



April 26, 2022

Dear Chair Sirotkin and committee members:

I write to request the committee's favorable recommendation of H.74, an act relating to making miscellaneous changes concerning self-storage businesses. This bill updates the state's self storage law to account for modern business practices and to enhance consumer protections.

Importantly, H.74 is the product of extensive House committee discussions in 2020 (then H.606) and this year. The bill incorporates feedback from a wide range of stakeholders including Vermont Legal Aid, the Vermont Banker's Association, the Vermont Attorney General's office, and the Vermont Self Storage Association.

I offer the following highlights of the bill's key provisions. For additional information regarding the self storage business and a more detailed explanation of the bill, I have also provided the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

If passed, H.74 would do the following:

- Expand the disclosures made to the customer when signing the agreement to rent self storage space.
- Protect personal information abandoned in self storage and mandate the destruction of PI found in an abandoned space.
- Allow for notices to be sent by email but only if the customer has affirmatively opted in. Moreover, if the storage owner does not receive a response, return receipt, or delivery confirmation within two days, the owner must send the notice by certified mail or first-class mail with certificate of mailing.
- Permit online sales of abandoned property. These online sales expand the number of bidders and increase the amount of the bids. All sale proceeds are applied to the customer's debt, with any excess going back to the customer.

Since the Vermont legislature passed the self storage law in 2007, more than 40 states have modernized their laws to include the important changes addressed in H.74. Those modernized laws have benefited both self storage owners and customers.

In closing, I respectfully request that the committee favorably report H.74 to the Senate floor. I will be available to provide testimony and answer any questions at the committee hearing on April 29.

Respectfully,

Joseph Doherty
SVP, Chief Legal & Legislative Officer