

Public Comment
4-23-15
H.40

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April 22, 2015

Vermont State Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee
115 State St.
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Senators,

Agri-Mark Dairy Cooperative member farms and their Cabot facilities located throughout Vermont strongly support the House-passed version of H.40 with its creation of a new renewable portfolio standard for Vermont utilities and its provisions to freeze the Energy Efficiency Charge at 2015 levels until 2018. The bill would also require the Legislature's Joint Energy Committee to report by February 2016 on whether to extend or alter the cap or make other related changes.

In a recent 12-month period (March 2014 to February 2015), Agri-Mark had more than \$4 million in electricity spending for its 13 Green Mountain Power accounts in the state. These accounts include facilities in Cabot, Middlebury, Waitsfield, Montpelier, St. Albans, Waterbury and Quechee. Agri-Mark paid \$258,490 in Energy Efficiency Charges (EEC) representing 6.3% of the total costs during that period. This is a substantial expense and impacts all our farmer-owners and our operations. We have worked hard and incurred expenses to achieve incentive rebates under the program, but those usually amount to only a fraction of what we pay in.

We believe that it makes sense to cap the program charges and pause the escalating financial burden on Vermonters. Capping the EEC charges should not affect the current levels of services and support provided under Efficiency Vermont since in recent years, Efficiency Vermont has had difficulty finding cost effective ways to spend the millions of dollars already raised by the EEC. It then makes sense to have the Legislature's Joint Energy Committee review all aspects of the program and report by February 2016 on whether to extend or alter the cap or make other related changes.

Energy conservation is crucial to us all, but it is also important that actions taken toward that goal make sense and are as effective and efficient as possible. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely yours,

Robert D. Wellington
Senior Vice President
Economics, Communications
& Legislative Affairs



Owned by the farm families of Agri-Mark who provide their farm fresh milk to their award-winning brands.

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