

March 12, 2024

Dear Chair LaLonde and Members of House Committee on Judiciary:

Re: H. 284, An Act Relating to Regulating Drones Above Privately-Owned Real Property

On behalf of Vermont Electric Cooperative, Green Mountain Power, Vermont Gas Systems, Vermont Electric Power Supply Company, Village of Hyde Park Electric, and Vermont Public Power Supply Authority, we are contacting you in regard to H.284 and how the bill may relate to the reliability and resiliency activities of our utilities. Many utilities currently use, or have plans to use, drones for infrastructure surveying, assessment, and evaluation. Drone technology is proving to be a safe, effective and cost-saving tool in our operations work and especially critical during storm restoration in rural parts of our territories.

While we support the goals of the proposed legislation to protect privacy, and the limiting of the prohibition to drones used for hobby, recreation, and surveillance, we would appreciate your consideration of additional language to clearly exempt utility activities. For example, an additional provision in Section 1 along the lines of:

*(f) Use of drones by distribution and transmission utilities or their contractors for the purposes of system reliability and resiliency are exempt from this section.*

If your committee would be interested in testimony related to this request any of the utilities listed could be available at your convenience. Thank you very much for your consideration.



Andrea Cohen, Manager of Government Relations  
Vermont Electric Cooperative

cc: Candace Morgan, Green Mountain Power  
Dylan Giambatista, Vermont Gas Systems  
Shana Louiselle, Vermont Electric Power Supply Authority  
Brian Evans-Mongeon, Village of Hyde Park Electric  
Sarah Elise Braese, Vermont Public Power Supply Authority

