VPIRG Testimony on H.557
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Thank you for inviting us to testify. I'm excited the Committee is taking this important issue up, and look forward to working with you on it. We believe this bill, while it is one piece of the puzzle, would be a step in the right direction. Slashing climate change pollution is a requirement of *physics*, so the least we could do is make it a requirement in law.

Climate change – a serious problem that requires serious action:

- Climate change must be addressed, fully and *now*.
    - The commonly accepted threshold of climate "safety," 2 degrees C [3.6 degrees F] temperature rise over pre-industrial levels, is now properly considered *extremely dangerous*;
    - Even 2 degrees C is drifting out of reach, absent efforts of a scale and speed beyond anything currently proposed;
    - Our current trajectory is leading us toward 4 or 6 (or 8 or 10) degrees C, which we now know to be a potentially civilization-threatening disaster.
    - "*a 4 degrees C future is incompatible with an organized global community, is likely to be beyond 'adaptation', is devastating to the majority of ecosystems, and has a high probability of not being stable*." [1]

Suggested changes to H.557:

- Page 3, lines 1-2
    - All State agencies, departments, boards and other entities shall implement these greenhouse gas emission limits
- Progress towards emission limits should be based on lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions, not only emissions within Vermont's borders.
    - While we recognize that tracking the full cradle-to-grave impacts of an energy source is a complex and difficult endeavor, and additional complications arise given a lack of that analysis for Vermont's 1990 emissions, ultimately lifecycle climate impact is what matters, not simply emissions within Vermont's borders. This is an issue that the Thermal Efficiency Task Force flagged as important and appropriate for the TES to address[2], and given the growing body of evidence that tar sands oil[3] and fracked gas[4,5] (to take the two most prominent examples) have significantly higher lifecycle climate impacts than their conventional counterparts, no analysis of Vermont's progress towards combating climate change would be complete without a thorough accounting of these impacts.

1- Dr. Kevin Anderson, Tyndall Center for Climate Change Research: http://137.205.102.156/Ms%20S%20J%20Pain/20111124/Kevin_Anderson_-_Flash_%28Medium%29_-_20111124_05.26.31PM.html
2- http://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/psd/files/Topics/Energy_Efficiency/TETF/TETF%20Report%20to%20the%20Legislature_FINAL_1_15_13_2.pdf (p115)
3- http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/191608.pdf
4- Nature, "Should Fracking Stop?" by Howarth, RW and A Ingraffea (September 2011)
5- United Nations IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, Working Group I (September 2013)