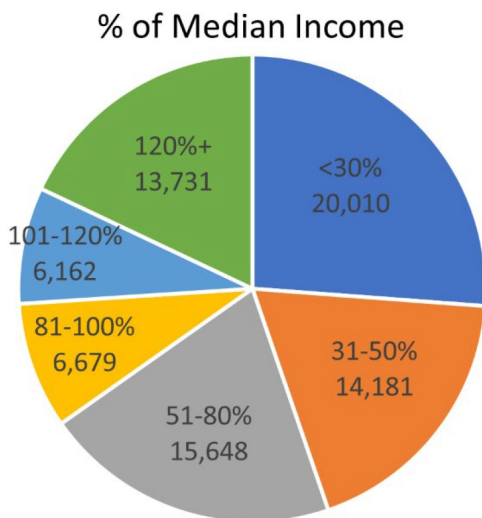


To: House Energy & Environment Committee  
 From: Maura Collins, Executive Director  
 Date: May 3, 2023  
 Re: Renewable Energy Standard (RES) study

I understand your committee is discussing language that would create a Renewable Energy Standard (RES) study committee. As a part of that work, I fully endorse the idea that this study – and all legislative studies – should include a meaningful assessment of the equity impacts of our RES. Looking at how the existing RES has served low-income Vermonters, and assessing how changes to a future RES could better address this group’s energy costs and needs, is paramount to the discussion.



As an example, equity conversations rightfully often focus on income and race as two of the most common categories I’ve seen. Those are critical ways to disaggregate data, but a full equity review for RES should likely also focus on housing types since residences are a critical way RES incentives have been deployed for Tier III. You can see how many Vermonters fall into various income categories to the left, and the various housing types in the chart below.

Having an organization that understands how RES has been implemented across residences – including multifamily rentals and manufactured housing – is going to be an important part of this work. Additionally, there may be new ways to engage other housing types that have yet to be explored.

I support the idea that the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, as a statewide housing organization whose statute is focused on the needs of low- and moderate-income Vermonters would be a participant in this conversation. This way we could advance the practical realities of implementation of RES among low-income homes.

I am happy to answer questions the committee may have but didn’t want to take up precious testimony time at this point in the session and instead thought I’d express this support in writing instead.

