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Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2020 1:46 PM
To: Ann Cummings <ACUMMINGS@leg.state.vt.us>; Mark MacDonald <MMacDonald@leg.state.vt.us>; msirokin@leg.state.vt.us; Brian Campion <BCampion@leg.state.vt.us>; Becca Balint <bbalint@leg.state.vt.us>; Randy Brock <RBrock@leg.state.vt.us>; Christopher Pearson <CPearson@leg.state.vt.us>
Cc: Faith Brown <FBrown@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: [External] S.190--Extension of Standard Offer Program until 2032

[External]

February 12, 2020

Dear Chair Cummings and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Put Blodgett. I grew up on a dairy farm in Bradford, currently own forest land in that town and Newbury, and serve as president of the Vermont Woodlands Association, a forest landowner association of approximately 900 members.

I would like to submit support for S.190, the extension of the Standard Offer Program until 2032.

With the growth of electronic communication and faster-growing trees for pulp in the tropics, the demand for paper locally has plummeted and therefore the demand for low-grade wood from our forests.

Forests are like vegetable gardens, they have to be thinned (weeded) of low-grade wood so the better species and individuals can make full use of the limited sunlight, water and soil nutrients.

Burlington Electric and Ryegate Power are two markets still available to forest landowners to market their low-grade wood and thus improve our forests.

New Hampshire has allowed cheaper fracked gas to replace its wood-burning power plants. Fracking requires chemicals to be pumped into the shale to force out the gas, polluting the groundwater. Burning gas, coal, and oil adds to greenhouse gases. The decaying wood in Quebec Hydro reservoirs is poisoning the fish with mercury that the Inuit depend on for food.

If Vermont allows its infrastructure of loggers, truckers and biomass generating facilities to be undercut and destroyed by temporarily less expensive other energy sources, it will never achieve its carbon-reduction goals.

I hope you will support S.190.

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