

March 20, 2023

House Committee on Appropriations  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

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

The House Committee on Appropriations has played a vital role in supporting Vermont in meeting our legal obligation to reduce carbon pollution, especially over the past two legislative sessions, while helping *all* Vermonters adapt and build resiliency in the face of increasingly difficult challenges caused by climate change. This obligation will continue to require prolonged and ample support for critical climate programs, as well as the capacity to support statewide implementation of these programs.

To that end, we urge you to support the following two FY 24 budget recommendations in particular, as made by the House Committee on Environment and Energy in their [letter to your committee on March 3, 2023](#), in response to the Governor's FY24 Budget (emphasis added):

1. *B.1100(21)(D) Governor's Recommendation: \$300K for three FTE Environmental Justice Positions: **We support this appropriation, but we strongly recommend that it be moved from one-time funding to base funding.** Background/Justification: The Environmental Justice Bill, signed into law in 2022, included three FTE. The FY23 Budget Bill, Act 185, uses one-time funds to cover those three FTE. The Governor's FY24 Budget Recommend proposes to use one-time funding to support these positions. The work described in Act 154 is ongoing and comprehensive. Additionally the three positions are also assigned to work on compliance with federal civil rights laws and regulations, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, work that is also ongoing.*
2. *B.1100(21)(B) Governor's Recommendation: \$900K for one time climate office work: **We support this appropriation and request that the following language be added to the respective section E pertaining to this appropriation: "The Climate Office must regularly communicate, collaborate and determine appropriate use of the funds with the Vermont Climate Council, its steering and subcommittees while utilizing this appropriation."** Additionally, the Committee would like to highlight that there is a newly released grant opportunity to conduct work along these lines through the Environmental Protection Agency, [available here](#).*

These recommendations made by the House Committee on Environment and Energy are in line with Vermont's adopted Climate Action Plan. They would move us towards meeting the State's ongoing and increasingly stringent carbon pollution reduction requirements, while also working towards equitable outcomes and ensuring all Vermonters are part of a just transition in the face of climate change.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Ben Edgerly Walsh, Vermont Public Interest Research Group

Johanna Miller, Vermont Natural Resources Council

Lauren Hierl, Vermont Conservation Voters

Chase Whiting, Conservation Law Foundation

David K. Mears, Audubon Vermont

Beth Zigmund, MD, and Megan Malgeri, MD, Vermont Climate and Health Alliance

Dan Fingas, Rights and Democracy

Peter Sterling, Renewable Energy Vermont

Miriam Serota-Winston & Jenna Hirschman, Vermont Youth Lobby

Sophia Donforth, Vermont Energy Education Program

Vanessa Rule, 350Vermont

Chris Williams, Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance

Robb Kidd, Vermont Chapter of the Sierra Club

Patrick Flood, Third Act Vermont

Dan Quinlan, SolaVida.org