

By Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

Senate resolution relating to disapproving of Executive Order 02-21.

Whereas, on January 14, 2021, the Governor signed Executive Order 02-21 reorganizing the Natural Resources Board and its District Commissions, and

Whereas, according to the Executive Order, effective April 15, 2021, a professional Natural Resources Board would decide major permit applications with assistance from two District Commissioners from the district where the project is located, and

Whereas, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy has taken testimony and public comment concerning this Executive Order, and

Whereas, the Senate agrees with the Governor that it is to the benefit of the State of Vermont to “maximize natural resources protections, enable well planned growth, increase predictability and reduce redundancy with other state regulatory programs,” it finds complexities and possible unintended consequences that must be analyzed and addressed to achieve these goals, and

Whereas, the Senate believes the best mechanism both to resolve these complexities and unintended consequences and to explore, in depth, the options for reorganizing the Natural Resources Board is to use the standing committee process, with the resulting opportunity for enhanced research, analysis, and public participation, and

Whereas, the Senate is committed to working cooperatively with the Administration to produce legislation that will achieve our shared goals of updating the Act 250 process, and

Whereas, as part of this process, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy looks forward to reviewing and taking testimony on the Administration’s complete proposal for changing the Act 250 permit process, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 2002, disapproves of Executive Order 02-21, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate invites the Administration to bring forward draft legislation to optimize the Act 250 permit and appeals process, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Governor Philip B. Scott.