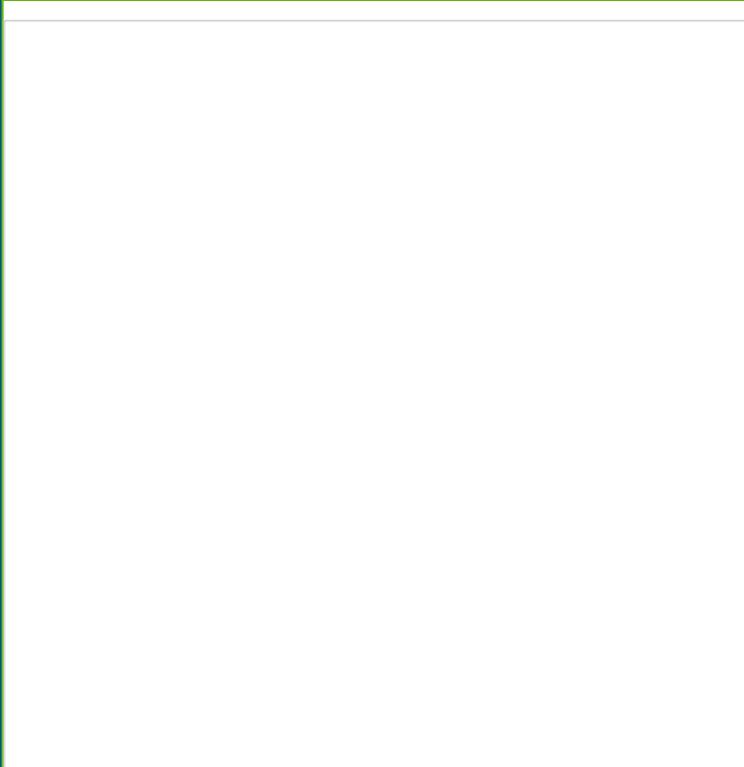
S.259 Timeline

Dates (on or before)	Section	Action
January 15, 2025	10 V.S.A. § 599a	ANR, in consultation with State Treasurer, submits a report to the General Assembly detailing the feasibility and progress of carrying out the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program.
July 1, 2025	10 V.S.A § 599a(b)(3) Sec. 3(a)	ANR files with ICAR the proposed rule for the adoption of the Resilience Implementation Strategy.
January 1, 2026,	10 V.S.A § 599a(b)(3) Sec. 3(a)	ANR shall adopt the final rule establishing the Resilience Implementation Strategy.
January 15, 2026	10 V.S.A. § 599c	The State Treasurer, after consultation with the Interagency Advisory Board to the Climate Action Office and others submits to the General Assembly an assessment of the cost to the State of Vermont and its residents of the emission of covered greenhouse gases for the period that began on January 1, 1995 and ended on December 31, 2024.
July 1, 2026	10 V.S.A. § 599a(b)(1) and (b)(2). Sec. 3(b)	ANR files with ICAR the proposed rules adopting methodologies to identify responsible parties, determine their share of covered greenhouse gas emissions, register responsible parties, and issuing notices of cost recovery demands.
January 1, 2027	10 V.S.A. § 599a(b)(1) and (b)(2).	ANR shall adopt the final rules adopting methodologies to identify responsible parties, determine their share of covered greenhouse gas emissions, register responsible parties, and issuing notices of cost recovery demands.
6 months after final ANR rulemaking under § 599a(b)(2)	10 V.S.A. § 598(f)	ANR issues the cost recovery demands
6 months after cost recovery demand issued	10 V.S.A. § 598(g)	Cost Recovery Payments Due

From: EAN <crobechek@eanvt.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 12:24 PM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Total Energy News | March 2024

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Total Energy News | March 2024

Dear Julie,

We hope you will join us this week for our next Leveraging Change Speaker Series event:

[Grid Evolution as we "Electrify Everything"](#)

This in-person event at Hugo's Bar and Grill in Montpelier, tomorrow March 20th at 5 p.m. will offer a chance to meet with other Network members and public sector partners for informal conversation. We will also learn together and discuss how the grid will need to evolve as we 'electrify everything.' There will be light food available and plenty of time for networking. Please [register in advance](#) for this in-person event!

If you missed it, you can also see a recording of

[Grid Evolution as we "Electrify Everything"](#)

Hugo's Bar and Grill
Montpelier, VT
March 20 | 5-7 p.m.

Speakers

Betsy Bloomer
VELCO (Moderator)

Rebecca Towne
Vermont Electric Co-op

Serge Abergel
Hydro-Québec

our recent webinar on tools for [Tracking Vermont's energy transition at the local level](#), and explore the Energy and GHG dashboards on the [EAN website](#).

Cara, Jared, and Lena

Sarah Adams
ISO New England

[Registration Required](#)

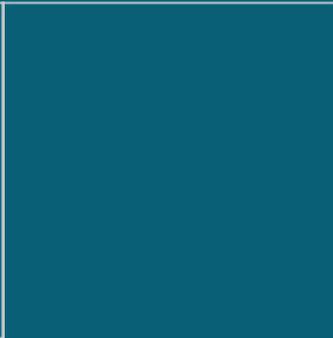
News from the World



February marked 9th consecutive warmest month on record

Earth has broken warmest-month records for nine months in a row, according to a new report by Copernicus, Europe's climate change service.

ABC News
[Read More](#)



Smart tech could help fix biggest barrier to building clean energy

A new report finds that "grid-enhancing technologies" can help gigawatts of solar and wind leapfrog the clean energy logjam — and save a ton of money.

Canary
[Read More](#)



Major project to carry electricity through VT and NH scuttled

The Twin States Clean Energy Link, would have brought 1,200 MW of electricity from Quebec to New England through mostly buried transmission lines.

VT Digger
[Read More](#)

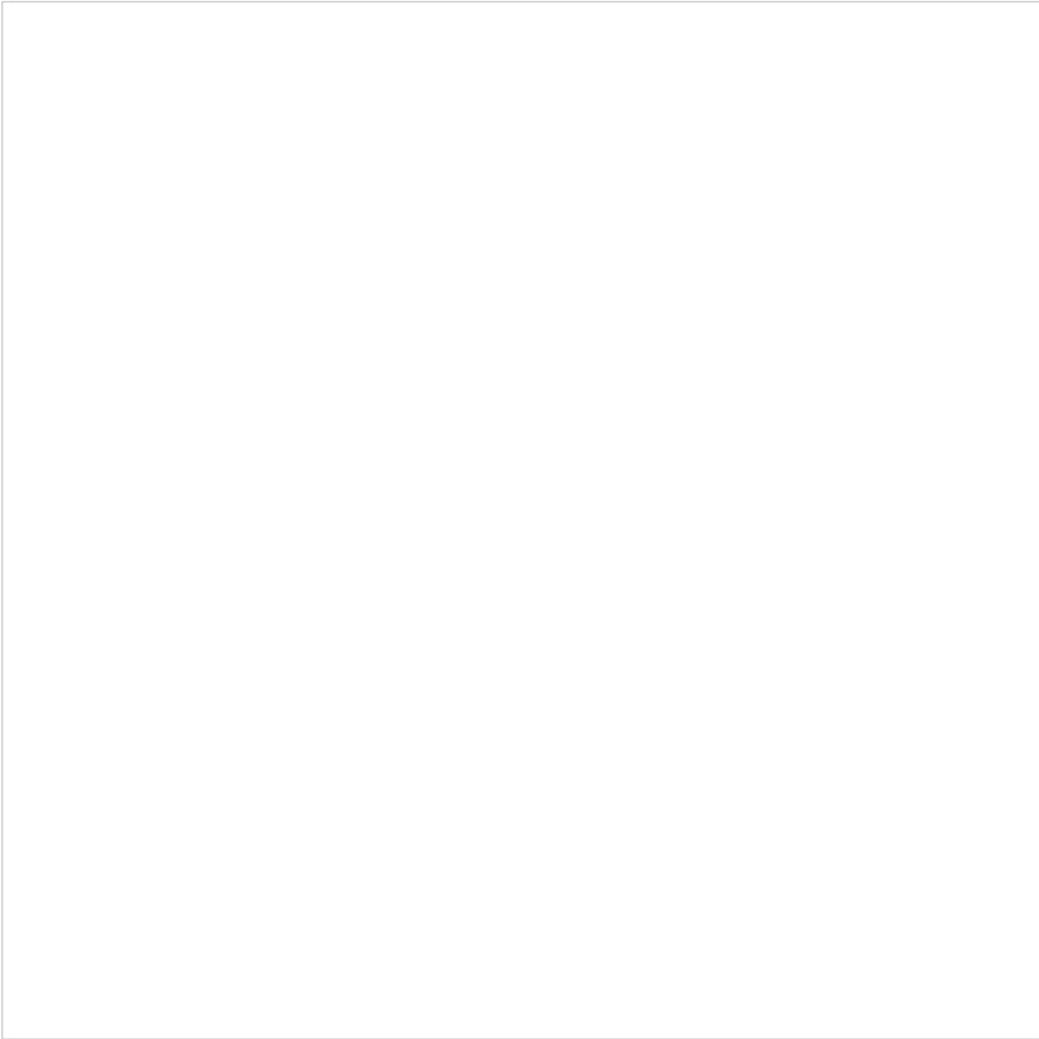
Network Action Team Profile Thermal Energy Networks

Since Autumn 2022 an EAN Network Action Team has been building a coalition to accelerate the development of Thermal Energy Networks in Vermont. Working closely with the [Vermont Community Thermal Networks](#) (VCTN) and Vermonters with expertise in regional planning, town energy committees, engineering, and environmental law, the team has just unveiled a comprehensive toolkit to help communities learn about Thermal Energy Networks and then:

