

March 15, 2023

Memo from the Vermont House Environment and Energy Committee to the House Appropriations Committee

Re: Two Follow Up Items Regarding the Vermont House Environment and Energy Committee Letter Dated March 3, 2023

First, in our letter, regarding B1100(a)(28) Governor's Recommendation for \$10M for the ACCD Brownfields program: There was a misprint in our paragraph. We continue to support the "site" language (not "parcel"), raising the cap from \$200,000 to \$500,000 and supporting the "notwithstanding" language. However, the last sentence of the paragraph that began with (2), referenced "not more than 5 percent of the funds being used for administrative purposes". The reference to 5% was in error – the Committee had discussed this percentage allocation during the Budget Adjustment Act, and agreed to increasing to 10%. We have not changed that recommendation. Thus this paragraph should read:

B1100(a)(28) Governor's Recommendation: \$10M for ACCD Brownfields program

Sec. 16 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. G.300(c)(2) is amended to read:

(2) \$6,000,000 to the Department of Economic Development for the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites to be used in the same manner as the Brownfields Revitalization Fund established by 10 V.S.A. § 6654, except notwithstanding the grant limitations in 10 V.S.A. § 6654, projects supported by this appropriation shall not be limited to \$500,000 grants per site. The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall award the amount of \$1,000,000.00 in fiscal year 2023 to regional planning commissions for the purposes of brownfields assessment. In awarding funds under this section, the Secretary, in consultation with VAPDA, shall select one regional planning commission to administer these funds. To ensure statewide availability, the selected regional planning commission shall subgrant to regional planning commissions with brownfield programs, with not more than 10 percent of the funds being used for administrative purposes."

Second, on page 4 of our letter, we state:

"Identifying a special fund to support compensating volunteers via community engagement stipends. The need to do this has come up several times in Committee. For example, the Public Service Department is allocating \$300,000 to conduct outreach for

the next Comprehensive Energy Plan (which we support), the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board has requested funding to complete outreach to a Biodiversity bill that our Committee just voted out, and if additional requests are made of the Vermont Climate Council, then it is likely volunteers would need support to provide their time and expertise to complete additional VCC work.

- Relatedly (but different), there is a need within the Agency of Natural Resource to support facilitation efforts – particularly to environmental justice work.”

We still concur with our above statement.

However, now that we have passed H.126 out of Committee, and identified a specific need for \$75,000 to be appropriated to address community engagement associated costs, we are further clarifying that, in addition to the overarching need for this area of work to be properly funded, we request an appropriation in the amount of \$75,000 in this year’s Budget to address the specific outreach required in H. 126.

Thank you for your review – please do not hesitate to contact us with any further questions.

Sincerely,

House Environment and Energy Committee