

1 H.631

2 Introduced by Representatives Lefebvre of Newark, Feltus of Lyndon, Higley  
3 of Lowell, Lawrence of Lyndon, McCullough of Williston,  
4 Quimby of Concord, and Sheldon of Middlebury

5 Referred to Committee on

6 Date:

7 Subject: Forestry; agriculture; forestland; maple production

8 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the  
9 Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets to report to the General Assembly  
10 regarding the impact of large-scale maple production on the health and vitality  
11 of the State's forestlands.

12 An act relating to forestland used for maple production

13 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

14 Sec. 1. AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS REPORT;

15 IMPACT OF INDUSTRIAL MAPLE PRODUCTION ON

16 VERMONT'S FORESTLAND

17 (a) As used in this section, "large-scale maple production operation" means

18 a person, corporation, or other entity that taps more than 100,000 trees in the

19 State annually for the purpose of collecting maple sap.

1       (b) On or before January 15, 2019, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and  
2       Markets, after consultation with the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and  
3       Recreation, shall report to the House Committees on Agriculture and Forestry  
4       and on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife and the Senate Committees on  
5       Agriculture and on Natural Resources and Energy regarding the impact of  
6       large-scale maple production operations on the health and vitality of the State's  
7       forestlands. The report shall include the following:

8           (1) an estimate of the number of large-scale maple production  
9       operations in the State;

10          (2) an estimate of the total acreage of forestland in the State that is used  
11       by large-scale maple production operations;

12          (3) a summary of the adverse forest health, environmental, and natural  
13       resources effects that can occur from excess tapping of trees, including:

14            (A) whether excess tapping negatively affects the long-term viability  
15       and health of trees; and

16            (B) whether the cultivation and management of trees by large-scale  
17       maple production operations reduces diversity of tree species or reduces or  
18       eliminates wildlife habitat; and

19          (4) recommended regulatory or legislative actions to address the  
20       negative effects of large-scale maple production operations on the health and  
21       vitality of the State's forestlands.

1        (c) Prior to issuing the report required under subsection (a) of this section,  
2        the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall convene at least three  
3        meetings of interested persons to collect public input on the impact of large-  
4        scale maple production operations on the health and vitality of the State's  
5        forestlands.

6        Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

7        This act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.