

Dear Chair James and Committee Members,

Thank you again for taking up S.219 and for your efforts to understand the needs that Vermonters have for energy coaching/ navigation and the different existing programs that provide some coaching services. We urge you to continue to work on the issues of the bill and we are ready to help in whatever way we can as you deliberate possible revisions.

We have listened to some of the testimony you have been taking and the questions being asked by Committee members, and we offer a few brief comments.

Our overall observation is that much of the testimony supports the value of commissioning a study process to evaluate the energy coaching needs Vermonters have and the current landscape of services being provided in Vermont and elsewhere, and to provide recommendations back to the Legislature in time for you to act next year.

Additional comments include:

- There are many good programs, but there are also significant gaps. We are not reaching enough people and making the kind of progress that is necessary to meet the State's climate goals.
- We agree that many existing programs do a good job doing what they do. We collaborate with most and often refer clients to them. For example, almost every one of our client reports includes recommendations for services, incentives, or rebates from Efficiency VT, and it's also true that a large percentage of our clients didn't know or were confused about those EVT services and offerings.
- All of our clients appreciate the help of knowledgeable community-based navigators. The myriad of State and federal energy programs and services is confusing.
- One valued aspect of our Energy Navigator program is that we stay connected to people over time and help clients navigate multiple steps as they become possible.
- We agree that training is necessary and important for energy coaches. As we explained, our navigators receive extensive energy coaching training. They are not required to be BPI-certified, but their work and any written reports are reviewed and approved by our experts, who have significant training and experience in building science (in our case more than what is required in BPI-certification training).

We welcome any questions you may have and are available for additional testimony if that would be helpful.

Thank you again,

Steve Maier  
CEAC and Energy Navigators