

Vermont Climate and Health Alliance

Medical and Health Professionals Calling for Change

January 18, 2018

To Vermont Legislators:

The Vermont Climate and Health Alliance is a newly formed group of Vermont physicians, nurses, therapists, veterinarians, researchers, health aides, and other health professionals who share a deep concern about the impacts of climate change on human health. It is our conviction that, given current fossil fuel consumption trajectories, climate change will become the major threat to human health in the the 21st century.

For decades, climate scientists have been telling us that the climate and the oceans are sending unequivocal signals of poor planetary health. The pitch and intensity of those signals are now rising quickly. Based on the scientific evidence, we believe the underlying processes are near a tipping point, and, as such, a far more robust and immediate policy response is needed across the Nation.

We reference two important documents. The first is the executive summary of a report titled "*The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States.*"¹ This comprehensive report, prepared by more than 100 experts, describes the far-reaching impacts of global warming on human health. The second document is a report prepared by the Vermont Department of Health.² Less expansive in its scope than the national report, this document highlights an important subset of the many climate-related health effects that will affect the citizens of Vermont.

Building on the policy work that the Vermont Legislature has undertaken for more than a decade, we ask that lawmakers accelerate the development and adoption of policies that will mitigate this unfolding health disaster for our children and grandchildren. We believe the solutions will also create jobs and contribute to the long term economic strength of our communities. We ask that the Legislature once again demonstrate to the rest of the country that Vermonters have the courage, intelligence, creativity and compassion needed to implement sensible, fair, and economically sound policies that will move our state and the Nation forward. Now, more than ever, action at the state level is critical.

We are ready to engage with you in this work by providing input related to our areas of expertise. We intend to weigh in, through testimony and other means, on the potential health benefits of proposed climate-related legislation.

Sincerely,
The Vermont Climate and Health Alliance
www.vtcha.org

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This letter has been endorsed by the following organizations:

-- The Vermont Medical Society --

-- The Vermont Public Health Association --

-- The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association --

-- The Vermont Chapter of the American Lung Association --

-- The Center for Health and Learning --

This letter has been signed by the 283 Vermont medical and health professionals listed on the attached page.

To contact VTCHA, please call or email

Dan Quinlan
VTCHA Chair
802.760.7400
contact@vtcha.org

¹ *The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States*, US Global Change Research Program, April 2016. (www.globalchange.gov/browse/reports/executive-summary-impacts-climate-change-human-health-united-states)

² *Climate Change and Health in Vermont*, Vermont Department of Health, October 2017. (www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ENV_CH_WhitePaper.pdf)