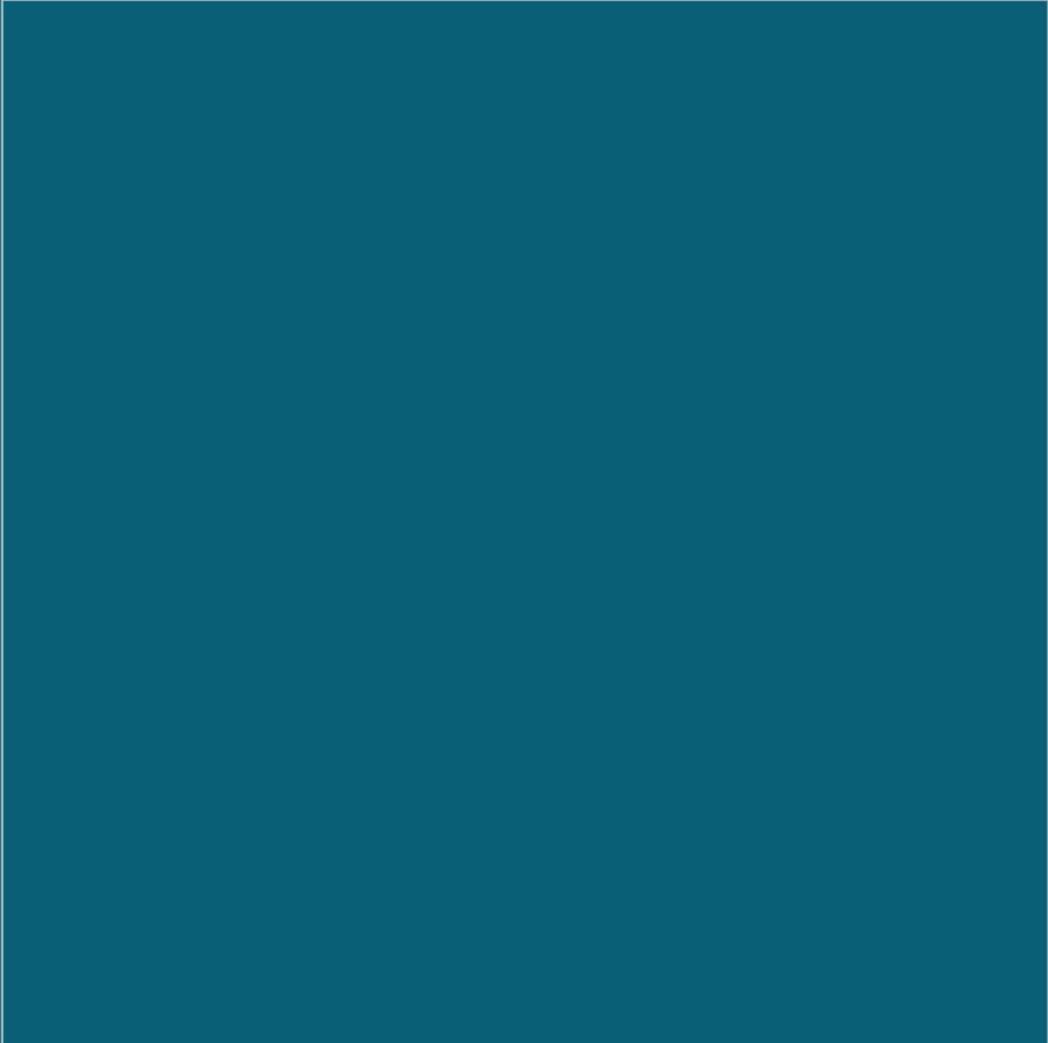
- Identify opportunities in their community,
- Understand ownership options, and
- Develop a project.

You can explore the toolkit as a web resource or download a pdf version on the VCTN website here: [How to Develop a Thermal Energy Network](#).

You can also view a [VECAN hosted webinar](#) about the Toolkit from March 13th to hear more from the team about this project.



Data Download: New VT Thermal Data



Fossil heating fuel sales in Vermont have decreased by over 12% since 2018. The majority of the decrease comes from a 22% reduction in sales of fuel oil and kerosene, as well as a 9% reduction in fossil gas sales. Propane sales, on the other hand, have remained relatively consistent over the last six years.

The drop in fuel sales in 2023 was likely primarily driven by lower heating demand as a result of warmer winter temperatures. Vermont heating degree days in 2023 were the lowest measured in the last decade (heating degree days are a measure of how cold the temperature was on a given day, and compares the mean outdoor temperature to a standard temperature of 65F). Additionally, while not nearly as high as in 2022, fossil fuel prices in Vermont remained relatively high during 2023, which may have contributed to lower fossil heating fuel demand as households shifted more toward alternative fuel choices, such as wood and electricity. Specifically, we have seen increased adoption of high efficiency electric heat pumps over the last couple of years. As [Efficiency Vermont recently reported](#), Vermont now has over 63,000 heat pumps installed in homes and businesses (11,000 of which were installed in 2023 alone).

This data could be an indication that we are beginning to see the impacts of electrification on energy use and, therefore, on greenhouse gas emissions. Further exploration and analysis of this topic is forthcoming in a research brief that will be released next month.

Events and Opportunities

Leveraging Change Speaker Series | Grid Evolution As We "Electrify Everything"

Join fellow EAN members and public sector partners for a conversation about how the grid will need to evolve as we "Electrify Everything." Speakers will include Rebecca Towne (Vermont Electric Co-op), Serge Abergel (Hydro-Québec), and Sarah Adams (ISO-NE). Betsy Bloomer from VELCO will moderate the conversation.

March 20 at 5 p.m. | Hugo's Bar and Grill, Montpelier

[Learn more and register](#)

VECAN Webinar | Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program

Join VECAN and Vermont Housing Finance Agency for a webinar on the Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP). Important and needed investments, like weatherization, often come with upfront costs but can significantly reduce energy costs over time. This program is intended to help mitigate some of the upfront cost challenges by providing customers an easy, affordable way to pay back home weatherization upgrades over time – not all at once. Learn about the benefits of WRAP, who in your community qualifies, and how you can help community members take part in the program.

March 27 at noon - 1 p.m. on Zoom

[Register here](#)

SolaVida Event | A Celebration of Showing Up

Every day lots of Vermonters get up and go to work in organizations that are helping and healing people: teachers, doctors, nurses, therapists, caregivers, teachers, social workers, reporters, advocates, town council members, legislators, and many more. They spend their time working to make our lives better. Come join us for an evening of stories told by Vermont storytellers, celebrating the work of the "communities of compassion" that are all around us. Storytellers will include staff from Energy Action Network and VPIRG.

Saturday April 13th 7:30 p.m. | Zenbarn, Waterbury VT

[Learn more and buy tickets](#)

VEEP Adult Programming

[Registration is open](#) for Vermont Energy Education Program's Summer Institute for teachers: Beyond the Standards - Solutions for Climate Change!

June 24-28, 2024 in Albany, NH

[Learn more](#)

EAN Network Action Teams

EAN Network Action Teams meet regularly. If you are interested in joining meetings of the Weatherization at Scale Coalition, the Climate Workforce Coalition, or other teams, or if you want to learn more about their work, contact Cara: cara@eanvt.org.

[Learn more](#)

Vermont Climate Council Meetings

All Vermont Climate Council meetings and subcommittee meetings are open to the public, with all details on the [Climate Council website](#).

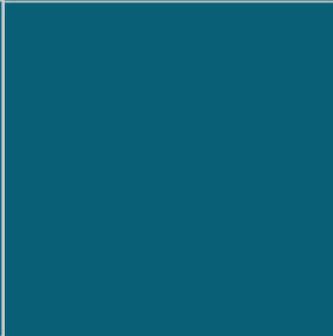
The Vermont Total Energy Ticker



Warmest winter on record: Several Vermont communities hit new highs

According to data from the National Weather Service, Burlington, St. Johnsbury and Woodstock all had their warmest winters on record.

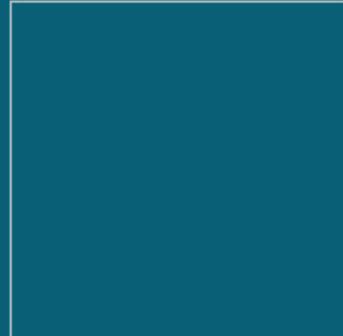
VT Digger
[Read more](#)



Key step forward for bill that would make Vermont the first state to have a 'Climate Superfund'

The bill aims to collect damages from big oil companies for the harm their products have brought and continue to bring to VT by causing climate change.

VT Digger
[Read more](#)



The next generation of climate leaders | EAN's Lena Stier

Hear from EAN's own Lena Stier about what it's like being a young person in the climate and energy field, including advice to employers on empowering the next generation of climate leaders.

BED Net Zero Energy
[Listen](#)

Have an upcoming event or news story to share? [Let us know](#).

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To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Spring member drive; House passes budget; Climate 'superfund' bill advances

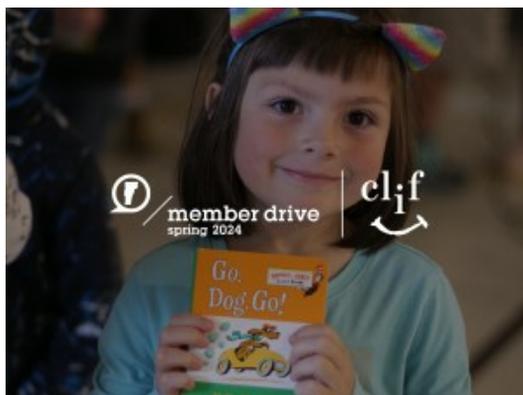
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Daily Digger | March 30, 2024

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Spring member drive: We need 100 members to send a book today!

By **Maggie Cassidy** and **VTDigger Member Team**

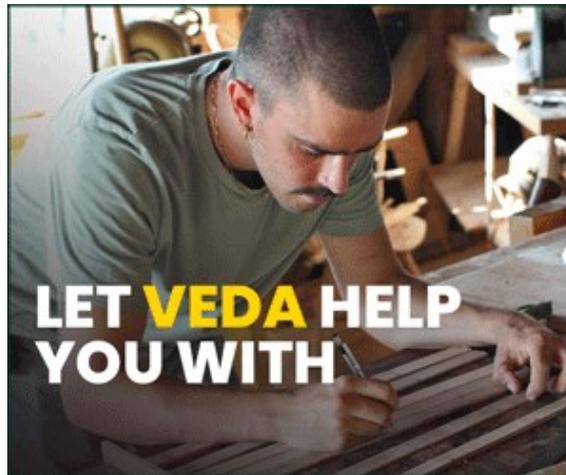
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As Vermont House passes budget, Republicans pan spending plans

By **Sarah Mearhoff**

Drawing the most controversy in the Statehouse in recent days is what is left out of the budget: proposed tax hikes on corporations, high earners and expensive property transfers.



Senate advances a bill that would establish a climate ‘superfund’

By **Emma Cotton**

The bill would require that some of the world’s biggest fossil fuel companies — and those that have contributed most to the warming of the planet — pay for damage related to climate change in Vermont.



Auditor’s report details lack of state oversight in Vermont’s EB-5 fraud

By **Babette Stolk**

“At the highest level, our findings should not be entirely surprising,” State Auditor Doug Hoffer said in releasing the findings.



Final Reading: Bill banning forever chemicals in consumer products comes back to life in the Vermont House

By **Peter D'Auria, Sarah Mearhoff, and Shaun Robinson**

That chamber's human services committee has been taking testimony on legislation passed by the Senate last year.



