

My name is Clarissa Sprague, I am a student at UVM, a coordinator for Burlington Sunrise, and a marcher from two weeks ago. Feet like drum beats on pavement, our song filled 65 miles, with hope for change and remembrance for what is already lost. At UVM, as I flip through environmental studies textbooks, it is easy to feel hopeless, dispare for a planet that is on fire and drowning at the same time. I had forgotten how many people still care.

I moved to Vermont with the hope of studying environmental policy and learning from a progressive state, known for bold climate action. However, I find a sad irony that here we are politically spinning our wheels, delaying discussion on many transformative climate bills this session. In my home state, Portland Oregon has already passed a city ordinance banning new fossil fuel infrastructure.

I hope by now you realize the urgency of this crisis, as young people are rising up across the globe. We feel this urgency because can we see it. As ash piles up on my windowsill each summer, as Oregon air is no longer safe to breath, I come to realize that we are not talking about predictions. I have come to realize that *we* are the grandchildren they were talking about and we are facing these repercussions *now*. For my generation, we have been told all our lives that “we didn’t create this problem but it’s our job to fix it”. But we must scream and shout to let our voices be heard in a system where many those who will be most affected cannot even vote.

Our futures depend on your support of H. 51, H. 214, and H 175.

The world has already begun its transition to renewable energy. Right now 78 cents of every dollar we spend on fossil fuels leaves the Vermont economy. Instead we should be investing in renewable energies and creating jobs in state. As a college student, I want Vermont to be a place to live and stay in after I graduate.

Passing this bill would prove that you care about my generation more than those profiting from a broken and dying industry. That the polluted political atmosphere that suffocates the rest of our country will no longer stand in Vermont, that promoting fossil fuels and suffering through their consequences is not a life that we want to live. This community is hear, standing up, singing and shouting, crying and marching, and we need you to hear us.

