

Public Comment on H.51, H.175, H.214  
April 23, 2019

To: House Energy and Technology Committee

RE: Fossil Fuel Infrastructure Public Comment

The Sharon Energy Committee is currently working with the Sharon Planning Commission on enhanced energy planning in the Sharon Town Plan. We are planning for ways to contribute to Vermont's Comprehensive Energy Plan goals of securing 90% of our energy needs coming from renewable sources by 2050. As such, we plan on reducing the use of fossil fuels dramatically, becoming more energy efficient, and switching to a greater reliance on renewably generated electric power. There is no room for new fossil fuel infrastructure in our plans.

As Vermonter Bill McKibben recently noted: "Climate change is a timed test and we are running out of time." The science is clear. Recent scientific reports have noted that Vermont's average temperature has warmed 2.85°F since 1970 (1). The IPCC (2) predicts that we have only 12 years to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions or face apocalyptic consequences of climate change. Climate change is here and now. From the increasing temperatures and more frequent heavy rainfall and flood events we are witnessing in Vermont, to the increasing threats of mosquito and tick-borne diseases and invasive pests such as the emerald ash borer threatening our forests. Climate change is expensive, costing millions of dollars of infrastructure, home and business repairs and the potential loss of tourist revenue from declining winter and summer sports and a declining maple syrup industry.

We urge Vermont's legislators to support legislation that would prohibit new fossil fuel infrastructure and increase energy efficiency and renewable energy. We urge legislators to vote in favor of H.51. Bill H.51 will not increase the tax burden on Vermonters. All Vermonters will experience increasing costs if we do not demonstrably reduce the use of fossil fuels.

Please support the following bills:

H.51 – An Act Relating to Fossil Fuel Infrastructure

H.423 – Allowing public institutions to participate in more than one net metering system

H.513 – Broadband expansion in rural areas

H.534 – Building Energy Standards and Performance enforcement mechanisms

S.173 – Global Warming Solutions Act to make Vermont's climate goals mandatory

S.171 – Weatherization and Building energy performance

Sincerely,

Ryan Haac, Dee Gish and Jill Wilcox  
The Sharon Energy Committee