'A consummate showman and entertainer': Vermont saxophonist Joe Moore dies at 75

By **Habib Sabet**

Moore was a longtime fixture in the Vermont music scene, playing across the Green Mountain State in a variety of acts, including the Joe Moore Band, Bob Stannard & Those Dangerous Bluesmen, and Pork Tornado — a side project of Phish drummer Jon Fishman.



**Burlington mayor-elect
Emma Mulvaney-Stanak to
resign House seat**

By **Shaun Robinson**

The incoming mayor said she would step down from the Legislature on April 1 so that she could “effectively serve the city.”



**Fiscal hole threatens Green
Mountain Transit bus service**

By **Williston Observer**

The bus service’s leaders are lobbying for a recurring state-level funding source to stabilize its finances into the future.

Opinion

Tom McKone: Deteriorating schools need attention and funding

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From: Sarah Mearhoff and Shaun Robinson <finalreading@vtdigger.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 2, 2024 6:31 PM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Final Reading: Report of the week

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April 2, 2024



Final Reading

Report of the week

Study up! The Senate voted on Tuesday morning to water down most of a bill aimed at making state contracts more transparent, opting to order a study after Sen. Jane Kitchel, D-Caledonia, made a case for further scrutiny from the floor.

The bill, [S.96](#), as passed 5-1 by the Senate Government Operations Committee, would have required the disclosure of more details about state contracts and grants for services with private entities worth \$25,000 or more, including how a contractor's pay would compare to state employees' pay for the same work.

The bill would also have doubled the cost savings — from 10% to 20% — that those private contracts would have to demonstrate over hiring public employees for a given project.

If the state works with a private contractor, “it should be because of new and innovative solutions that will save money — and not because workers are being paid less, or having their benefits cut, at the expense of the quality of service,” said Sen. Tanya Vyhovsky, P/D-Chittenden Central, one of the bill's sponsors, when reporting the bill.

But Kitchel, who chairs the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, urged senators to hit the brakes instead.

She presented an amendment, backed unanimously by her committee, that would task the administration with merely studying the feasibility of most of the proposals recommended by Senate Gov Ops. The deadline — next February.

The appropriations chair said that, while she supports the spirit of the bill, she was worried about the burden that new disclosure requirements could put on social service nonprofits, noting her experience as a volunteer on the board of a designated agency.

Kitchel said her committee was concerned, too, that the Joint Fiscal Office could not estimate the bill's impacts on state finances — yet found that they could be substantial.

During a brief recess that followed, members of Senate Gov Ops gathered in a tight huddle near the desk of its chair Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Addison, who then rose to speak.

Kitchel “is always a wealth of history about state government,” Hardy said, adding that she would support the change, though not all of her Gov Ops colleagues felt the same.

S.96 “was a priority for most of the members of the committee,” Hardy said, adding that she hopes that the meat of the bill could be passed in a future legislative session.

Then Senators adopted the appropriations amendment on a nearly unanimous voice vote, before advancing the bill.

— *Shaun Robinson*



Sen. Jane Kitchel, D-Caledonia, offers an amendment to a bill dealing the the privatization of government contracts on the floor of the Senate at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Tuesday. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

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Join our spring member drive with a gift today and you'll also send a brand-new book to a Vermont child.

[Donate and send a book](#)

ON THE MOVE

After granting preliminary approval to S.96, the Senate did the same for another labor-related measure on Tuesday: Proposal 3. The proposed constitutional amendment would add **a right for workers to organize and collectively bargain** among Vermont's founding principles.

All 29 senators who were present for the vote approved Prop 3 on a roll call.

The proposal's journey is far from over, though. It must still get the green light from a majority of House members this year — and then must get approved again, by both chambers, in the next biennium. After that, it would go to a statewide vote — expected in 2026 — for final approval.

— *Shaun Robinson*

Bolstering **protections for tenants** has been mostly absent from the housing conversation in Montpelier this year, with lawmakers focused on lowering barriers to housing development and addressing Vermont's homelessness crisis.

But that changed on Tuesday afternoon, when House Progressives put forward an amendment to a housing spending bill that would have placed a temporary pause on "no cause" evictions statewide.

The amendment came as a growing list of communities have approved "just cause" eviction protections in recent years, which prohibit evictions for "no cause." (Landlords would still be able to evict a tenant because they haven't paid rent, or they've broken state landlord-tenant law or the provisions of their lease.)

Those local charter changes need the greenlight from the legislature and the governor, and so far, none have cleared both hurdles. Progs said the amendment was meant to press the issue, but the attempt was met with strong pushback.

"We haven't vetted those policies," said Rep. Mike McCarthy, D-St. Albans City, who chairs the committee that is the first to review local charter changes. "We haven't done that for a number of reasons that are both policy and also politics."

McCarthy told VTDigger/Vermont Public in February he thinks the local charter changes are likely to meet (yet another) veto from Gov. Phil Scott, without enough votes for an override.

Supporters said that "just cause" policies haven't been vetted because they've been stonewalled.

"We're kind of repeatedly told that we have to wait until we develop a statewide policy," said Rep. Troy Headrick, P/D-Burlington, on the floor. "But then we're also repeatedly told how hard it is to develop a statewide policy. That leaves these four charter changes just kind of sitting there. And I don't think that's right."

The amendment failed dramatically, with just 13 voting in favor and 119 against. Lawmakers instead amended the bill to include a summer study of eviction law.

— *Carly Berlin*

The House passed H.871, which would create a working group to hash out plans for restarting the state's school construction aid program, including how a program should be funded, and how it should prioritize funding.

The bill would also create a facilities master plan grant program, which would help supervisory unions plan for their facilities' future.

The chamber also advanced an amended version of H.874, a miscellaneous education bill. As it originally passed out of the House Education Committee, it included \$1.9 million for Vermont's competitive Community Schools grant program. That appropriation was reduced to \$1 million, and the bill now creates a

study to better understand the effectiveness of community schools.

Rep. Erin Brady, D-Williston, vice chair of the House Education Committee, told her colleagues on the floor that the community schools framework represents “a fundamental rethinking of how to deliver public education” in line with Vermont’s “student-centered” approach to learning.

— *Ethan Weinstein*

Visit our [2024 Bill tracker](#) for the latest updates on major legislation we are following.

IN THE KNOW

Senators gathered in the Cedar Creek Room on Tuesday afternoon to tout their progress on their “number-one priority” for the legislative session, as described by Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Baruth, D/P-Chittenden Central: **flood recovery**.

With five flood-focused bills having made it past the Senate thus far, Baruth said the upper chamber’s work on the issue “has begun to show very, very visible results.”

On Tuesday alone, senators moved two such bills — [S.259](#), which would establish a climate “superfund” to pay for future natural disaster response, and [S.310](#), which seeks to reform the state government’s response to future disasters — through their final stages of passage, sending them over to the House.

Also passed by the Senate and now under House review is [S.213](#), which would establish new regulations for river, wetland and dam management which prioritize flood resiliency. Already signed into law are [S.160](#), written to reimburse municipalities for lost state education property tax payments from flood-abated properties, and [the Budget Adjustment Act](#), which included millions in flood recovery dollars.

— *Sarah Mearhoff*

Nearly a quarter of households sheltered through Vermont’s motel voucher program were set to depart on Monday, following **another round of confusion for unhoused Vermonters** who have sought shelter in state-subsidized motel rooms.

As of 1:30 p.m., around 360 households of nearly 1,600 in the program were set to check out, Department for Children and Families spokesperson Nya Pike wrote in an email in response to questions from VTDigger/Vermont Public.

[Read more here.](#)

— *Carly Berlin*

The post office is coming back to the capital city, according to the U.S. Postal Service, and the goal is to have it ready before summer.

On Friday afternoon, the Postal Service signed a lease agreement for a space in the City Center building on 89 Main St. in Montpelier. A grand opening date has not been set yet, according to Postal Service spokesperson Stephen Doherty.

[Read more here.](#)

— *Juan Vega de Soto*

WHAT WE'RE READING

[Utility seeks to surrender license to operate Green River Reservoir hydroelectric facility](#), VTDigger

[Vermont College of Fine Arts announces “affiliation agreement” with CalArts](#), VTDigger

[Vermont’s post-pandemic teacher shortage has gotten worse](#), Vermont Public

Thanks for reading!



Sarah Mearhoff
Statehouse Bureau Chief



Shaun Robinson
State Government & Economy
Reporter

Our mission is to produce rigorous journalism that explains complex issues, promotes public accountability and fosters democratic and civic engagement. VTDigger is a project of the Vermont Journalism Trust, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our Tax ID number is 27-1553931

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From: Emma Cotton, VTDigger <admin@vtdigger.org>
Sent: Friday, April 5, 2024 9:01 AM
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Subject: Environment news: Storm leaves thousands without power; Sunny skies predicted for eclipse day; Climate 'superfund'

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Environment News Weekly

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You subscribed to our weekly roundup of stories about Vermont environmental issues, such as climate change, energy, agriculture and water quality.



Thousands of Vermonters without power as snow continues to fall on the state

By Erin Petenko

April 4, 2024, 1:12 pm

The storm is forecast to continue through Friday morning, according to the National Weather Service.

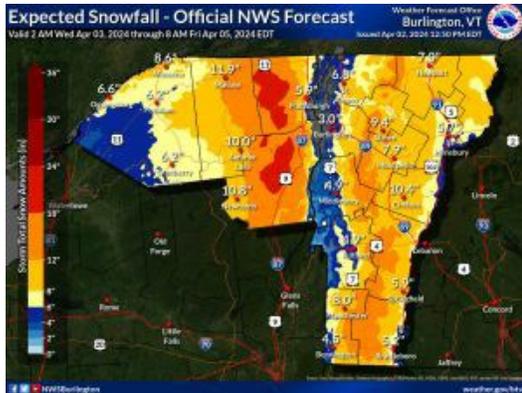


Forecasters ‘cautiously optimistic’ Vermont will have sunny skies on eclipse day

By **Erin Petenko**

April 3, 2024, 6:51 pm

Current models suggest Vermont will have a narrow band of nice weather between cloudy days — but history is against us.



Towns along spine of the Green Mountains expected to get more than a foot of snow

By **Tiffany Tan**

April 2, 2024, 5:36 pm

The rest of the state is expected to get anywhere from 3 to 12 inches between Wednesday and Thursday.



Utility seeks to surrender license to operate Green River Reservoir hydroelectric facility

By **Sophia Keshmiri**

April 2, 2024, 2:17 am

Morrisville Water and Light said Monday that it hopes the state will maintain the dam, but the Agency of Natural Resources said it has made no such commitments.



