

Testimony as prepared for delivery

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Chair, Science & Data Subcommittee

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Thank you, Chair James and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Jared Duval. I join you today as a member of the Vermont Climate Council. To be clear, my testimony is solely in my capacity as an appointed member of the Climate Council and does not represent a position of the organization I work for. As I have shared with this committee previously, EAN does not take positions on bills before the legislature.

I have served on the Climate Council since October 22, 2020, when I was first appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees to serve as the member of the Council “from a Vermont based organization with expertise in energy and data analysis.” I was re-appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees in 2023 and am currently serving my 2<sup>nd</sup> term. On the Council I chair the Science & Data subcommittee and also serve on the Cross-Sector Mitigation subcommittee and the Council Steering Committee. In these capacities, I was a co-author of both the initial Vermont Climate Action Plan in 2021 and the updated Climate Action Plan adopted by the Council as of July 1, 2025.

As Councilors, we are required by the Global Warming Solutions Act (Act 153 of 2020) to make recommendations to the legislature. Specifically, Sec. 4 10 V.S.A. chapter 24, §591 subsection d reads:

- (d) The Council shall recommend necessary legislation to the General Assembly concerning:
  - (1) adopting market-based or alternative compliance mechanisms as part of the State’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies;
  - (2) changes to land use and development, including to chapter 151 of this title and 30 V.S.A. § 248, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote resilience in response to climate change;
  - (3) statutory authority necessary to implement the Plan; and
  - (4) any other matter the Council deems appropriate.

From my perspective as a Councilor and as Chair of the Science and Data Subcommittee, I believe that **H. 740 is the single most important bill before this committee this session in terms of helping to meet Vermont's commitments to reduce climate pollution and to do so in ways that lower overall costs. Not because this bill will reduce pollution or costs on its own – but because tracking key data and information is a necessary precursor to more meaningful and effective pollution and energy cost reduction effort(s) in Vermont.** Quite simply, if we can't do this most basic and simple of steps, we're not going to be able to reduce pollution and costs in the ways that have proven to be most effective in other states.

The reporting requirement envisioned in this bill is a top priority recommendation of the Climate Council. Specifically, **the first emissions reduction recommendation made by the Council in the 2025 Climate Action Plan is to, “Develop a framework for the reporting of GHG emissions data from fuel suppliers and other significant emitters of climate pollution.”**<sup>1</sup>

Right now, Vermont has very good estimates of the aggregate amount of statewide climate pollution emitted in Vermont, by virtue of the Vermont Greenhouse Gas Inventory produced by the Agency of Natural Resources. What we do not currently know is which fossil fuel companies are responsible for what share of those emissions – i.e., how many gallons of fossil fuels are imported into and sold within Vermont, by whom. This lack of information limits the State's ability to have those corporations be held responsible for helping to reduce pollution over time. As the saying goes, “if you don't measure it, you can't improve it.”

Overall, there are five key reasons that, as a member of the Council and Chair of the Science & Data subcommittee, I support H. 740:

- **Basic data collection and reporting, as proposed with a greenhouse gas reporting registry, is a necessary precursor for any meaningful and effective pollution reduction policy effort.** This has been true for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Clean Fuel Standards in Washington, Oregon, and California; and for Cap and Invest programs in Washington, Oregon, and California. New York is also now advancing a GHG reporting requirement as the first step in its proposed multi-sector Cap and Invest program.
- As a participant in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, Vermont is already among the states that require reporting of emissions from any fossil fuel-fired power plant above 25MW. However, beyond the utility sector and in contrast, Vermont does not currently require supplier-level reporting of emissions from what are, by far, the largest

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<sup>1</sup> See Page 96:

<https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/anr/climatecouncil/Shared%20Documents/VermontClimateActionPlan2025-Chapter12.pdf>

sources of climate pollution in Vermont: the combined hundreds of millions of gallons of gasoline, diesel, fuel oil, propane, and other fossil fuels imported into Vermont by fossil fuel corporations for use in the transportation and thermal sectors. The transportation and thermal sectors combine for approximately 72% of Vermont's climate pollution, far surpassing our electricity sector (3%).

- As the federal government becomes a less reliable source of energy and emissions data collection and reporting, a state-level reporting requirement ensures that Vermont can track and understand key data necessary to inform efforts to protect human and environmental health.
- For purposes of efficiency, clarity, and effectiveness, I agree with ANR's recommendation – which is reflected in H. 740 – for a stand-alone reporting rule rather than an attempt at “data harmonization” (whereby various pieces of data would aim to be stitched together from across separate agencies of state government). While the Tax Department already collects some data from fuel suppliers, such data are not likely sufficient to calculate emissions. Emissions calculations require data not just about gallons sold, but also about fuel type and content.
- In Climate Council meetings, the lone vote against recommending a reporting requirement came from the Councilor appointed to represent the fossil fuel industry, who argued that fuel suppliers do not have the time or expertise to calculate emissions. My understanding is that this argument, at best, reflects a misunderstanding. **A reporting requirement would not require the corporations that import fossil fuels into Vermont to calculate emissions. Rather, as proposed in H. 740 (and as done in other states), fossil fuel suppliers will merely have to report data that they already have, specifically “the types and volume of fuels sold.” The calculations of the emissions associated with the combustion of those fuels can and would be completed by ANR, not the fossil fuel companies themselves.**

Thank you.

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