

Representative Mollie S. Burke H.273 Testimony
House Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife
22 March, 2017

REASONS TO TAKE UP AND SUPPORT H.273

- I. Existing statute states that the goal of the State is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Those goals are 50% reduction by January 1, 2028 and 75% by January 1, 2050.
- II. 2008 Acts and Resolves created the Climate Change Oversight Committee to develop greenhouse gas reduction programs to implement State energy policy.
- III. Existing authority indicates that one of these programs could be a cap and trade program for greenhouse gases caused by transportation, heating, cooling, and ventilation.
- IV. In 2015 the Transportation Climate Initiative, made up of heads of transportation, energy, and environmental agencies in 11 Northeastern states asked Georgetown University's Climate Center for an analysis of state energy goals. Georgetown concluded that carbon emissions from transportation need to be reduced in order to meet state pollution goals and to address the magnitude of the challenge posed by climate change.
- V. The Georgetown study proposed policy changes, including a cap and trade program, that could reduce transportation pollution by 31-40%. This program could approximate one in California for gasoline and other petroleum fuels which took effect in 2015. According to the Vermont Agency of Transportation, Vermont would have to make the 40% mark in order to meet state goals.
- VI. Cap and Trade program is market based. Vermont's participation in the regional cap and trade program (RGGI) in the electricity sector has been beneficial, and has not resulted in an increase in electricity costs.
- VII. While we need to meet our statutory goals for energy, this issue is not just a matter of meeting goals. I believe we need to take the threats posed by climate change seriously. I believe it is an emergency, affecting all aspects of life, our economy, our health, and our safety.
- VIII. Climate Change Economy Initiative believes that we can grow our economy while addressing climate change through innovative economic development and market based solutions. This bill supports that initiative.