Senate advances a bill that would establish a climate ‘superfund’

By **Emma Cotton**

March 29, 2024, 8:50 pm

The bill would require that some of the world’s biggest fossil fuel companies — and those that have contributed most to the warming of the planet — pay for damage related to climate change in Vermont.

promotes public accountability and fosters democratic and civic engagement.
VTDigger is a project of the Vermont Journalism Trust, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
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Subject: VBSR Conference One Month Away, Economic and Social Impact of the Arts Event, and More!

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Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

**34th Annual VBSR Conference:
ONE MONTH AWAY!
Thursday, May 9 @ Hula, Burlington**



34TH ANNUAL VBSR CONFERENCE

IN OUR HANDS

Holding the realities of the global business environment with solidarity, creativity, and action here at home.

BOLD RESTRUCTURING | REDEFINING CONNECTION | JOYFUL RESILIENCE



Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

www.vbsrconference.org • **May 9th** at Hula in Burlington

The future of Vermont and our businesses is IN OUR HANDS. This year we'll be holding the realities of the global business environment with solidarity, creativity, and action here at home.

Get your tickets NOW for one of Vermont's largest and most anticipated business events of the year. Haven't seen the initial [agenda](#) and speakers yet? Take a peek...and get your ticket now!

This full-day conference will bring together thought leaders and changemakers from throughout the state for provocative conversations inspired by a keynote address, facilitated dialogues, panel discussions, interactive sessions focused on the leading-edge of social and environmental impact, and unique, values-aligned experiences.

[Register Now!](#)



As leaders, visionaries, and inspired individuals, we can draw upon Vermont's long history of business innovation and policy leadership to create the future we want in the present.

We can relearn what it means to be human with the transformative power of nature and technology. And, as global citizens, we can mobilize our local community for joyful resilience and action here at home.

Woven throughout the day will be ample opportunities for networking and meeting our exhibitors in Hula's beautiful and inspiring space!



Scene from the 33rd Annual VBSR Conference keynote address, May 11, 2023, at Hula in Burlington.
(Photo by Ben M. Collins)

Are you interested in sponsoring VBSR's largest event of the year? If so, please contact Jeremy Gerber at jeremyg@vbsr.org for details.





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**The Economic & Social Impact
of the Arts in Vermont**
Tuesday, April 23 @ Stone Church, Brattleboro



Join Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) and [The Stone Church](#) for another People.Planet.Prosperty. Speaker Series event! **FREE** and

open to the public!

Enjoy networking, food, and drinks as we engage in discussion about the far reaching economic and social impact of the the arts in Vermont.

Our panel will include:

- **Robin Johnson**, Owner of The Stone Church & Member of National Independent Venue Association
- **Danny Lichtenfeld**, Executive Director of Brattleboro Museum and Art Center
- **Kate Trzaskos**, Executive Director of Downtown Brattleboro Alliance



Art is an integral part of Vermont's identity. The arts are the glue for our tight-knit communities, a platform for social justice, and also a powerful driving force in Vermont's economy. [The Arts & Economic Prosperity 6](#) – an economic and social impact study of the nation's nonprofit arts and culture industry – found that the Vermont arts industry

- "generated **\$158.6 million in economic activity** during 2022," which
- "supported **2,712 jobs**,
- provided **\$112.8 million in personal income to residents**, and
- generated **\$34.8 million in tax revenue** to local, state, and federal governments."



This event is a part of the VBSR People.Planet.Prosperty. Speaker Series, where we come together to learn from experts and innovators in the Vermont business community.

This is also a great opportunity to catch up with colleagues, make new connections, gain new ideas and inspiration, and have some fun! This event is open to anyone interested in VBSR's mission: *to leverage the power of business for positive social and environmental impact.*

VBSR People.Planet.Prosperty. Speaker Series
The Economic & Social Impact of the Arts in Vermont

When: Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Location: The Stone Church, 210 Main St. Brattleboro, VT

Cost: FREE and open to the public

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

Special thanks to our host!



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VBSR Welcomes New Board Members

New Board Members 2024



VBSR is pleased to welcome four new members to the organization's Board of Directors: Kelly Clements of Gordon's Window Decor, Chad Farrell of Encore Renewable Energy, Mel Hall of Global Village Foods, and Ruchi Nadkarni of Fringe Impact.

"We are honored to have Kelly, Chad, Mel and Ruchi join VBSR's Board," said VBSR Executive Director Roxanne Vought. "They each bring such unique perspectives to our work of building a just, thriving, and transformative economy, while expanding the already rich tapestry of industries, geographies, business types, and identities that make for a strong and effective Board of Directors."

Learn more [here](#) about these wonderful new board members.

Annually, in the late summer, VBSR makes a call for Board Nominations. Members and friends of VBSR are asked to consider who might be a great addition to VBSR's Board of Directors, including those who would benefit from the opportunity.

VBSR especially seeks board members who identify as women and non-binary, people of color, veterans, individuals with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, rural businesses, and other identities and lived experiences traditionally underrepresented in dominant business culture. Learn more about the process [here](#).

Planning for Progress: Exploring Revenue Strategies for Vermont's State Budget

Monday, April 15



Join Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility and our panel of experts for this important discussion exploring proposed revenue strategies and their impact on Vermont.

One of the critical questions emerging from Vermont's 2024 legislative session is how to address our state budget. Vermont is once again experiencing budgetary constraints reminiscent of pre-COVID fiscal challenges as lawmakers work with a budget no longer infused with pandemic-era federal aid.

VBSR and our allies continue to advocate for policy shifts that address the urgent and essential changes needed to support our people, planet, and prosperity. We also recognize that to meet this vision for Vermont additional revenue will need to be generated.



As Vermont lawmakers consider a suite of bills intended to generate state revenue, questions arise:

- What exactly is the legislation being proposed?
- What are alternative solutions to the budget constraints that are not reflected in these bills?
- What would it look like to build a revenue system through an equity lens?
- And how will all of this impact the business community?

Join us to learn from policy experts, legislators, and fellow business leaders about options for generating state revenue and their impact on Vermont's business community. There will be plenty of time for Q&A!



Moderator:

- Neale Lunderville, President & CEO, Vermont Gas Systems

Speakers:

- Art Woolf, Emeritus Associate Professor of Economics, University of Vermont
- Rep. Emilie Kornheiser, Vermont State Representative (Windham-7)
- Stephanie Yu, President and Executive Director, Public Assets Institute

Planning for Progress: Exploring Revenue Strategies for Vermont’s State Budget

When: Monday, April 15, 2024, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual

Cost: Free and open to the public

[Register Now!](#)

VBSR Member News Round Up



(Photo courtesy of Beta Technologies)

Beta Technologies: The president of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, Reta Jo Lewis, recently toured the Beta Technologies electric aircraft manufacturing facility that it helped build with a \$169 million loan. She wanted to see how the loan the bank provided to Beta was being put to use, creating jobs and producing products for export, the mission of the bank. She was pleased with the progress she saw: "You're talking with a company that's all about the greening of aviation...the men and women who are transforming aviation. How can you not be excited?...Vermont is the place that is going to be one of the key drivers of the future of aviation, done here at Beta." Learn more [here](#).

Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront: It has been years in the making, but the Champlain Street Park Improvements project has a grand opening end in sight for this summer. The “pocket park” rehabilitation is an effort led by VBSR

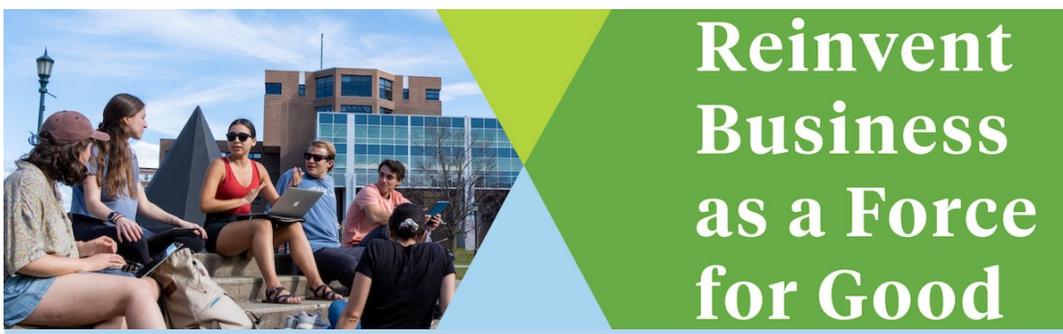
member Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront. What is a pocket park and why do they matter? In a small footprint, they integrate public recreational spaces into cities, increasing accessibility to green spaces while mitigating heat island effects, aiding in stormwater management, and attracting and providing habitat for urban wildlife, especially birds and pollinators. Learn more [here](#).

Reframe Lab, LLC: Starting last November, in partnership with Reframe Lab, VBSR started offering a new free program – ClimateReadyVT – designed to help small businesses in Vermont adapt to our changing climate and prepare for the next climate-related business disruption. As we approach the final session of the program, Peter Plumeau of Reframe Lab has provided an overview that includes the structured change management and design thinking principles at play as we work with small businesses to tackle multi-faceted challenges – while working with minimal time and resources. Learn more [here](#).

UVM: A recently released report highlights the opportunity for New England to dramatically expand forest protections and sustainably meet the region’s wood product needs by reducing consumption and reorienting production. It calls on New England states to permanently protect roughly 70% of the region’s landscape – a significant increase from the 25% currently protected – while expanding sustainable forest management across two-thirds of New England’s forests. The report is by researchers from Gold Member University of Vermont (UVM) and others including Harvard and UMass. Learn more [here](#).

NOFA-VT: NOFA-VT was recently in Washington, DC, advocating with other organic stakeholders from around the country for a farm bill that supports organic farmers, a healthy planet, and a just, equitable food system. The trip was part of the National Organic Coalition's (NOC) annual fly-in, where members of the coalition take to Capitol Hill to meet with their Representatives and Senators. Over the course of the week, coalition members met with 50 different members of Congress to share NOC's priorities for the next farm bill. Learn more [here](#).

Honey Road and Barr Hill: Two VBSR members have been named as finalists for the 2024 James Beard Awards, the most prestigious honors in the American restaurant industry. Cara Chigazola Tobin of Honey Road, a past nominee, is again a finalist in the Best Chef. The Barr Hill / Caledonia Spirits distillery and cocktail bar is a first-time nominee for Outstanding Bar and is the first Vermont bar to be a James Beard Award finalist in that category. The winners of the 2024 James Beard Awards will be announced at a ceremony Monday, June 10 in Chicago. Learn more [here](#).



UVM SI-MBA and OnLogic: With work to begin in May and culminate at the end of July 2024, UVM SI-MBA students are partnering on their practicum project with the sustainability team at OnLogic (both UVM and OnLogic are VBSR Gold Members). The working project title is Advancing Sustainable Solutions – Inward and Outward. Broadly, the SI-MBA students will contribute to the thoughtful implementation of sustainability at OnLogic in a strategic way that aligns with OnLogic’s core competencies as a hardware manufacturer helping to support emerging technologies. Learn more [here](#).

