

Testimony on H-746

Patrick Flood, for 350VT

February 9, 2018

- Thanks to the committee for taking up the bill and for Rep. Mary Sullivan, and co-sponsors Rep. Cina and Rep. Bartholomew, for introducing it.
- Climate change is worsening daily: floods, fires, drought; here in VT we have problems like Lyme disease, unpredictable farm and maple seasons, unpredictable snow and we are still paying for Irene.
- Vermont is not close to meeting the goals we set for ourselves; we need to do more, and rapidly
- This bill makes a very strong statement that we are fully committed to renewables and we are not going backwards. It represents the first step in getting to 100% renewables.
- This bill can make a huge difference and does not raise taxes. There is no harm even to fossil fuel company profits except for potential future profits.
- Moving to renewables is the economic development we need, not more fossil fuels.
- This bill is not unlike the bill the legislature passed a few years ago to ban fracking in Vermont. Natural gas is not benign. Methane is far worse even than oil.
- The city of Portland, Oregon passed a similar ban in 2016, which has been upheld by the Oregon Court of Appeals
- This bill carefully exempts things like gas tanks and gas lines, smaller infrastructure that uses our current system.
- The purpose really is to prevent new or expanded larger infrastructure like pipelines.
- We believe a number of technical improvements could be made to the bill to make it stronger and clearer. We request of the committee time to testify to those improvements.

- 350VT is pursuing town meeting day resolutions to ban more fossil fuel infrastructure. The resolution is on the warning or ballot in 38 towns.
- We realize this bill will be controversial. But the time has come to finally make a firm and irreversible
- commitment to reduce our carbon emissions and move to a renewable energy future.
- There are many safety and regulatory issues with the NG pipeline that continue to be reviewed.