



**Testimony of Peter Sterling, REV Executive Director
in Support of S.148
House Natural Resources, Fish & Wildlife
April 13th, 2022**

REV believes that Vermont remaining one of the few states in the nation without an environmental justice policy must be rectified in the 2022 Legislative session. Therefore, the member businesses of Renewable Energy Vermont call upon the Vermont General Assembly to pass, and Governor Phil Scott to sign, S.148.

Environmental justice describes both an end in and of itself, and the necessary process to achieve that end.

No part of Vermont's population, regardless of its racial, cultural or economic makeup, should ever be asked to bear more than its share of environmental burdens and Vermont should not promote the exporting of environmental burdens outside of our borders.

Vermont has 4,714 hazardous sites and many more brownfields, old landfills and superfund sites. S.148 aims to create processes for better understanding and remediating disproportionate impacts caused by these and other environmental factors right here in Vermont. Without a sophisticated and inclusive approach to addressing these issues, environmental disparities will persist in communities with the least resources.

Critical to this work is S.148's creation of an Advisory Council on Environmental Justice and an Interagency Committee on Environmental Justice to work directly on incorporating environmental justice principles into State programs, policies, regulations, legislation, and activities.

I would like to ask the members of this Committee to do all they can to ensure this Advisory Council is sufficiently resourced so they are able to tackle the task at hand.

In conclusion, REV believes that the many provisions in S.148 are important steps forward towards ensuring that all Vermonters, as well as those beyond our borders, have access to a safe and clean environment and can share in the benefits of clean, reliable renewable energy.