Your Organization Can Be a Force for Good – with the UVM SI-MBA Program
Together with UVM, VBSR has created 3 different ways our members might work with SI-MBA students and alumni:

1. Host a SI-MBA alumnus in a [Post-Graduate Fellowship](#) (Paid)
2. Bring current SI-MBA students on as pro bono consultants through [SIMPAC](#)
3. Host a current SI-MBA student for their capstone [Practicum Project](#)



What does it mean to be a socially responsible company?

On the Tuesday, March 26 episode of Vermont Edition, **Rooney Castle**, VBSR Gold Member Rhino Foods president and CEO, and our very own **Roxanne Vought**, VBSR Executive Director, had a robust conversation with host Mikaela Lefrak.

Hear what they had to say [here](#) about the impact of Champion Member Ben & Jerry's on Vermont businesses, elevating employee voices, and more.

Are you a member with values-led news to share?

Has your organization accomplished something recently that is part of creating a just, thriving, and transformative economy that works for all people and the planet?

If so, we want to hear about it! Members are encouraged to post valued-led news at <https://vbsr.org/post-news> or share it directly with VBSR Communications Manager, Talley Summerlin, at talleys@vbsr.org.

State House Updates at a Glance



Proposed and amended bills continue to move through policy committees and onto their respective floors in the 14th week of the 2024 legislative session.

Read on to catch up on a fast-moving week...

Historic Climate Superfund Act Departs Senate for House

The Climate Superfund Act has officially cleared the Senate. On a vote of 26-3, this legislation is a historic and bold step towards climate action!

The bill would require the largest fossil fuel companies with a legal connection to Vermont – companies like ExxonMobil and Shell – for their portion of the costs Vermont is incurring due to the climate crisis. It's an idea whose time has come.

S.259 has been referred to the House Committee on Environment and Energy.

Governor Vetoes Flavored Tobacco Sales Bill

Governor Scott has vetoed S.18, the bill that would ban flavored tobacco sales.

In a letter to the general assembly, he writes, "To be clear, I too feel we have an obligation to protect children, but it must be balanced in such a way that we honor the rights and freedoms of adults to make decisions about their individual lives."

Advocates for the bill are preparing for a veto override vote.

VBSR Continues Call for Medicare Affordability for Vermonters

The bill to expand the Medicare Savings Plan, H.721, has cleared the House and is now being considered by the Senate Health and Welfare Committee.

The bill expands income eligibility limits for Medicare subsidies and covers annual Part B premiums for low-income Vermonters.

VBSR and other organizations have submitted a letter to the Vermont Senate urging it to pass the MSP expansion. The Coalition's message can be read [here](#).

Back the FRAP: Senate Economic Development Committee Hears From Flood-Impacted Businesses

House lawmakers failed to support impacted businesses in a vote of 44-97, citing differing opinions on the role of government post-disaster and legislative procedure.

We now shift our focus to the Senate, where the Chair of the Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General, Senator Kesha Ram-Hinsdale, invited VBSR, the Vermont Professionals of Color Network, Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance, and Montpelier Alive to testify on the need for FRAP on Friday, April 5th.

VBSR will continue to work in the Coalition to promote the need to distribute state resources for disaster recovery in an equitable way and deliver the simple and urgent message that businesses cannot prepare for the next climate disaster if they have yet to recover from the last one.

Thank you to our Champion Members





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To: Moore, Julie
Cc: nne-events@mckinsey.com; caroline_wells@mckinsey.com; emily_chen@mckinsey.com; christina_hong@mckinsey.com
Subject: Invite to May 2 - Northern New England Climate Roundtable

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Hi Julie,

We are delighted to invite you to attend a Northern New England Climate Roundtable discussion with McKinsey & Company, where our experts will lead an interactive discussion on **Climate Risk and Resilience on Thursday, May 2, from 4:30pm – 7pm** at the Dartmouth Tuck School of Business in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Please find full event details and RSVP [here](#).

Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments will be provided.

This event will convene top public and private sector sustainability leaders within the greater Northern New England region and include an interactive session on the economic impact of climate change as well as future forecasts of climate risk and mitigation best practices. There will also be ample opportunity to connect and network with peers.

It promises to be a fantastic evening – we hope you can join us!

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Best,
Matt

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From: Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility <info@vbsr.org>
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To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Ferene Paris to Keynote VBSR Conference in Two Weeks!

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Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

**34th Annual VBSR Conference:
Storyteller Ferene Paris to Keynote!
TWO WEEKS AWAY: Thursday, May 9 @ Hula, Burlington**



Storyteller Ferene Paris, founder of All Heart Inspirations, is this year's Keynote Speaker; her feature on Vermont Public's "Homegoings" was nominated for an Emmy. (photo by Isora Lithgow Creations)

Storyteller Ferene Paris is this year's keynote speaker! As the founder of [All Heart Inspirations](#), she creates heart-centered spaces through live performance, interactive workshops, and community engagements.

Paris has shared stages with activist/author Dr. Angela Davis and

musician/actress Angélique Kidjo, and has made guest appearances on a variety of Vermont Public programs such as *Brave Little State*, *Stuck in Vermont*, *Homegoings*, and *Vermont Edition*.

Ferene's feature on Vermont Public's *Homegoings* was nominated for an Emmy Award and she believes we all have stories worthy of sharing – and will be asking this year's Conference attendees “What's yours?!”

Get your tickets NOW for one of Vermont's largest and most anticipated business events of the year. Haven't seen the initial [agenda](#) and speakers yet? Take a peek...and get your ticket now!

[Register Now!](#)



Scenes from the 33rd Annual VBSR Conference, May 11, 2023, at Hula in Burlington. (Photo by Ben M. Collins)

As leaders, visionaries, and inspired individuals, we can draw upon Vermont's long history of business innovation and policy leadership to create the future we

want in the present.

We can relearn what it means to be human with the transformative power of nature and technology. And, as global citizens, we can mobilize our local community for joyful resilience and action here at home.

Woven throughout the day will be ample opportunities for networking and meeting our exhibitors in Hula's beautiful and inspiring space!

Are you interested in sponsoring VBSR's largest event of the year? If so, please contact Jeremy Gerber at jeremyg@vbsr.org for details.

Register Now!



UVM SI-MBA Students at the Annual VBSR Conference!

Creative Solutions for Sustainable Businesses

Location: Sunset Room

Time: 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

Don't miss your opportunity to engage and work alongside UVM SI-MBA students!

Are you a problem solver? Do you see a challenge and want to dive headfirst into its difficulties? Come listen, learn, and lend a hand at the VBSR Solutions Lab!

Hosted by the University of Vermont Sustainable Innovation MBA (SI-MBA) program, you'll hear from Vermont businesses who are navigating challenges with circular business practices, regenerative agriculture and food, and sustainable marketing, and join a team of SI-MBA students in creating real-time solutions to these problems.

Bring your thinking caps, outside the box ideas, and innovative energy. Leave with leading-edge ideas you can use in your own business!

Can't make this session? **There are still many opportunities to engage the students and alumni of this unique program!**

Your Organization Can Be a Force for Good – with the UVM SI-MBA Program

Together with UVM, VBSR has created 3 different ways our members might work with SI-MBA students and alumni:

1. Host a SI-MBA alumnus in a [Post-Graduate Fellowship](#) (Paid)
2. Bring current SI-MBA students on as pro bono consultants through [SIMPACT](#)
3. Host a current SI-MBA student for their capstone [Practicum Project](#)



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PRESENTS

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Aligning Business and Community

The largest sustainable business gathering in NH with leaders from around the country.

MAY 2, 2024

CONCORD, NH
7:30 AM - 5:30 PM

Enjoy the NHBSR Conference...at Member Rates!

The annual NHBSR Conference, "Prosperity Unleashed: Aligning Business and Community", is right around the corner! Keynote speaker is Rebecca Henderson and VBSR members can register at the NHBSR rate!

May 2, 2024
7:30 am – 5:30 pm
Grappone Conference Center
70 Constitution Ave, Concord, NH 03301

Join NHBSR for an event brimming with inspiration, innovation, and meaningful connections. Dive into engaging sessions featuring interactive exercises, lively discussions geared towards actionable insights, and networking.

Learn more at the conference [site](#) and register [here](#). VBSR members can register at the NHBSR rate!





**INTERNS
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 THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EVENT SERVICES

May 28 - August 4, 2024
ONLY \$210 / WEEK
*Housing registration open
until May 6th!*

**DIRECT YOUR INTERNS HERE TO APPLY:
VTSUMMERHOUSING.COM**

VBSR Impact Circle Today!
Wednesday, April 24 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.



**IMPACT
CIRCLES**

Are you seeking connection with those facing similar challenges to you? A place to learn and grow with peers?

VBSR Impact Circles are peer-to-peer networking and discussion groups that provide Vermont business leaders with a forum to connect through shared experiences, grow your network, learn from each other, identify opportunities for potential collaboration, and generate greater environmental and social impact.

This group focuses on topics most relevant to professionals that work in Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (JEDI) and People & Culture.

Deepen the impact of your work while building community!

[**Register Now!**](#)

SMALL BUSINESS. BIG IMPACT.

YOUR BUSINESS CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Starting at \$1 a day, your small business
can improve the lives of community
members in Northwest Vermont.



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FOR MORE INFO

Thank you 365 Leaders:

Demonstrate your commitment to building a stronger community! United Way of Northwest Vermont invites you and your company to [join](#) our 365 Small Business Circle.

VBSR Member News Round Up



Champion Member Lawson's Finest Liquids has released its first Impact Report, which includes the fact that 51% of their employees identify as female or non-binary. (Photo courtesy of Lawson's Finest Liquids)

Lawson's Finest Liquids: Champion Member Lawson's Finest Liquids has published its first-ever Impact Report! From their beginnings 16 years ago, the organization has operated with a commitment to values that resonate deeply with both their team and their community. The 2023 report dives into their company

history and core values, sharing details about their Social Impact Program initiatives, achieving B Corp certification, and being named 2023 Craft Brewery of the Year. Their business has been on quite a journey, especially in the last five years as they opened the Waitsfield taproom and began accelerating their community impacts. Learn more [here](#).

Union Mutual: VBSR member Union Mutual and Norfolk & Dedham (N&D®), with a combined 350 years of delivering quality service and insurance products, recently announced their intent to affiliate, subject to regulatory approval. The affiliation brings a unified next step toward mutual growth and resilience for both companies, their employees, policyholders, agents, community partners and vendors. “The opportunity to grow through affiliation between two companies that share similar culture and principles is exciting. We look forward to building upon our successful historical results to come together to enable strategic pursuits and innovation,” said Union Mutual’s President and CEO Lisa Keysar. Learn more [here](#).

