

March 22, 2023

House Committee on Appropriations
115 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Dear Chair Lanpher and members of the House Committee on Appropriations,

We write in support of the policy proposals and funding amounts outlined in Secs. 10 and 11 of [H.484](#), the recently introduced Workforce and Economic Development bill. These provisions include a public education initiative to raise awareness of occupations that will contribute to the State's climate goals, and training for energy services businesses interested in adopting a climate-centered mission.

Secs. 10 and 11 are the product of months of research and discussion amongst stakeholders convened by [Energy Action Network](#) (EAN). First formed in fall 2021, the all-volunteer [Climate Workforce Network Action Team](#) has been focused on ways to grow the workforce necessary for the State to transform its energy systems and reduce emissions in line with GWSA requirements. This EAN Team has engaged stakeholders spanning businesses, organized labor, State government, community service organizations, training partners, CTE, education, post-secondary education, and many energy services providers. Throughout these conversations, themes have emerged that undergird the proposals outlined in Secs. 10 and 11 of H.484.

We strongly support creation of a public education initiative to raise awareness of the career opportunities in climate fields, along with resources to expand coaching opportunities for businesses working to transition their business models in service of State climate goals. These proposals utilize existing and successful platforms, including Advance Vermont's (AV) [myfuturevt.org](#) platform, and the Vermont Sustainable Job Fund's (VSJF) Business Coaching program.

Focusing on climate workforce is critical as Vermont moves toward its mandated GHG reduction targets. Furthermore, with transformational climate policies under consideration this session, and major Federal funding opportunities available to Vermont this decade, these proposals are timely and responsive to immediate needs. By leveraging existing infrastructure and the experts at AV and VSJF, we believe the value of the proposed investments in Secs. 10 and 11 of H.484 will be multiplied in service to the State's workforce, economic, and climate objectives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben Edgerly Walsh, Climate & Energy Program Director, Vermont Public Interest Research Group

Dale Azaria, Vice President and State Director (interim), Conservation Law Foundation

Dan Fingas, Movement Politics Director, Rights and Democracy
Johanna Miller, Energy & Climate Program Director, Vermont Natural Resources Council
Lauren Hierl, Executive Director, Vermont Conservation Voters
Neale Lunderville, President & CEO, VGS, Co-Chair, EAN Weatherization at Scale Network
Team
Peter Sterling, Executive Director Renewable Energy Vermont
Roxanne Vought, Executive Director, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility