

Thomas Hughes
House Appropriations Committee
2/14/2018

My name is Thomas Hughes and I am the campaign coordinator for the Energy Independent Vermont coalition.

Energy Independent Vermont members include Vermont businesses, non-profits, academic institutions, religious groups, students and economists. We are all working together to strengthen the Vermont economy and help Vermonters transition to a cleaner, healthier future by pricing the carbon pollution causing global warming.

I'm here today to encourage you to support the recommendations of the Governor's Climate Action Commission, the Mayors Coalition, the Climate Economy Action Team of the Vermont Council on Rural Development, and the General Assembly's Climate Solutions Caucus to fund a non-partisan, independent analysis of the costs and benefits of carbon pricing.

I believe the study should look at some of the most promising opportunities to use market forces to drive down carbon emissions. Those opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- [The ESSEX Plan](#), as proposed in [H.791](#) and [S.284](#)
- [The Vermont Case for Carbon Dividends](#), as proposed in [H.531](#)
- An expansion of the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative's](#) carbon pricing program to transportation fuels, or a new regional carbon pricing program such as the one under consideration by the [Transportation & Climate Initiative](#)
- Joining California, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia in the [Western Climate Initiative](#)

To frame the study, I am happy to suggest some materials that could be helpful, and that I will leave with the Committee's assistant:

- [State-Level Carbon Taxes: Options and Opportunities for Policymakers](#), Brookings Institute

- [11 essential questions for designing a policy to price carbon](#), Brookings Institute
- The World Resources Institute's [Putting a Price on Carbon series](#) of white papers, including:
 - A Handbook for U.S. Policymakers
 - Reducing Emissions, and
 - Ensuring Equity
- Clean Energy Canada's booklet, [How to Adopt a Winning Carbon Price](#), which provides recommendations for policymakers based on the positive experience with carbon pricing in British Columbia
- The Vermont Department of Public Service's 2014 [Total Energy Study](#), which modeled a version of carbon pricing and forecast that the economy would grow and the state would create thousands of new jobs, and finally,
- Energy Independent Vermont's [analysis](#) of a Vermont-based carbon pricing program conducted by Regional Economic Models, Inc.

The REMI analysis that we commissioned explored carbon pricings net impacts on employment, gross state product, real disposable personal income, and population. In addition, it explored distributional impacts across Vermont's income ladder. The REMI analysis would be a good template to work from, but is by no means the only way to approach this project.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here today, and would be happy to serve as a resource as you consider this important opportunity.