VSJF and Hunger Free Vermont: For the first time in four years, the Bennington County Hunger Council met in person – and the featured presentation was delivered by VBSR members Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund (VSJF) and Hunger Free Vermont. They shared the big changes coming to county-based hunger councils and discussed a detailed plan to ensure full food security in Vermont by 2035 (the Farm to Plate report we recently highlighted here). The goal? To organize all parties even further and collaborate more to create a plan that brings food security for all. Learn more [here](#).

Salvation Farms: ...and speaking of VSJF and Farm to Plate... Salvation Farms has chosen Kelly Dolan (formerly the Farm to Plate network manager for VSJF) as its next executive director. She replaces the founding director, Theresa Snow. In her previous role she collaborated with food systems organizations to incorporate the goals and strategies contained in the Vermont Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan 2021-2030. Prior to that, Dolan led UVM Extension’s Migrant Education Program overseeing a statewide effort to support migrant farmworkers and their families. Learn more [here](#).

VELCO: Vermont Department of Labor’s Project WorkSAFE officials recently presented a safety and health achievement recognition award to Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO). The state’s Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) recognizes small businesses that operate exemplary safety and health programs. VELCO qualified for SHARP status by demonstrating a safety record significantly better than the industry average and working with Project WorkSAFE to maintain a robust safety and health program. A safe workplace reduces insurance costs, attracts excellent employees, and most importantly, keeps Vermonters safe and injury-free. Learn more [here](#).

Renewable Energy Vermont: Renewable Energy Vermont has announced that the REV2024 Conference will be on October 16 and 17 in Burlington, VT – and they are seeking speaker proposals. Submissions do not need to have a complete panel with confirmed speakers to be considered. It is more useful that REV receives your idea by the deadline than waiting for the application to be

“complete.” Submissions that bring first-time REV Conference presenters are encouraged. For two days each fall, hundreds of business leaders, policymakers, regulators, academics, and community organizers from throughout New England focus on building an equitable, integrated, 100% renewable energy economy – lend your voice! Learn more [here](#).

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont: Gold Member Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont is welcoming the return of spring with the Wellness Revolution Cycling Program in St. Johnsbury and Vergennes for the 2024 season. This free program serves those who identify as women to help them break through barriers that keep them off their bikes and connecting with other women in a healthy activity. Vermont offers incredible opportunities for riding across the state. Be it on our bike paths, around town, on mountain bike trails, or on rural gravel roads – cycling provides accessible transportation, wellness, and connection to our environment. Learn more [here](#).



LGBTQIA+ National Small Business Grant Program

The VT Pride & Prosperity Network is spreading the word about the LGBTQIA+ National Grant program which provides eligible small businesses the chance to receive one of 25 grant packages totaling \$25,000.

Founders First – a national organization that believes building an inclusive economy is not just good for diverse founders, it's great for the U.S economy – is committed to increasing the number of diverse founder-led businesses generating over \$1 million dollars in revenues.

Eligibility Requirements

- Identify as a LGBTQIA+ business owner
- Must be a CEO, President, or Business Owner
- Have an active U.S. based business
- Business Annual Revenue does not exceed \$5M
- Must have between 2 to 100 employees
- Minimum of 1 year in business

Learn more [here](#).



Jun 28, 2023, press conference at Champion Member SunCommon's HQ announcing the Solar for All plan; Administrator Regan, Senator Sanders and the Vermont Delegation highlighted how Solar for All residential rooftop solar installations will work. (livestream screenshot courtesy of the EPA)

Vermont Department of Public Service to Receive Nearly \$62.5 Million to Deliver Residential Solar

As part of the Biden-Harris Administration's celebration of Earth Day on Monday, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Vermont Department of Public Service has been selected to receive \$62,450,000 through the Solar for All grant competition to develop long-lasting solar programs that enable low-income and disadvantaged communities to deploy and benefit from distributed residential solar.

This award is part of the historic \$27 billion Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, which was created under President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act to lower energy costs for families, create good-quality jobs in communities that have been left behind, advance environmental justice, and tackle the climate crisis.

"Today we're delivering on President Biden's promise that no community is left behind by investing \$7 billion in solar energy projects for over 900,000 households in low-income and disadvantaged communities," said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. "The selectees will advance solar energy initiatives across the country, creating hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs, saving \$8 billion in energy costs for families, delivering cleaner air, and combating climate change."

Learn more [here](#).

Are you a member with values-led news to share?

Has your organization accomplished something recently that is part of creating a just, thriving, and transformative economy that works for all people and the planet?

If so, we want to hear about it! Members are encouraged to post valued-led news at <https://vbsr.org/post-news> or share it directly with VBSR Communications Manager, Talley Summerlin, at talleys@vbsr.org.



The Yield Bill and the Future of Public Education in Vermont

The House Committee on Ways and Means succeeded in advancing the Yield Bill (H.887). What does the Yield Bill do? Our public education system is funded through this revenue source.

The bill is expected to hit the house floor this week as it advances through the legislative process.

For more information on the Yield Bill, we encourage you to review the [Fiscal Note](#) prepared by the Joint Fiscal Office.

H. 707 and State Workforce Development Board Streamlining

The Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General voted to amend and advance H.707, an act relating to revising the delivery and governance of the Vermont workforce system.

You can read the Committee's version on page 2,719 [here](#).

VBSR's Executive Director, Roxanne Vought, weighed in directly with Chair Ram-Hinsdale and the committee members in support of the legislation ahead of their vote. The bill will be taken to the Senate floor early this week.

Progress Towards Climate Action

Last week, the House Committee on Environment and Energy advanced our VBSR climate platform. These three bills will travel through additional committees before being voted on by the full House.

- [S.259](#): The **Climate Superfund Act** was voted out of the Committee. The bill will hold the world's largest fossil fuel companies responsible for helping to clean up the damage that their products are causing to our climate.
- [S.305](#): The **Miscellaneous PUC bill** was amended to allow municipalities

to construct thermal energy network projects, expanding the options for cleaner heat options. In addition, a study was approved to explore low-income ratepayer stabilization to lift equitable solutions.

- [S.213](#): The **Flood Safety Act** seeks to enhance our natural defense against future flood risks by improving river corridor and wetland protections and the central infrastructure of our dams.
-

Medicare Savings Plan Comes Out of Senate Health & Welfare

H.721, the bill that would expand the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) eligibility to 14,000 new low-income Vermonters, is one step closer to becoming law.

The Senate Health & Welfare amended the version passed by the House and passed it out on a 3-2-0 vote.

H.721 is heading to Senate Finance & Appropriations.

More Vermont Families Gain Child Care Tuition Assistance

On April 7th, more Vermont families became eligible for [child care tuition assistance](#).

This is incredible progress, and we encourage you to share this information with your HR teams and employees. Additionally, understanding how Act 76 affects you, your family, and your colleagues helps us ensure the best possible implementation of Act 76.

Paid Leave Will Make Vermont Stronger

Advocates, business leaders, and volunteers met at the Statehouse for a Paid Leave Day of Visibility. We met with lawmakers in 1:1 conversations about this critical legislation and its principles.

We're proud to join AARP Vermont and 65 others in the [@vtpaidleave](#) Coalition in calling on VT lawmakers to pass paid family and medical leave.

Don't miss the [full-page ad](#) in Seven Days.

Opportunities to Listen, Learn, and Be Heard



Jenn White of NPR's "1A" to discuss Vermont's housing crisis in Essex Junction next week. (photo courtesy of WAMU and 1A)

Starting this Friday, there are several incredible opportunities to engage topics important to Vermonters: Housing, Rural Development, Data Privacy, and more.

Read on to learn more about ways you can get involved, tell your story, ask your questions, and hear from experts, elected officials, and business leaders from Vermont and beyond.

A promotional graphic for an evening with NPR's Jenn White. On the left is a photo of Jenn White smiling, wearing a denim jacket. The background is a light green to yellow gradient. Text on the right reads: "An Evening with NPR's Jenn White May 1st" and "With Special Live Broadcasts of 1A from Vermont Public's Studios May 1st & 2nd". At the bottom right are the logos for Vermont Public and 1A WAMU NPR.

NPR's 1A Discusses the Vermont Housing Crisis

Jenn White, host of NPR radio's daily news program, "1A" is joining Vermont Public for a special evening of discussion on the Vermont Housing crisis and other news topics.

May 1st, 7:30p, Essex Cinemas (21 Essex Way #300 Essex Junction, VT 05452)

Tickets for friends and members of VBSR are only \$5 (50% discount!) - learn more and register [here](#). (DISCOUNT CODE: SAVE5)

Panelists include:

- **Carly Berlin** | Housing/Infrastructure Reporter for Vermont Public and VTDigger
- **Maura Collins** | Executive Director, Vermont Housing Finance Agency
- **Nancy Owens** | President, Evernorth

Vermont Public is asking folks who might want to share their housing to story for possible inclusion in the event to call **855-236-1212** or email **1A@wamu.org**.

Lawson's
Finest Liquids

Peter Welch
U.S. SENATOR FOR VERMONT

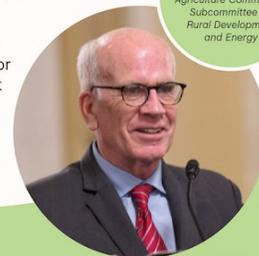
SEN. PETER WELCH'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT LISTENING SESSION

AT THE LAWSON'S FINEST LIQUIDS TAPROOM

FRIDAY, APRIL 26TH, 5:30-7PM

Vermonters are invited to a panel discussion with local leaders as well as a listening session and Q&A with Senator Welch to hear from you how congress can better support rural communities in Vermont and across America.

SEN. PETER WELCH
Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Rural Development and Energy



PANELISTS



Sarah Waring
Rural Development
State Director, USDA

Adeline Druart
CEO,
Lawson's Finest Liquids



Melissa Bounty
Executive Director,
Central Vermont
Economic Development
Corporation



Roger Nishi
VP of Industry Relations,
Waitsfield & Champlain
Valley Telecom



Rural Development Listening Session with Senator Welch

April 26, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Lawson's Finest Liquids Taproom (155 Carroll Rd, Waitsfield, VT 05673)

Senator Peter Welch will host a Listening Session in Waitsfield with community members and local leaders to discuss how Congress can better support rural communities in Vermont and across America. Senator Welch, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Rural Development and Energy, is working to pass bills to help flood recovery, build out broadband, lower energy

costs, and improve water infrastructure in rural America.

Vermonters are invited to share their thoughts and concerns with Senator Welch.

