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S.21

Introduced by Senators Ayer, Lyons, Pollina, and White

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Energy; natural resources; land use; large buildings; solar generation;  
study

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a  
committee to examine and make recommendations requiring the installation of  
solar electric generation on or at large buildings that are heated or cooled.

An act relating to a study on whether to require large buildings to install  
solar generation

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

Sec. 1. LARGE BUILDINGS; SOLAR GENERATION; STUDY

COMMITTEE; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created a study committee, to be known as the Study  
Committee on Solar at Large Buildings (the Committee), to examine whether  
to require the installation of solar electric generation on or at large buildings.  
As used in this section, “large building” means an enclosed structure that has a  
roof and walls and a floor space that measures at least 4,000 square feet and

1 whose operation includes one or more of the following: consumption of  
2 electricity, heating space, or heating water.

3 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following nine  
4 members:

5 (1) a member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker  
6 of the House;

7 (2) a member of the Senate, appointed by the Committee on  
8 Committees;

9 (3) the Commissioner of Public Service or designee;

10 (4) the Chair of the Natural Resources Board or designee;

11 (5) an individual in the business of developing large buildings for  
12 commercial purposes, appointed by the Governor;

13 (6) an individual in the business of making devices that capture the  
14 energy of the sun and convert it into electricity or heat, appointed by  
15 Renewable Energy Vermont;

16 (7) an individual employed by a Vermont electric distribution utility  
17 with expertise in the installation of solar electric generation and related  
18 transmission and distribution issues, appointed by the Governor;

19 (8) a representative of the Vermont Association of Planning and  
20 Development Agencies, appointed by the Association; and

1           (9) a Vermont resident with expertise on environmental and energy  
2           issues by joint appointment of the Vermont Natural Resources Council and the  
3           Vermont Public Interest Research Group.

4           (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study whether to require the  
5           installation of solar electric generation on or at large buildings and, if so, under  
6           what conditions and through what process or program. This study shall include  
7           consideration of each of the following:

8           (1) The public benefits and costs of adopting such a requirement,  
9           including environmental and land use impacts, effects on the Vermont utility  
10          grid, and economic impacts.

11          (2) If such a requirement were to be adopted:

12           (A) Notwithstanding the definition of large building in this section,  
13          the appropriate building size to which the requirement should be applied.

14           (B) The establishment of an amount of energy consumption at a large  
15          building below which the requirement would not apply and, if so, what that  
16          amount should be.

17           (C) The amount of solar generation that should be required to be  
18          installed on or at a large building and the method for determining that amount.

19           (D) The use of a cost-effectiveness test in determining whether to  
20          impose such a requirement on a particular large building or how much solar

1 generation should be required and the method to be used in performing that  
2 test.

3 (E) The on-site placement of the solar generation, including whether  
4 the requirement should be limited to roofs or other impervious surfaces or  
5 should allow ground-mounted installation.

6 (F) The role, if any, that existing transmission or distribution supply  
7 constraints on the utility grid should play in imposing such a requirement on a  
8 particular large building.

9 (G) The use of offsets to satisfy all or part of such a requirement,  
10 including whether to allow such use and under what conditions. In this  
11 subdivision (G), the term “offset” refers to the off-site installation of solar  
12 electric generation.

13 (H) The provision of incentives by the State to promote compliance  
14 with such a requirement and, if so, what incentives should be provided.

15 (I) Imposing the requirement only on new large buildings or also on  
16 existing large buildings and, if existing large buildings are included, under  
17 what circumstances, such as expansion or modification.

18 (J) The appropriate agency or agencies to administer and oversee  
19 compliance with such a requirement.

20 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,  
21 and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council and the Joint Fiscal

1 Office. On request, the Committee shall be entitled to the assistance of the  
2 Agencies of Commerce and Community Development and of Natural  
3 Resources, the Departments of Public Service and of Taxes, the Natural  
4 Resources Board, the Public Service Board, the regional planning  
5 commissions, and each Vermont retail electricity provider as defined in  
6 30 V.S.A. § 8002.

7 (e) Report. On or before January 15, 2018, the Committee shall submit a  
8 written report to the House Committee on Energy and Technology and the  
9 Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on Finance with its  
10 findings and any recommendations for legislative action in the form of  
11 proposed legislation.

12 (f) Meetings.

13 (1) The Office of Legislative Council shall call the first meeting of the  
14 Committee to occur on or before September 1, 2017.

15 (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its legislative  
16 members at the first meeting.

17 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

18 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on February 1, 2018.

19 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

20 This act shall take effect on passage.