



TWO RIVERS-OTTAUQUECHEE

William B. Emmons, III, Chairman
Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director

REGIONAL COMMISSION

February 13, 2014

Representative Bill Botzow, Chair
House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

RE: Comments on H. 736

Dear Mr. Chair,

Thank you for the opportunity to present yesterday on this bill. As requested, below is a summary of the points I made on behalf of the regional planning commissions after seeking input from all eleven RPCs. I am referring to the bill as introduced. I understand that some of these points refer to sections or language which may have already been modified.

1. In section 2, page 7,(c) (2); It should read "The business is located in a designated downtown, village center, growth center, or other significant geographic location recognized by the state or regional planning commission."
2. In section 6, page 18. We strongly support the increase of total tax credits by \$500,000 but are concerned about carving out the increase for a single purpose. We would prefer that it be made eligible and perhaps be given extra points but that the Downtown Development Board not be further constrained.
3. In section 7, page 19. Related to the EB-5 Program generally, we suggest that you add new language requiring EB-5 projects that are processed through the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's Vermont Regional Center must be located in areas consistent with local and regional plans and in conformance with state land use goals in 24. VSA, Section 4302.
4. In section 8, page 20. Regarding the creation of manufacturing rate classes on energy efficiency charges, we are concerned that this provision for an opt-out may run contrary to state energy goals.
5. In section 18, page 27. Regarding the Designation of Downtown Incubator Space, There was concern about shifting more local property taxes onto fewer taxpayers, especially in these times of rapidly escalating local property taxes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to weigh in on this bill. Please let me know if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Peter G. Gregory, AICP
Executive Director

cc: RPCs, ACCD

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