Panelists are:

- **Adeline Druart**, CEO, Lawson's Finest Liquids
- **Sarah Waring**, Rural Development State Director, USDA
- **Roger Nishi**, VP of Industry Relations, Waitsfield & Champlain Valley Telecom
- **Melissa Bounty**, Executive Director, Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation

Learn more and register [here](#).

Data Privacy Primer

with
Rep.
Monique
Priestley

Friday
April 26th
12:00–1:00

Data Privacy Primer with Rep. Monique Priestly

Have questions? Learn more at this educational webinar for Vermont businesses!

LUNCH & LEARN: DATA PRIVACY PRIMER

Hosted by Vermont State Representative Monique Priestley

Friday, April 26th 12:00–1:00pm Eastern

Register to Receive Zoom Details: <https://bit.ly/privacyprimer>

GUEST EXPERTS:

- **Neil Richards & Ryan Durrie** of the Cordell Institute
- **Caitriona Fitzgerald** of EPIC
- **Zach Tomanelli** of VPIRG

A constant stream of data — from our steps, heart rates, exercise routines, and location, to our shopping behaviors, online interactions, preferences, and even the layout of our homes — is captured by a variety of organizations.

As every aspect of our lives is digitized and scrutinized, we become participants in an ongoing exchange where our personal information is the currency, compelling us to reflect on the boundaries of this trade and its implications.

Join us as we discuss what data privacy is — and why it matters — with guest experts.

AGENDA:

- A Brief History in Data Privacy
- What is Data Minimization?
- What is Targeted Advertising?
- What is a Private Right of Action?

- Why does any of this matter?

Thank you to our Champion Members



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From: Sarah Mearhoff and Shaun Robinson <finalreading@vtdigger.org>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2024 6:36 PM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Final Reading: Gov Ops

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May 6, 2024



Final Reading

Gov Ops

About a month ago, the Senate voted to water down a bill aimed at making state contracts more transparent, opting instead to study what lawmakers had initially proposed. Now, though, some parts of that original legislation are back in play in the House.

The bill, S.96 — a priority for members of the Senate Government Operations Committee — would have required the disclosure of more details about state contracts and grants for services with private entities worth \$25,000 or more. Those details include how a contractor's pay would compare to state employees' pay for the same work.

Over the past couple of weeks, the House Government Operations Committee returned this and some other key proposals back to the bill. Late Monday morning, the House committee passed out S.96 on a party line vote, 8-3.

Proponents of the bill have argued that this information isn't reliably available today, adding it would ensure that the state is only hiring out a job because a private contractor has innovative ideas, and not because the contractor would save the state money at workers' expense.

House Gov Ops did, still, funnel some of its Senate counterparts' proposals into a

study. That includes a measure to double the cost savings — from 10% to 20% — that a private contract would have to demonstrate over hiring public employees for a given contract.

The report would also examine whether grants to private entities should be subject to similar reporting requirements — something that had also been proposed by the Senate committee.

"I was somewhat surprised ... about the lack of insight we've got into how we're spending public dollars for contracts and grants across state government," said House Gov Ops Chair Rep. Mike McCarthy, D-St. Albans, during Monday's committee hearing. "We can at least, I think, make some progress on the contractor piece."

McCarthy said he hopes other House committees can take a look at S.96 in the coming days, and any changes would ultimately head back to the Senate. But time is of the essence — and the two chambers have been at loggerheads on key issues throughout the session.

Meanwhile, S.96 wasn't the only labor-related proposal on lawmakers' minds Monday. On the floor, the full House granted preliminary approval to S.102, a bill that seeks to make it easier for certain workers to organize unions, among other measures.

In that case, the House actually nixed a measure that the Senate passed: allowing agricultural workers to collectively bargain. That bill is now slated for final House approval tomorrow.

— *Shaun Robinson*



Rep. Mike McCarthy, D-St. Albans City, center, speaks at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Tuesday, January 9, 2024. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

IN THE KNOW

Gov. Phil Scott on Monday appointed Abbey Duke, a Democrat, to fill the legislative **seat vacated by former state Rep. Emma Mulvaney-Stanak**, who was sworn in as Burlington's mayor last month.

Duke is the founder and CEO of Sugarsnap, a South Burlington-based catering company, and the chair of Burlington's Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission. Vermont's Democratic and Progressive parties had each sent the governor a list of three candidates to replace Mulvaney-Stanak, who served as a Progressive/Democrat in the House.

The governor's choice for the Chittenden-17 district seat prompted an immediate outcry from Progressives. In an interview, Josh Wronski, the executive director of the Vermont Progressive Party, called Scott's appointment of a Democrat "really disappointing" and said it went against years of precedent.

[Read more here.](#)

— *Corey McDonald*

ON THE MOVE

In a bid to protect Vermonters from scammers, legislators recently passed what could become **the state's first-ever law regulating cryptocurrency kiosks**, which allow people to quickly buy virtual currencies with cash or debit cards.

Among the provisions included in [H.659](#) are a daily transaction limit, a fee cap on exchanges and a one-year moratorium on the installation of any new machines in the state, which would take effect at the end of June.

Although Gov. Scott had not seen the bill's final language yet, his spokesperson Jason Maulucci said "the Department of Financial Regulation has been comfortable" with its provisions.

Read more soon at VTDigger.org.

— *Juan Vega de Soto*

In a 94-38 vote during an unusual Monday session, the House passed [S.259](#), a bill that would create a **climate "superfund."** If it becomes law, the bill would fine the world's largest oil companies to pay into a fund, which would help Vermont prepare for and recover from events caused by climate change, such as last summer's floods. Lawmakers in the Senate [voted in favor of the bill](#) earlier this session.

— *Emma Cotton*

Governor Scott signed several bills into law today, including [S.109](#), which sets in motion a process for offering **Medicaid coverage for doula services** during pregnancy and birth, and [S.187](#), which would remove regulatory barriers to allow students **to apply sunscreen at school** with parental permission but without a doctor's note.

— *VTD Editors*

Visit our [2024 Bill tracker](#) for the latest updates on major legislation we are following.

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., announced Monday that **he will seek a fourth six-year term in the U.S. Senate this November**. Sanders, an independent who caucuses with Democrats, was first elected to the post in 2006 and has served in Congress for more than three decades.

Citing his seniority in the U.S. Senate, the Burlington independent said in a press release and [recorded statement](#) on Monday that, if he were reelected, he would

continue to be “in a strong position to provide the kind of help that Vermonters need in these difficult times.” Serving in the Senate, he said, “has been the honor of my life.”

In an interview with VTDigger Monday afternoon, Sanders said he chose to run again because, “In my view, this moment in American history is one of the most dangerous that we have seen for a very, very long time.”

[Read more here.](#)

— *Sarah Mearhoff*

Rep. Tristan Toleno, D-Brattleboro, has chosen not to seek reelection.

The former assistant majority leader of the House and former chef has served in the Legislature for a dozen years. He’s currently a member of the House Appropriations Committee.

“As a 52-year-old who has been in food service and the Legislature for a long time, it doesn’t provide much general financial or retirement security,” Toleno told VTDigger. “I need to make a different choice.”

— *Kevin O’Connor*

As Toleno prepares to exit the House, **another member from Brattleboro is set to face a primary challenge.**

Amanda Ellis-Thurber, part of the third generation of family to raise dairy cows and organic crops at Brattleboro’s Lilac Ridge Farm, has filed to run against Rep. Emilie Kornheiser, D-Brattleboro, in the Democratic primary.

The challenge comes near the end of a roller coaster of a legislative session for Kornheiser, who as chair of the House Ways and Means Committee has been working to address rapidly rising property taxes.

Ellis-Thurber is new to politics, but not to public service. The 52-year-old was a presidential appointment during the Obama administration to Vermont’s 10-member USDA Farm Service Agency board.

“Folks, friends and neighbors in our district have been telling me they’re really nervous about the provocative legislation that’s been going on in Montpelier, most especially the double-digit property tax increases,” Ellis-Thurber told VTDigger in an interview.

At a local legislative forum over the weekend, Kornheiser said that fighting economic inequality remained her top priority.

“We need to make sure we can keep this a state that can really work for everyone and not just for the select few,” she told attendees at Brattleboro’s Brooks Memorial Library.

— Kevin O'Connor

CORRECTIONS SECTION

The Wookiee Chewbacca is both indelible and inimitable, but Rep. Brian Cina, P/D-Burlington, said the latter, not the former, followed, ironically enough, by a pretty darn good imitation. We regret the error in Friday's newsletter.

WHAT WE'RE READING

[At UVM, a fraught school year ends in protest over destruction in Gaza, VTDigger](#)

[Plan for home-based cannabis business in Rutland leads to fight among neighbors, VTDigger](#)

[Covid wrecked Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Lawmakers want to put it back together, Vermont Public](#)

Thanks for reading!



Sarah Mearhoff
Statehouse Bureau Chief



Shaun Robinson
State Government & Economy
Reporter

Our mission is to produce rigorous journalism that explains complex issues, promotes public accountability and fosters democratic and civic engagement. VTDigger is a project of the Vermont Journalism Trust, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our Tax ID number is 27-1553931

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From: Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility <info@vbsr.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 6:30 AM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Win \$1,000 in Raffle Prizes, a SOLD OUT Conference, and More!

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Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

Win \$1,000 in Raffle Prizes

Donate by 5pm on Thursday May 9th



(photo courtesy Adventure Dinner)

Donate to VBSR's [Expanding Our Movement Fund](#) through 5:00 PM Thursday, May 9 to be entered into a raffle to win \$1,000 in prizes from VBSR members in the food, beverage and hospitality industry:

- \$400 gift card to [Adventure Dinner](#)
- \$300 gift card to [Hotel Vermont & Juniper Restaurant](#)
- \$100 gift card to [Cabot Creamery](#)
- \$100 gift card to [King Arthur Baking Company](#)
- \$100 voucher to [Lake Champlain Chocolates](#)

**Winner will be chosen at VBSR's Annual Conference. You don't need to be present to win.*

Donate to Win!

The more you donate, the greater your chances of winning:

- \$25 Donation = 1 Ticket
- \$50 Donation = 2 Tickets
- \$75 Donation = 3 Tickets
- \$100 or more = 5 Tickets



34th Annual VBSR Conference: SOLD OUT TOMORROW: Thursday, May 9 @ Hula, Burlington



The 34th Annual VBSR Conference is SOLD OUT! Thanks to all who registered – we can't wait to learn, connect and celebrate together tomorrow!

The time is **now** to familiarize yourself with the [Attendee Experience](#)! It contains everything you need to know about parking, food, accommodations, and more. We highly recommend that all attendees read this thoroughly before heading to Hula.

