

April 17, 2025

Senate Committee on Appropriations
115 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Dear Chair Perchlik and Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations,

The twelve undersigned organizations write to you today to respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Appropriations support funding for a critical cost-saving climate resilience policy – the implementation of Act 122 (the Climate Superfund Act). It is imperative Vermont fund that law's implementation, knowing that delays in our work to improve Vermont's resilience to climate-fueled disasters will be costly for our state.

In 2024, Act 122 was enacted with strong panpartisan majorities in the House and Senate. It tasks the Treasurer's Office with assessing the historical and projected costs to the State of Vermont and its residents because of changes to the climate attributable to certain greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of costs the Treasurer is tasked with assessing include the financial fallout from increasingly frequent flood devastation and from record-setting increases in heat experienced within Vermont. These and other costly effects of global warming have affected and will continue to affect every county in the state, creating both acute and chronic strains on State, municipal, and private sector finances that must be prudently planned for.

The Treasurer's Office has requested a total FY26 appropriation of \$825,000.00 to advance the cost-assessment work required by Act 122. This request includes \$700,000 in contracted technical support to be obtained through one or more Requests for Proposals from those with requisite expertise and \$125,000 to support a new limited-service position dedicated to Act 122 implementation in the coming fiscal year. In addition, the Agency of Natural Resources has stated a need for \$675,000 in funding - \$175,000 for an attorney dedicated to supporting the law's implementation and \$500,000 for contracted technical support.

As organizations on this letter and ANR itself have testified to, if funding for ANR's technical support does not happen until FY27 it will still be able to execute its responsibilities under the law in a timely manner – in particular given that the Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Energy appears to be including a 12 month delay for the relevant deadlines in the Act as part of H.319.

We urge you to support these needs – specifically those of the Treasurer’s office, and the attorney position requested by ANR - so that Act 122 can be effectively implemented.

Implementation of Act 122 will enable the State to get a clear understanding of the economic damages Vermont has sustained and will likely sustain as the climate continues to change and will provide a legally and scientifically defensible basis to recover a portion of those economic damages from parties bearing significant responsibility for the greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate damage.

Our organizations look forward to working with you to advance these efforts and build a resilient, thriving Vermont for all, and we sincerely thank you for your consideration of these essential investments.

Sincerely,

350 Vermont

Conservation Law Foundation

Renewable Energy Vermont

The Climate Reality Project Vermont Chapter

Third Act Vermont

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

Vermont Chapter of the Sierra Club

Vermont Climate & Health Alliance

Vermont Conservation Voters

Vermont Interfaith Power and Light

Vermont Natural Resources Council

Vermont Public Interest Research Group