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Steering Committee Member, Vermont Youth Lobby
Stowe High School
RE: H.477
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First and foremost, thank you once again to the committee for taking our testimony today and giving the youth a chance to speak and have their voices be heard. My name is Moya Abdel-Mawgood, and I am a senior at Stowe High School. Over the next few minutes, I'd like to discuss a few things; the environment and the economy, and how they are all intertwined and laid out in this bill. Additionally, I will speak upon on how this bill will benefit Vermonters, the economy, and the environment in both the present and the future.

I think it is pretty safe to say, we all know that climate change is *real* and it's happening now and it's happening *fast*. We have a matter of decades to completely reverse these effects if we want to save our beautiful planet, currently our one and only home. As a civilization, we have come so far to develop and flourish, but it has gone so far that we are hurting the ecosystem which sustains our own life, prosperity and survival. It doesn't take much observation to realize the crazy extreme weather we have been having recently. One day we are in the negatives, it's windy, and "tundra weather", and the next the snow is melting, the ground is thawing, and your car is trudging through the mud on your way to work or school on those dirt roads, which as we all know are plentiful here in Vermont. And the cycle only repeats itself. This extreme change in climate is NOT a result of normal fluctuation of temperature and/or weather patterns. This is a DIRECT result of climate change. Which is caused none other than by the harmful amounts of fossil fuels and greenhouse gasses we are using and emitting into our atmosphere.

With the passing of this bill, as I am sure you already know, 33.33% of the funds collected will be allocated towards incentives towards energy efficiency initiatives; including, but not limited to, weatherization, EVs, and EV charging stations. These changes can and will IMMENSELY affect our environment in a positive way. Nationally, and even globally, there is a lot of buzz about trying to switch to energy efficient vehicles. Though Vermont is a small state, and even if our entire population of less than 700,000 switched to EVs. It would make a significant difference in the amount of runoff and other harmful pollutants that contaminate our waterways and fields. Yet, it would probably barely make difference on the large scale, but we can be a leader in this initiative, so that larger states with greater populations will follow our example. And even so, passing H.477 is just a start. This action would make Vermont a major catalyst in attempting to fix the damage we've done to our home, and reversing the effects of climate change.

By passing this bill, you will enable Vermont's economy to flourish, yet not at the expense of the individual people living here, but at a cost (that is not so high comparatively) of the large corporations who are really the major contributors to this global issue of climate change. With a total of 66.66% of the funds of the tax being allocated to support low income Vermonters and Vermonters who live in rural areas, we would be directly supporting those who are evidently required to pay more just to get from home to work. This long commute is in no way, shape, or form anyone's fault individually, but it is one of the major characteristics of living in this beautiful state--we are not too densely populated and industrialized. But that also comes with having to drive around A LOT.

The manner in which the bill applies the gradual increase of the tax until 2030, when said increase becomes a steady price of \$50/tonne, will ensure the stability of the current low

income and rural living Vermonters. This gradation of the tax over the course of 10 years will ensure that the *present day* Vermonters do not suffer a great hardship and have time to adapt, also with the assistance of the allocation of the funds collected. But it also ensures that there will be a future for Vermonters, and we will begin to take those large steps towards reversing the effects of global warming. In the long run, the one decision you all make on this bill could very well be a catalyst for saving the planet.

Though, I understand, coming from a district whose house representative isn't very keen on implementing new taxes, how hard it is to ask for even *more* money from certain corporations or distributors. But seriously, if that's the literal price we have to pay for reversing these life threatening effects of climate change, then do the interests of big corporations and distributors even matter? They may feel as though they are losing money in the present, when in fact they most likely have more than enough to spare and go around, especially if it is going to directly helping our planet, something every living person can and will benefit from with the passing of the Vermont Equity & Infrastructure Act.

Switching gears only slightly, as a senior in high school who always strives to do her best, I am enrolled in four Advanced Placement courses, one of which is Statistics. Now, about a month ago, we learned about Type I and Type II errors. An example of a Type I error would be treating a person who incorrectly tested positive for contagious Disease X, when in fact they were healthy. A Type II error, would be failing to treat a person who tested negative for contagious Disease X, when in fact they were sick. Of the two, evidently, Type II is far worse. Though Type I may lead the incorrectly diagnosed person to have potential financial issues in paying for said treatment they didn't really need, or needing to take time of work, or family anxiety. That is only worse for them *personally* and a few others around them. They are still

ensured to be 100% healthy and are also keeping those around them healthy, as the disease is *contagious*. Meanwhile, failing to treat someone with said contagious Disease X, could lead to that person suffering and being sick. As well as getting those around them sick, and potentially leading to a situation we may call “The Second Black Plague”.

You may be wondering why I am going on about Statistics and Type I vs. Type II errors. It is because, I would unequivocally classify not passing the Vermont Equity & Infrastructure Act a Type II error. Inaction on this bill, and on great strides towards reversing the effects of climate change, would be analogous to a “false negative” situation. Our lives, and the lives of our generation’s children are in your hands. That is how little time we as a global community have to fix this. I ask you kindly and empathetically, to consider that greatly when voting on H.477.

In closing, I would once again, like to extend my gratitude and thanks to the committee for giving the youth this opportunity to express their concerns about the environment and climate change, and our collective support of bill H.477.