

1 H.137

2 Introduced by Representative McCormack of Burlington

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Conservation and development; air pollution control; noise pollution;

6 Agency of Natural Resources; leaf blowers; leaf vacuums

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the  
8 Agency of Natural Resources to adopt rules regulating leaf blowers and leaf  
9 vacuums to minimize noise pollution and prevent air pollution from particulate  
10 matter caused by their use.

11 An act relating to regulating leaf blowers and leaf vacuums

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

13 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

14 The General Assembly finds that:

15 (1) The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines particulate  
16 matter or particulate pollution as a “complex mixture of extremely small  
17 particles and liquid droplets,” including soil and dust particles.

18 (2) These particles are divided into two groups: inhalable coarse  
19 particles or PM10 particles and inhalable fine particles or PM2.5 particles.

1           (3) The EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state  
2           that particles that are PM10 or smaller can cause serious health problems  
3           through inhalation. These can include “premature death in people with heart or  
4           lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma,  
5           decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms, such as irritation  
6           of the airways, coughing, or difficulty breathing.”

7           (4) The University of California College of Engineering – Center for  
8           Environmental Research and Technology has found that leaf blowers and leaf  
9           vacuums are a measurable cause of PM10 and PM2.5 emissions.

10           (5) Therefore, the operation of leaf blowers and leaf vacuums may pose  
11           a risk to the health of Vermonters.

12           (6) The State of Arizona has restricted the use of leaf blowers under  
13           State Senate bill 1552, effective April 1, 2008. The use of leaf blowers on road  
14           shoulders, loose dirt, dirt fields, and in blowing debris onto roadways is  
15           prohibited in Arizona. Additionally, cities and counties within the Phoenix  
16           metropolitan area are obligated to restrict the use of leaf blowers when a High  
17           Pollution Advisory is in effect. These restrictions aim to reduce particle  
18           pollution.

1 Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. § 586 is added to read:

2 § 586. REGULATION OF LEAF BLOWERS

3 On or before Jan 1, 2016, the Secretary shall adopt rules regulating the use  
4 of leaf blowers and leaf vacuums to minimize noise pollution and to prevent air  
5 pollution from particulate matter due to the operation of leaf blowers to move  
6 debris and leaf vacuums to collect debris. As used in this section, “leaf  
7 blower” means any portable power equipment designed or operated to produce  
8 a current of air by fuel, electricity, or other means to push, propel, or blow  
9 dust, leaves, grass clippings, cuttings and trimmings from trees and shrubs,  
10 refuse, trash, or other debris. As used in this section, “leaf vacuum” means any  
11 movable power equipment designed or operated to produce suction by fuel,  
12 electricity, or other means to gather and collect dust, leaves, grass clippings,  
13 refuse, or other debris.

14 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.