

02/02/2022

Good Morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. I thought it best to send over my notes this morning as time is limited and there is much I'd like to say. I ask that you please take the time to review these notes and please feel free to contact me with questions or more conversation. I ask that you hear me with an open mind for a few minutes as the decisions made by this committee and legislative session have a severe impact on Vermont.

I'm a fifth generation Vermonter, a father, a grandfather and a business owner. I live a rural life in this small state... I've raised a family and built a small business. I've paid Vermont's high taxes and cost of living while keeping my head down and worked to do what I've always been told is the right thing to do. I'd like to think that for once the advantage of living in a small state is upon me and I can be heard by my government and my words will be taken seriously and be considered.

I own a small propane company which employs six people and serves almost 1600 Vermont homes. I'm one of approximately 100 small local businesses in VT that provide essential heat and hot water in peoples daily lives. We live here, work here and contribute to our communities and neighbors well being. We hold their receivables, shovel their steps check on shut ins and get out of bed in the middle of the coldest nights to ensure their health and safety. We generally provide unmatched service to our neighbors and the community as a whole.

This legislation...this legislation will effectively put me out of business almost immediately. Not just me though. I'd bet it will have the same effect on 1/3 to 1/2 of the small locally owned fuel providers in VT. This will be done almost immediately by the Clean Heat Credits (CHC's) section of the bill. Like most other small fuel businesses in VT, our products are shipped in from out of state facilities. We don't provide installation services of new products and generally find it difficult to staff the work that we do. We don't have the expertise or desire to get involved with installation work. If we have trouble finding enough employees, whom we pay a very livable wage to, to do our existing work taking on another piece seems more than daunting. It wouldn't be a stretch to say that more than 95% of our product comes from out of state wholesalers. Vermont's instate wholesale terminals account for a mere fraction of the propane sold in the state. I'm certainly not far from an anomaly. The CHC, as proposed, would require that we pay a 3 to 1 penalty for basically all our gas. As I stated above this would have a devastating effect on many of us who now serve the communities we live in. On average, a VT fuel dealer has about 2000 customers. If we considered the fact that 1/3 to 1/2 will be put out of business quickly we also have to consider the fact that between 60000 and 100000 Vermonters will then be scrambling to find a new supplier. That's an impossible task for any company or companies to undertake in a short span of time. It's literally 5-10 years

of full time work for the industry IF you could convince them to continue to invest in their infrastructure. Here's another thought about that. Are you comfortable with Vermonters paying \$8-\$10 per gallon for propane and heating oil? With diminishing gallons and high infrastructure costs combined with an unknown future those prices aren't just a guess...those are realistic.

I know you have a lot to consider and a lot of work to do so I'll move on and jump right into the heart of your "electrification plan". HEAT PUMPS. IT'S LITERALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DO WHAT YOUR PROPOSING AND IT WON'T WORK!. Let's talk about heat pumps in the real world. I have quite a few customers who've already made investments into heat pumps. Here's the real world truth. For most of them it hasn't significantly reduced the amount of propane they use. Here's what they're saying.

1. They spend thousands of dollars up front thinking it's the right thing to do and it will save them money. It doesn't
2. They become frustrated and disenchanted because the heat pumps don't keep their house warm; they feel they were lied to about the product; and they increase their overall energy bills year round. Most customers say they are better for AC than for heating. Therefore they run them more through the summer months and have higher energy bills year round. They are using more overall energy, not less, with heat pumps due to the increased load year round. More... not less.

WHERE'S THE ENERGY COMING FROM

While, all we have to do is look at ISO-NE.com for that information. It's in real time right on their home page. Natural gas by far provides most of our energy. Nuclear is almost always the second largest supplier(which nobody seems to want) and as is true during high demand Oil is a large supplier. All renewables combined often don't make up 10% of the grid. The solar, that Vermont seems to love, usually provides 2% on a sunny day. Here's the kicker. We're buying electric that's being produced in plants that run about 40% efficient and we're planning on buying a lot more of that power. Why do we want to buy that power when we can have furnaces and boilers that are 95% efficient running a primary energy source that already exists?

I won't harp on solar, I could debate that with you all day but it's showing it's performance to be lackluster.

HERE'S SOME REAL PROBLEMS.

People use too much energy. We don't hear much encouraging conservation... we're just told to have green power. Our leaders should encourage conservation.

New homes are getting bigger. The average size of new homes is growing. They consumer more energy, not less.

Overpopulation. Perhaps it's time we considered that we've reached the limits of what mother earth can handle and provide for.

Red Meat. Cows produce more GHG than all cars, trucks, boats, trains and planes combined. Until we all become vegan we're not gonna fix this problem.

Rather than go on, I invite any of you to schedule time to debate this with me. **CONVINCE ME!** That electrification is the right path. I guarantee that if you haven't/can't convince me, let alone the masses of the public, this will fail.

This plan/law puts Vermont in a very perilous situation. We're being forced down a path that can't meet our basic needs for heating and sanitation and will cost Vermonters dearly on both ends. First in the conversion to electric that's being mandated by this law and secondly from the lawsuits of the aggrieved parties that will come because the goals are impossible in the given timeframe. We have not the technology, tools nor dollars to accomplish these goals in such a manor. This is what's known as a lose/lose situation.