



**Senate Natural Resources and Energy
VLCT Testimony
January 17, 2014**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S. 292 and S. 201.

As I mentioned in testimony on October 30, Chapter 117 of Title 24, the planning statutes, requires regional and municipal plans to include:

✦ ***“an energy [element/plan], which may include an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems within the [region/municipality], a statement of policy on the conservation of energy and the development of renewable energy resources, and a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use and control devices likely to result in conservation of energy.”*** (24 VSA§ 4348a (a)(3) for regions and 4382 (a)(9) for municipalities);

✦ ***“a utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective local and regional community facilities and public utilities, whether publicly or privately owned, showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including...power generating plants and transmission lines... and recommendations to meet future needs for those facilities, with indications of priority of need”*** (24 VSA § 4348a(a)5 for regions and 4382 (a) (4) for municipalities);

✦ ***“an economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth”.*** (24 VSA § 4348a (a) (10) for regions and 4382 (a) (11) for municipalities).

We support the proposed language of S. 201, which would amend 30 VSA § 248 (b) to require that substantial deference be given to the recommendations of the municipal and regional planning commissions, the recommendations of the municipal legislative bodies, and the land conservation measures contained in the plan of any affected municipality (page 10 of the bill). This change would recognize the substantial work that regions and municipalities put into the development of their plans every five years to address changing circumstances.

The VLCT Municipal Policy adopted at our annual meeting in October, states,

4.06 D. In the Certificate of Public Good process, the PSB should give “substantial consideration” to municipal concerns and determinations by holding hearings in any municipality potentially affected by a proposed project. The PSB should include all local decisions concerning the project within the PSB docket, formulate areas of inquiry based on concerns raised in the local hearing process, and require any decision to address local concerns raised in local determinations and adopted municipal plans.

We urge you to include language requiring the PSB to include all local decisions in the docket, formulate areas of inquiry based on concerns raised in the local process and require any decision to address local concerns raised in local plans and determinations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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