

H.746 Fossil Fuel Infrastructure Ban  
April 12, 2018 Testimony  
House Energy and Technology Committee

**Sophie Dauerman**  
**Shelburne, Vermont**

Hi, I'm Sophie and I'm a Sophomore at CVU and a member of Environmental Action club. I would like to start off by thanking you for taking the time to hear my testimony. My involvement in environmental activism stems from my love of nature. I feel incredibly grateful to live in such a beautiful state. I am reminded of this every day, whether it be sailing on the lake or cross-country skiing in the woods. Looking into the future, I feel strongly that we preserve and value this gift to ensure it remains a point of pride for our state. My love of nature goes hand in hand with my passion for science. Through my involvement in scientific research, I've seen the potential science has to make a positive difference in the world. Connecting the two, I've sprung an interest in climate science and environmental engineering. I strongly believe that Vermont should be a leader in replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy.

H.746, to prevent fossil fuel infrastructure, would ban more fracked gas pipelines. Fracking has many alarming environmental impacts, including contaminating drinking water, releasing hazardous chemicals into the air, and increasing seismic activity. Fracked gas also poses many environmental concerns after it is extracted. The burning of natural gas is releasing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere furthering climate change. Vermont has taken into account these concerns and has banned fracking. However, we still pump natural gas into our state through pipelines, and if legal action is not taken this process may increase. It is important we take a firm stand against the consumption of fossil fuels and emerge as a national leader on the issue. Vermont places value in the environment and it's time we back this up with legislation that would help tackle the issue on a large scale. Less fracked fossil fuels brought in would allow us to invest in renewable energy and make strides into the future of the fuel industry, all while protecting the land we love.

Thank you again for your time, I hope you continue to consider and discuss this critical bill.

**Mykala O'Farrell**  
**Williston, Vermont**

Hello, my name is Mykala O'Farrell. I am a Sophomore at Champlain Valley Union High School and I am a member of our schools Environmental Action Club. I would like to begin by thanking you all for taking the time to listen to my testimony about fossil fuel infrastructure in Vermont.

This issue holds importance to me because I am extremely passionate about the environment as the majority of my favorite activities take place in our fascinating and remarkable wilderness. Some of my fondest memories are from the times I have spent hiking, biking, and kayaking in different areas around Vermont. I could not imagine what my childhood or my current life would be like if I was not able to enjoy nature and experience its true and pure beauty. This admiration for our environment has led me to feel empowered to take action on this issue.

I feel that that act H.746 should continue to be considered because fracked gas pipelines present great risks and dangers that should not be overlooked. Pipelines present these risks as pipelines can erupt and their wells can leak. These eruptions trigger massive fires, which have devastating outcomes. Therefore, the implication of pipelines in Vermont is putting our community members and our environment in severe danger.

The possible event of a pipeline explosion became a reality for San Bruno, California when their Pacific Gas and Electric pipeline exploded. This explosion took the lives of 8 innocent community members and forever impacted the San Bruno area. These deaths could of been completely avoided if the pipeline was not installed in the first place. Another case was when the Utica pipeline in Ohio exploded and broke into flames. Thankfully this explosion did not injure anyone, but it very well could of ended in a dramatically different way.

These dangers of pipelines hit close to home as we have a Natural Gas pipeline that runs near CVU and that was considered to be put in in a somewhat “reckless” manner. If this pipeline were to erupt the CVU community would face pipelines dangerous aspects first hand, which furthers my concern for this infrastructure. This danger that goes hand in hand with pipelines activates me to ask that you continue to consider act H. 746, as this bill will not only protect our environment, but it will also protect the safety of Vermonters. Thank you again for your time and further consideration.

**Avery Murray-Gurney**  
**Hinesburg, Vermont**

We tend to think of climate change as an impending issue, when in reality climate change is already here. We're already seeing the damage, like rising sea levels, stronger storms like Hurricane Maria, and even local impacts on our maple and agriculture industries. As a teenager, the impacts of climate change will have more of an impact on my life. As I grow up, the damage caused by climate change will become more severe and more visible. Future generations will have fewer opportunities unless we actively work to fight climate change. Banning fossil fuel infrastructure, or supporting similar legislation, is a great way to prevent future impacts of climate change. Fossil fuels are a major contributor to the CO2 levels that are fueling climate change. By banning future fossil fuel infrastructure, we start to work towards depending on renewable energy instead of continuing to rely on fossil fuels. This is a great step for us to take. Additionally, supporting legislation like this is a great way for Vermont to be a leader in the climate movement; So far, only Portland, Oregon has banned fossil fuel infrastructure. By acting, we could inspire others to act. I urge you to take action by support this legislation. Thank you.