Signatories from the Vermont Medical and Health Professional Community

Marcia	Abdelrahman	RN	Claire	Diamond	MA	Mike	Landon	MS	Matthew	Sadowsky	MS
Clare	Abercrombie	BS	Mike	Dionne	MBA	Ann	Laramee	NP	Joanna	Schmit	MS, DVM
Ann	Adsem	BSN	Kim	Dittus	MD, PhD	Peggy W	Larson	MS, DVM, JD	Kim	Schmitt	MS, PA-C
Varun	Agrawal	MD	Trey	Dobson	MD	Michael	Latreille	MD	Kurt	Schulz	MS, DVM
Jessica	Akey	PhD	Pat	Donehower	MSN	Alex	Laventure	BS, MD	Michael	Scollins	MD
Tom	Alcorn	AHS	Belinda	Doran	BA, BSN, MFA	Anna Jane	Letendre	BS	Martha	Seagrave	PA-C, RN
Joseph	Aloi	PharmD	Michelle	Dorwart	MD, MPH	Samantha	Lewandowsk	MS	Emina	Seferagic	
Elizabeth	Alton	MS, DVM	Julia	Doucet	BS, RN	Benjamin	Littenberg	MD	Jamie	Sharp	BSN
Robert	Areson	MD	Julie	Dufresne	BSN, CAPA	David	Little	MD	M. Kathleen	Shaw	DVM
Peter	Areson	MS, MD, FACS	G. Richard	Dundas	MD	Deborah	Lowry	MSN, RN	Kelsey	Sheahan	MD
Millie	Armstrong	DVM	Jessica	Early	MSN	Rebecca	MacKenzie	LICSW	Jessica	Sherman	DNP
Lori	Augustyniak		Trees-ah	Elder	RN, MSN	Megan	MacKinnon	MA, EMT	Adrienne	Snider	DVM
Laurie	Aunchman	ASN, RN	Marsha	Ellis	BSN	Wilhelmina	Maher	ASN	Halle	Sobel	MD
Jennifer	Bamford	MD	Casey	Ellison	NPhD	Megan	Malgeri	MD	Addie	Soule	RN
Alice	Barbera	BA	Jessica	Faraci	MD	Barbara	Martin	BS	Krystine	Spieß	DO, BS
Diana	Barnard	MD	Elizabeth	Farah		Darlene	Maxwell	BSN, RN	Carrie	Steele	RN
Mark	Barton	BS	Corine	Farewell	DVM, MBA	Martha	McAuliffe	BSN	Sandra	Steingard	MD
Susan	Baxley	BSN, RN	Donna	Fialkoff	MS	Colleen	McCarthy	BS, EMT-B	Shelly	Stelzer	MD
JessieMae	Belcher	BSN	Gayle	Finkelstein	MS RN	Laura	McCray	MD, MSCSE	Bonitta	Steuer	MSN, CNM
John	Berino	MS, CIH, CSP	Jeff	Finkelstein	BSEE	Warren	McDermott		Ian	Stokes	PhD
Stephen	Berns	MD	Kate	Fitzpatrick	DNP, NEABC	Lucille	McDermott	RN	Magge	Stone	BSN
Jennifer	Bevilacqua	VMD, VSMT	Jon	Ford	MS, PA-C	Mica	McDonald	CCH	Marylynn	Strachan	RN
Julie	Bibleheimer	MA	Priscilla	Fox	J.D.	Donald	McIntyre	MD, FAAD	Lisa	Strate	MSN, NEABC
Linda	Blair	MSW, LICSW	Karen	Fagnoli-Munn	RN, BSN, MSA	Karen	Mckenny	BSN RN	Miriam	Sturgis	MD
Sarah	Blau	DVM	C.	Fraser	MD	Blake	McKnight	MS, FNP-C	Gary	Sturgis	DVM
Ruth	Blauwikel	DVM, PhD	Rick	Frauton	BS	Robert	McLellan	MD, MPH	Michael	Stutzman	MS, MD
Lynn	Blevins	MD, MPH	Alexander	Friend	BA, MS	Katherine	McNamara	DVM	Scott	Sutor	DVM
Zafir	Bludevich	BS, PT	Gillian	Galford	PhD	Tammy	McNamara	DVM	Michael	Tanneberger	DVM
Kathryn	Blume	BA	Janice	Gallant	MD	Jack	McShane	MA, ARRT	JoEllen	Tarallo	EdD, MCHES
Peg	Bolton	MD	Mary	Galle	BS	Heather	Meisterling	BSN	Amylynn	Teleron	MD
John	Bond	PA	Shayne	Galloway	BA	Chad	Mitchell	MD	Griffin	Thayer	MA
Susan	Boyer	DNP	Jennifer	Garber	DVM	Julie	Mitchell	MS	Alexandra	Thomsen	PhD
Kilbourne	Boyle	BSN, CHPN	Cori	Giroux	DVM	Angela	Monahan	BSN	Lauren	Trunsgard-Scott	BSN, MSOL
William	Brady	DVM	Janet	Golden	MSN, RN, CGRN	Linda	Moore	DVM	Michele	Tulis	DVM
Cricket	Braun	Psy.D.	Alex	Graham	MD, MBA	Jessica	Moore	BSN, RN	James	Ulager	MD