Featured Speakers



Emmy Allison
LIFT Economy



Shawn Berry
LIFT Economy



Adam Davidson
Masterful Storytelling, Inc.



Zoraya Hightower
Nature for Justice



Amanda Janoo
Wellbeing Economy Alliance





Reinvent Business as a Force for Good

UVM SI-MBA Students at the Annual VBSR Conference!

Creative Solutions for Sustainable Businesses

Location: Sunset Room

Time: 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

Don't miss your opportunity to meet, engage and work alongside UVM SI-MBA students and alumni!

Are you a problem solver? Do you see a challenge and want to dive headfirst into its difficulties? Come listen, learn, and lend a hand at the VBSR Solutions Lab!

Hosted by the University of Vermont Sustainable Innovation MBA (SI-MBA) program, you'll hear from Vermont businesses who are navigating challenges with circular business practices, regenerative agriculture and food, and sustainable marketing, and join a team of SI-MBA students in creating real-time solutions to these problems.

Bring your thinking caps, outside the box ideas, and innovative energy. Leave with leading-edge ideas you can use in your own business!

Can't make this session? **There are still many opportunities to engage the students and alumni of this unique program!**

Your Organization Can Be a Force for Good – with the UVM SI-MBA Program

Together with UVM, VBSR has created 3 different ways our members might work with SI-MBA students and alumni:

1. Host a SI-MBA alumnus in a [Post-Graduate Fellowship](#) (Paid)
2. Bring current SI-MBA students on as pro bono consultants through [SIMPACT](#)
3. Host a current SI-MBA student for their capstone [Practicum Project](#)



VBSR Member News Round Up



Gold Member BCBSVT has started their Mountain Days program for 2024. The annual tradition invites neighbors to hike their way to a healthy summer. (Photo courtesy of BCBSVT)

Blue Cross Blue Shield Vermont: Gold Member BCBSVT has started their Mountain Days program for 2024. The annual tradition invites neighbors to hike their way to a healthy summer. The in-person kick-off event is on Saturday, May 11th from 10 AM – 2 PM at the site of their first-ever event on Mt. Wantastiquet in West Chesterfield, NH. This mountain serves as the beautiful backdrop of Brattleboro's downtown, outlined behind the Connecticut River. BCBSVT will provide free Mountain Day t-shirts, healthy snacks, and water for participants. No RSVP is required, and the event is open to all. Can't make it to Brattleboro? There's a way to join in the challenge virtually! Learn more [here](#).

CATMA: Bikeshare company Bird is back in business in Burlington and beyond, according to VBSR member Chittenden Area Transportation Management Association (CATMA). It re-launched March 18 for the 2024 season and in the first four weeks of the relaunch there were 4,000 rides totaling about 4,500 miles of riding (this included eclipse visitors). "Despite facing headwinds, Bird is here and has exhibited a commitment to our community including a carefully thought-out relaunch plan," CATMA said in a statement. Learn more [here](#).

Gardener's Supply Company: Gold Member Gardener's Supply Company is opening a new location on Shelburne Road. The nursery – a smaller building with fewer signature hard goods and plants – is a new concept for the company. They are also partnering with Morgan Brook Farm, who will have a food truck on site serving burgers and other offerings. The idea is to create a sense of community – even if just for commuters in the area – where there's been an empty lot for some time. Learn more [here](#).

VEOC: Vermont Employee Ownership Center (VEOC) is holding their annual VEOC conference on Friday, May 31, in Burlington. The one-day event brings together the most dynamic minds from the employee ownership community in shared celebration of broad-based employee ownership. Melissa Hoover of the Democracy at Work Institute is the keynote speaker. Learn more [here](#).

Jasper Hill Farm, Runamok Maple, AO Glass: Local Maverick, the Vermont platform dedicated to promoting and elevating the local experience, has

announced the grand opening of its Vermont Marketplace in New York City (at the Oculus World Trade Center), set to open its doors on June 1st, 2024. Established in Burlington, Vermont in 2020, Local Maverick has been at the forefront of connecting consumers with the finest local offerings, ranging from food and drink to art, craft, and wellness products. Jasper Hill Farm, Runamok Maple, and AO Glass are among the VBSR members who will be featured in the new space. Learn more [here](#).



VT PoC Wants to Hear From You!

BIPOC biz survey

The Vermont Professionals of Color Network (VT PoC) has launched a statewide survey for people who live in Vermont and identify as Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color (BIPOC). This survey is to gather insight on the experiences, successes, and challenges of BIPOC community members in Vermont.

Here is what BIPOC Vermonters can expect when taking the survey:

- The survey will be asking about you, your experience in Vermont, your experience with existing resources in the state, VT PoC, and how you like to stay connected.
- The survey runs from May 1-July 31, 2024
- Data will be collected, protected, and remain anonymous from outside sources
- Participants will have the opportunity to enter in a prize drawing to win a \$100 gift card from a local BIPOC business.

We would like to invite as many BIPOC individuals as possible to participate in the survey, including those who have yet to connect with VT PoC. The more voices heard, the better VT PoC can advocate for and address the needs of the BIPOC community in Vermont.

Survey [Link](#) and Survey [Website](#).

Are you a member with values-led news to share?

Has your organization accomplished something recently that is part of creating a just, thriving, and transformative economy that works for all people and the planet?

If so, we want to hear about it! Members are encouraged to post valued-led news at <https://vbsr.org/post-news> or share it directly with VBSR Communications Manager, Talley Summerlin, at talleys@vbsr.org.

Regional Flood Recovery Symposiums Announced

– June 4, 5 and 6 –



(photo courtesy of Vermont.gov)

The Vermont Flood Recovery office in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be presenting a series of Flood Recovery Symposiums:

- June 4, at [Stratton Mountain](#),
- June 5 at [Vermont State University Johnson Campus](#), and
- June 6 at the [Vermont State House](#).

Each event will provide similar content so if you can't make the one in your region, you can always RSVP for one on another day.

Representatives from federal agencies, state programs and other supporting organizations will be on hand to present a range of opportunities to support flood recovery for your municipality, business, or nonprofit organization. Most importantly, these representatives will be available to speak with you about your situation, offer tips on how to navigate the system, and combine resources across agencies to help get your projects done.

Morning sessions will focus on municipal recovery and afternoon sessions will be more business-centric, but all the resource providers will be tabling throughout the day.

Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) and FEMA will also be on-hand to promote and discuss the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, including best practices for elevations and buy-outs. This will be a high-level overview of current efforts and opportunities, with progress updates and information about how to dive deeper with VEM support.

A workshop geared toward non-profit organizations will happen from 3:30 to 4:30 each day. This session will provide a high-level overview of federal assistance that may be available to 501c3's and those that they may serve immediately following disasters. In addition to the resilience information presented earlier in the afternoon, this session will help agencies to be better prepared for the next disaster event.

Register by clicking the links above or visit vtfloodrecovery.com.

State House Updates at a Glance



The legislature is expected to adjourn on May 10th, which leaves lawmakers with only a matter of days to resolve some substantial issues. Read on for a top line look at what is happening in the final days of the session...

Flood Safety Act

With an impressive vote of 111-26, the Vermont House passed [S.213](#), known as the Flood Safety Act. This bill reduces flood risk and improves climate resilience. It will now head back to the Senate for a final vote.

Climate Superfund

On Friday, the Climate Superfund, S.259, cleared the second reading on the House floor by a vote of 100-33 (you can view the roll call [here](#)). The third and final vote on the bill is expected this week before it heads to the Governor's desk.

Renewable Energy Standard

On Tuesday, May 7, H.289, the Renewable Energy Standard – "the RES" – passed the Senate, giving this historic legislation approval of the legislature. The bill reforms the current Renewable Energy Standard and will make Vermont the second state in the nation to mandate 100% renewable energy. More information is available [here](#).

Overdose Prevention Center Pilot

H.72, the bill that establishes a pilot facility in Burlington to allow a safe, supervised site for consumption of pre-obtained opioids, passed the Senate 21-8 (you can view the roll call [here](#)).

With the number of overdoses rising, Vermont is looking to NYC and across the globe for a proven model to reduce the number of deaths. The establishment of an Overdose Prevention Center would do just that.

ACt 250 Reform

With a rules suspension and much debate, the State Senate passed H.687 on a vote of 18-10.

The bill's focus is to strike a balance between increasing Vermont's housing stock and protecting our natural environment. Lawmakers have sought to eliminate red tape and streamline the process for those applying to develop in certain conditions.

The Senate's changes will now need to be reviewed by the House.

Thank you to our Champion Members





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Our mailing address is:

PO Box 1274
Burlington, VT 05402

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You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

From: Keith Whitcomb <keith.whitcomb@rutlandherald.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 8:58 AM
To: Moore, Julie
Subject: Admins position on S.259?

You don't often get email from keith.whitcomb@rutlandherald.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Secretary Moore,

Hi, I'm a reporter with the Rutland Herald and Times Argus working on a story about S.259, the Climate Superfund Act. I read somewhere that ANR has some thoughts on how effective this bill might be should it become law. My understanding is it would somehow require large oil companies to pay the state for damage done through climate change, something I imagine they'd resist. Do you or someone at ANR have a few minutes to discuss it before noon today? I can be reached at 802-274-2176.

Thanks,
-Keith

- Keith Whitcomb Jr.
General Assignment Reporter
Rutland Herald/Times Argus
802-274-2176

From: Moore, Julie
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 11:30 AM
To: Keith Whitcomb
Subject: Re: Admins position on S.259?

Hi Keith.

Here is a link to the article from MD that I'd mentioned:

<https://www.marylandmatters.org/2024/05/01/lawmakers-hope-to-use-this-emerging-climate-science-to-charge-oil-companies-for-disasters/>

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Keith Whitcomb <keith.whitcomb@rutlandherald.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 8:58:04 AM
To: Moore, Julie <Julie.Moore@vermont.gov>
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From: Moore, Julie
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To: Brackin, Stephanie; Gendron, Maggie
Subject: FW: Admins position on S.259?

[Climate Superfund Act nearly clear of Vermont Legislature | Local News | rutlandherald.com](#)



Julia S. Moore, P.E. | Secretary (she/her)
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
1 National Life Dr, Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620-3901
802-828-1294 office
julie.moore@vermont.gov
anr.vermont.gov

The Agency of Natural Resources supports telework and there are times when I may be working from another location. I am generally available to connect by phone and email during business hours. I am also available to meet in-person upon request.

Help raise money for Vermonters impacted by flood damage and show your Vermont pride with *Vermont Strong* and *Tough Too* license plates and socks. [Click here to purchase your Vermont Strong gear](#) or visit DMV.Vermont.gov/VermontStrong23.

Impacted Vermonters can find resources and referrals by visiting Vermont.Gov/Flood.

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