

350VT Statement on Climate Legislation

350VT supports the climate change legislation proposed in the [2020 Climate Action Platform](#). We believe it is the first real attempt by Vermont to comprehensively address the climate crisis.

However, we feel the proposals need to be strengthened to reduce carbon emissions in a real and timely way, given the critical need for immediate and effective action.

We support a tax surcharge on the top 5% of Vermont taxpayers to fund concrete actions to reduce emissions, as proposed in Senator Pollina's Green New Deal bill ([S.311](#)), especially dramatically increased funding for weatherization, electric vehicle incentives and public transportation. We believe these taxpayers can and should make this special contribution since they are enjoying a huge tax windfall as a result of the Trump tax cuts.

We would like to see the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) ([H.688](#)) substantially strengthened by:

- Including a ban on any further development or expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in Vermont, such as gas pipelines.
- Requiring Vermont achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2032 and decarbonization by 2040 as proposed in the Vermont Youth Climate Congress Declaration.
- Including a stronger right to private citizen action to ensure private citizens will have legal standing.
- Establishing tighter limits on the use of carbon offsets, no greater than 10%, and assurance of no adverse impacts on people or ecosystems.
- Including stronger language on the need to address a just transition.

Additionally, as either part of the GWSA or as separate legislation, we must:

- **Create effective forest and agricultural policies that prioritize restoring water quality,** building soil health and protecting ecosystem functions and resiliency. Create economic incentives and educational support for farmers in the transition to truly regenerative practices that sequester carbon, preserve soil health and water quality.
- **Actively work to serve the needs of marginalized communities** who are socio-economically and geographically vulnerable to the effects of climate change, as proposed in the Vermont Youth Climate Congress Declaration. This includes prioritizing people of color, rural and indigenous communities and low income Vermonters in a comprehensive new disaster preparedness and response plan, as well as prioritizing these communities' access to educational facilities, incentives, job training, and transition assistance, among other critical services.
- **Create a state operated public education effort,** similar to a public health campaign and including K-12 school curriculum, to fully inform all Vermonters about the climate crisis and the need to act boldly now.
- **Reduce the renewable energy credits from Hydro Quebec to zero when the current contracts run out,** or cap at 220 MW.
- **Expand incentives for community solar projects.**