



STATE OF VERMONT
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 Rural Economic Development Working Group

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April 7, 2017

Chairwoman Townshend and Members of the House Government
 Operations Committee and
 Chairman Carr and Members of the House Energy and Technology
 Committee

We, the members of the Rural Economic Development Working Group,
 would like to express our strong support for H.459, an act related to the
 creation of Rural Economic Development Infrastructure Districts.

The REDI districts will allow municipalities, portions of municipalities, or
 groups of municipalities to plan, finance, own and operate infrastructure
 including renewable energy, telecommunications, transportation and
 other facilities, for the purposes of increasing community resilience,
 sustainability and economic vitality. These districts are unique in allowing
 access to advantageous financing of projects that cross municipal borders.
 They rely on a solid business case to access financing rather than
 on taxpayer dollars.

Vermont's rural communities know the unique infrastructure needs of
 their own area. The ability to form a REDI district would provide these
 towns with a means to serve their own needs, instead of waiting for state
 programs or incentives that can often prove elusive.

We would be happy to testify in your committee on this bill and urge you
 to support the development of this important rural economic
 development tool.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
 Rural Economic Development Working Group