

1 H.784

2 Introduced by Representatives Ralston of Middlebury, Komline of Dorset,

3 Scheuermann of Stowe, and Young of Glover

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Energy; public service; renewable electric generation; transmission;

7 economic development

8 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to encourage the
9 upgrade and expansion of Vermont's transmission system to promote the use
10 of renewable energy from Canada in Vermont and other states in return for
11 supporting transmission connections for renewable projects in Vermont and
12 providing a source of funding for energy efficiency and renewable projects and
13 economic development in the State.

14 An act relating to renewable electric generation and transmission

15 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

16 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

17 The General Assembly finds that:

18 (1) Vermont has adopted the following statutory goals for its electric
19 supply portfolio:

1 (A) For 2017, there are two goals. First, there is a statewide goal that
2 20 percent of the electric portfolio is to be new renewable energy. Second,
3 there is a “total renewables target” for the portfolio of 55 percent, to include
4 existing and new renewable energy.

5 (B) After 2017, the total renewables target increases by an additional
6 four percent every three years until reaching 75 percent in 2032.

7 (2) The 2011 Comprehensive Energy Plan issued by the Department of
8 Public Service sets a goal to meet 90 percent of the State’s energy needs,
9 including electricity and other forms of energy consumption, by 2050.

10 (3) Other states to Vermont’s south seek to encourage the consumption
11 of renewable energy.

12 (4) Provinces in Canada have developed and continue to develop
13 sources of renewable energy such as hydroelectric power.

14 (5) Vermont’s transmission grid is already connected to the Province of
15 Quebec and to other states to Vermont’s south. Upgrades and additions to that
16 grid could allow transmission of electricity from Canada through Vermont to
17 other states.

18 (6) The State of Vermont also owns railroad corridors along the western
19 side of the State. Under Vermont law, a transmission utility under Public
20 Service Board jurisdiction may build transmission facilities along the sides of
21 railroad tracks on paying reasonable compensation.

1 (7) The siting of renewable electric generation within Vermont has been
2 affected by a lack of available transmission capacity.

3 Sec. 2. PURPOSE

4 The purpose of this act is to encourage the upgrade and expansion of
5 Vermont's transmission system in order to promote the use of renewable
6 energy from Canada in Vermont and other states in return for supporting
7 transmission connections for renewable projects in Vermont and a source of
8 funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and for economic
9 development in Vermont.

10 Sec. 3. DEPARTMENT; NEGOTIATION; PRESUMPTION

11 (a) The Department of Public Service (DPS), in consultation with other
12 State agencies such as the Agencies of Natural Resources and of
13 Transportation, shall negotiate to achieve the purpose of this act with power
14 generators in Quebec and Newfoundland and with the Vermont Electric Power
15 Company, Green Mountain Power Corporation, and other appropriate entities.

16 (b) In negotiations under this act, the DPS shall seek agreement that, in
17 return for Vermont's allowing upgraded or new transmission facilities in the
18 State to allow power to flow from Canada through Vermont to other states, a
19 regular annual contribution will be made to Vermont to fund energy efficiency,
20 renewable energy, and economic development in the State, and financial

1 support will be provided for new transmission lines to connect renewable
2 power generation in Vermont to the regional transmission system.

3 (c) An agreement reached between DPS and the other necessary parties that
4 achieves the purpose of this act shall establish a presumption under 30 V.S.A.
5 § 248 (new gas and electric purchases, investments, and facilities; certificate of
6 public good) that the upgraded or new transmission facilities to allow power to
7 flow from Canada through Vermont meet 30 V.S.A. § 248(b)(2) (need) and (4)
8 (economic benefit).

9 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on passage.