



75 Fairfield Street • St. Albans, VT 05478 • (802) 524-5958 • Fax (802) 527-2948

February 20, 2014

Senate Committee on Economic Development  
Senator Kevin Mullin, Chair  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Committee:

I am writing to express my concerns about S. 220, specifically Enterprise Zones. I understand you heard testimony on this section of the bill this morning. These comments are based on version 3.1.

The proposed Enterprise Zones and the associated benefits and regulatory incentives do not further Vermont's land use and development goals. Sections 28-31 of this bill should be removed in their entirety.

The proposed Enterprise Zones are not designed to be complimentary to Vermont's current designation programs. In fact, S. 220 could provide an easier path to more benefits than are currently available to our designated downtowns, neighborhoods and growth centers. This is in fundamental contradiction to Vermont's land use goals and the structure of our economic, community and housing development programs.

There are additional concerns with the specifics of the proposal. For example, providing agricultural mitigation benefits to new industrial parks without additional criteria puts more of these soils in jeopardy. And, municipal delegation of Act 250 permit conditions is a concept the NRPC has supported in the past but this current proposal does not set forth enough safeguards to ensure enforcement.

RPCs recognize the need to address the future of industrial land development. Many participated in the Act 59 process which set forth several recommendations in this regard, and several other RPCs share the concerns about Enterprise Zones.

Thank you for considering my comments. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

  
Catherine Dimitruk  
Executive Director