



To: House Ways and Means Committee

April 24, 2018

Vermont REALTORS® represents approximately 1700 real estate agents who work directly for the citizens and property owners of Vermont. We have a genuine interest in preserving the quality of our real estate inventory and we understand that our environment has a direct impact on value. We are supportive of most of the clean water efforts that are in the legislative processes.

"All in Concept"

The phrase "all in" has become an axiom in the clean water discussions with history dating back to Act 64. Vermont REALTORS understands this to mean that everyone benefits from clean water; everyone shall have a responsibility to preserve and pay for it.

Act 73 Funding Sources

1. State Payments- Paid by Vermonters.
2. Federal Payments- Paid by Vermonters.
3. Municipal – Paid by Vermont property owners.
4. Private Development- Paid by Vermont property owners.

Act 73 Estimated Gaps

1. Municipalities
2. Agriculture

Fairness, Equity, and Nexus

Vermont property owners benefit from a beautiful state and already pay most of the clean water bill by either direct financing or by retrofitting farms and developed property. Vermonters are not the only people who use our resources. The "All In" theory only works if it is all in. Vermont property owners should not be the exclusive financiers of clean water that people from all over the world come and enjoy for free.

Committee discussions on S.260 have begun with the fair assertion that the polluters pay. The polluter pay model includes determining where the impervious surface is and cross referencing it to parcel data. Neither data point is available currently. This has shifted the discussions to tiered fees, which fails due to complexity and then the discussion settles on a flat parcel scenario because it the easiest. A fair property fee will be difficult and take time to accomplish, while an easy fee is inequitable, unfair and does not hold the direct nexus to pollution.

Thank you,
Matthew Musgrave
Government Affairs Director