**Eliza McLean**  
**Shelburne, Vermont**

*Hi, my name is Eliza McLean and I'm a sophomore at CVU. I live in Shelburne, Vermont.*

*I am a member of ENACT, my school's environment club because I am very interested in what is going on in the environment and believe that we need to cut down on the fossil fuel emissions.*

*I would like to thank the House Energy and Technology Committee for allowing me to voice my concerns about pipelines today. I know there is no perfect energy source. But what I do know is that any new pipelines will be there for 30 years and putting in new pipelines will mean we will be using them for the next 30 years. That means 30 years of emissions, water pollution, and possible other problems that come from relying on pipelines to move natural gas and oil. I am 16 now. I hope that instead of investing in pipelines we'll invest in renewables instead so that when I'm 46 I will be able to see how we moved away from relying on fossil fuels. I strongly ask this committee to consider this bill prohibiting the construction of more pipelines. The quality of my life, of my friends' lives, and of all our future families' lives depend on the action you take.*

**Naomi Diamond**  
**Williston, Vermont**

Hi, my name is Naomi Diamond. I am a Sophomore at CVU, and a member of the CVU Environmental Action Club. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about this important issue.

From a young age I was encouraged to participate in many outdoor activities whether it was ski racing, hiking, or playing soccer. My love of the outdoors and skiing especially has pushed me to take action on the issues of the environment. I have many concerns about the future of our beautiful outdoors, and all the incredible things it offers. However, I am not the only one worried for our environment, whether in Vermont, or all over the planet. Many other youth share my concerns and are starting to take action to make changes happen that will better our world, and protect our environment.

Many youth have already made a difference in encouraging the process of moving away from Fossil Fuels. This year on town meeting day, 35 towns in Vermont voted in favor of resolutions that seek climate solutions. Many teens spoke at their respective town meetings, sharing resolutions to climate issues, and supporting the ban on any new fossil fuel infrastructure.

Act H.746 would prohibit the construction of fossil fuel infrastructure in Vermont. This bill has the ability to make a huge difference in preventing so many effects of the extraction, transportation, and burning of fossil fuels in our state. This is important because it will limit the use of fossil fuels in Vermont, and therefore reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

The burning of fossil fuels is leading to an increase in the amount of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. These gases cause global warming, the source of the melting glaciers, rising sea levels, shifting climate patterns, and so much more. On top of that, just the process of extracting and transporting these fossil fuels can cause air and water pollution, degrade land, ruin ecosystems, and put many humans and animals at serious risk to their health.

Thank you again for hearing us today, and I ask that you support the passage of H.746.

**Kylie Pierce**  
**Williston, VT**

Hello, and thank you for having us here today. My name is Kylie Pierce and I am a sophomore at Champlain Valley Union High School. I have been in Environmental Action Club for almost a year now and I continue to be fascinated by how much the world around us has been changing. I first gained an interest in climate change throughout my freshman year at CVU. My teachers incorporated many research, visual, and other projects on the causes and effects of climate change as well as solutions to it. We learned about rising sea levels, warming temperatures, droughts, and other crucial impacts that climate change has on our planet. Skiing, hiking, swimming, and other outdoor activities have always been a passion of mine, however learning about climate change has made me appreciate these things to a greater extent. The knowledge that I have gained makes me optimistic that we can change the path we're headed in by incorporating more renewables and taking action.

As of right now ratepayers are having to pay a huge cost towards building fossil fuel pipelines and many don't support this. Pipelines are dangerous and could be replaced by renewables, a much safer and environmentally friendly option. Pipelines are also too expensive for how much pollution they can cause as well as the health risks they pose. Renewables are a better use of our money and a better choice for our future. Using our money to make more energy efficient homes and buildings is not only better for our environment but it is something that ratepayers would rather put their money towards. Act H.746 would prohibit the construction of fossil fuel infrastructure in Vermont. This bill would make a substantial impact on the quality of our environment and would prevent the use of hazardous fossil fuels such as pipelines. Once again, thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony and I hope that you take this bill into great consideration.