Natalee	Braun	PhD	Steven	Grant	BA, MD	Erin	Morris	MD	Mary	Val Palumbo	DNP
Max	Breidenstein	BS	David	Grass	PhD	Julie	Morse	BSN	Constance	van Eeghen	DrPH, MHSA
Nancy	Bretschneider	BA, LMT	Caitlin	Greenberg	DO	Sue	Murdock	MSN, GNPBC	Christine	Vatovec	PhD
Kelly	Brooks	MD	Karen	Grunewald	DNP	Lynn	Murrell	MS, DVM	Cheryl	Vince	Ed.M.
Libby	Brooks	BSN	Erica	Guay	MSNE	Gatha	Nair	MD	Jack	Visco	MSN
Donald	Brown	DVM, PhD	Kimberly	Hageman	MD	Mark	Nash	MS	Alexa	Visco	MS
Tonia	Brown	BA	Daniel	Hament	DVM	Terence	Naumann	MD	Kramer	Wahlberg	MD
Larken	Bunce	MS	Sandra	Hamlet	BA, AS	Lisa	Nelson	V.M.D.	Sasha	Waldstein	MD
Lee-Anna	Burgess	MBBS	Linda	Havey	DNP, RNC	Hank	Ng	MD	Joyce	Walsleben	RN, PhD
Esther	Caballero-Manrique	MD	Virginia	Haviland	BA	Emily	Nicholson	BSN	Nina	Warren	BSN
Susan	Calame	RN	John	Hearst	MD	Casey	O'Brien	EMT	Brian	Wasser	MD
Ann	Carpenter	BSN, RN	Lincoln	Heath	MD	Linda	OBrien	B.S,MT-ASCP	Kristen	Watson	BA
Reed	Carr	BS	Samatha	Helinski	MSN, RN	Amy	Odefey	MD	Katherine	Wayman	MD
Elizabeth	Carson	BA	Kent	Henderson	DVM	Oxcar	Omuonya	BSN	Jessica	Webster	MA
Elizabeth	Carter	MSN	Mia	Hockett	MD, MPH	Malcolm	Paine	MD, MBChB	Cori	Weiner	DVM
Lisa	Catapano-Friedman	MD, DLFAPA	Virginia	Hood	MBBS, MPH	Nehpreet	Pandhai	MD	Michael	Welther	MD
Jennifer	Chamberlin	BS	Caroline	Horn	MS, DVM	Bindu	Panikkar	PhD	Lisa	Wester	RN
Monique	Citro		Charles	Howard	CPCU, CLU	Isaac	Patch	RN	Elizabeth	Whateley	MD
Virginia	Clarke	DVM	Phillip	Howard	MD	Marcella	Pelkey	OT	Sara	White	DVM
Diana	Clayton	MS	Laurinda	Hulce	MA	Phoebe	Pelkey	MPA	Jessica	White	BS, BSN
Jaina	Clough	MD	Erin	Hurley	MPH	Christy	Pilsucki	MSW, LICSW	Jessica	Whitelock	BSN
Julie	Cole	MPA	Rachel	Inker	MD	Geoff	Pollitt	BA	Barry	Whitworth	BA
Kayla	Corbett	MD	Roslynn	Jarvis	BSN	Julia	Powelson	MD	Gregory	Wilson	MDiv
Mari	Cordes	BS, RN	Judith	Jerome	MSW, LICSW	Dan	Quinlan	MS, MBA	Dennis	Woods	MD
Alison	Cornwall	MS, DVM	Carolyn Sue	Johansen	BS	Patricia	Quinlan	BSEE	Rhiannon	Woolwich-Holzman	DVM
Susan	Couture	BSN	Rebecca	Jones MD	MD	David	Rand	DO, MPH	Michaela	Wozniakewicz	DVM
Elizabeth	Cozart	MD	Cybelle	Joy	RN, MSW, CCM	Mary Ann	Ray	BSN-BC	Barbara	Wyman	RN
Emily	Crawford	DVM	Janet	Kahn	EdM, PhD, LMT	Charlotte	Reback	MD	Douglas	Wysockey-Johnson	MDiv
Judi	Daly	MSW, LICSW	Amalia	Kane	MD	Aaron	Reiter	MD	Robin	Yandell	APRN
Greg	Dana	MPA	Frances	Keeler	RN, MSN	Allen	Repp	MS, MD	Leslie	Young	MD
Sidarth	Dasari	MD	Sonya	Kennedy	MSN	Stephanie	Rettew	BSN, MA	Abby	Young	BSN
Joshua	Dein	VMD, MS	Edward	Kent	MD, FAAAAI	Caroline	Reynolds	DO	Helia	Zamprogno	MS,DVM,PhD
Allison	Dellner	CCH	Brianna	Kim	BSN, CCRN	Taylor	Ricketts	Ph.D	Nancy	Zimny	MS
Susan Leigh	Deppe	M.D.	Jan	Kline	MA, BSN	Susan	Rittenhouse	AB; PhD			
Carrie	Dessureau	BS	Darren	Knox	MD, MPH	Blair	Robinson	BA, RN-BC			
Elizabeth	Deutsch	RN	Emily	Koella	BS	Andre	Robinson	MS, MD (2018)			
			Amanda	Kolb	MD	Lee	Rosen	PhD			