



**Testimony of VPIRG Clean Energy and Environmental Advocate  
Kanika Gandhi concerning S. 30  
House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife  
May 9, 2019**

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, my name is Kanika Gandhi and I am the Clean Energy and Environmental Advocate at the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG).

For over 45 years, VPIRG has been working to advocate on behalf of its thousands of members in the state on a range of issues, including environmental health and climate issues. As you have heard from others on the issue, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) can be incredibly destructive for a variety of reasons and S. 30 is an important measure to ensure that these potent greenhouse gases are restricted and eventually phased out for major use in the state. We appreciate the Senate's initiative on this work and thank the committee for taking up this important issue.

HFCs are commonly used as refrigerants in appliances like air conditioners and refrigerators, as well as in insulating foam. They are also potent greenhouse gases that can have warming factors thousands of times greater than carbon dioxide per pound of mass<sup>1</sup> and are thus major contributors to global warming.

An Obama-era rule would have dramatically cut HFC emissions – a pollution reduction equal to the emissions of 21 coal-fired power plants. But that rule was partially struck down in the courts and the Trump administration dropped any further plans to regulate HFCs. As you know, the President does not take climate change seriously.

In the face of federal inaction, some states have begun to step into the breach, including California, New York, Connecticut, and Maryland. With California and New York leading the charge to ban future HFC use, it's possible that manufacturers will get the hint and start phasing it out nationwide. But we believe there is still value in having Vermont take a stand here.

We recognize and appreciate the work that the Agency of Natural Resources has put into creating rules that would phase out the use of HFCs. We see the passage of this legislation as being in support of the Agency's work. It is also an even stronger demonstration of the state's determination to address these potent gases. Phasing out HFCs and promoting the use of alternatives is a necessary and relatively easy step to promote the wellbeing of Vermonters and enhance the environment in which we live. We urge you to support S.30.

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.igsd.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/acp-13-6083-2013.pdf>