



To: Senate Government Operations Committee

From: Astrid Longstreth, Climate Change Committee Chair of Vermont State Youth Council,

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Date: January 30, 2025

Re: Repeal of the State Youth Council Sunset

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Thank you for listening to me and my fellow council members about this important subject. My name is Astrid Longstreth, and I'm the Climate Change Committee chair. I live in West Bolton and attend Mount Mansfield Union high school as a freshman.

We ask that the State Youth Council sunset period is repealed or extended to at least October 2032. The Vermont State Youth Council is important in many ways. It gives youth a voice in what happens in our state and provides a valuable perspective on what our state needs. As more and more youth are leaving Vermont, it's more important now than ever to take action on challenges facing Vermont and Vermont youth in order to make our state a better place.

Since I was young, I've always had an urge to make my voice heard and to make a difference. I've always wanted to leave my mark on the world, one that would stay long after I was gone, one that showed that I had done something to make the world a better place. The problem is, I never quite knew how to do that, until two years ago when I heard about the State Youth Council. I knew that it might be the place for me, and ever since joining, I have felt a sense of belonging that I've never felt before, and I know that I'm not the only one. As children, when so much of our life is up to our parents and teachers, we have very little control, and we often get the impression that we can't change anything until we ourselves become adults. However, this is not true, and this is why the SYC is so important. It gives youth an opportunity to use their voice in a way they never were sure how to do before, and weren't given a chance to before. The council is a valuable resource to youth in the state, and to the state itself. As the people who will be inheriting the state, youth's perspectives need to be taken into consideration.

We are asking for the Vermont State Youth Council's sunset act to be repealed or extended for the benefit of all Vermonters, future generations, and the future of the state. If the council ends, the state that we share will lose a valuable voice that cannot be replaced. We are asking for the next generation of youth in the State to be given the same amazing opportunity that we have been given. Thank you for listening, and I hope you will take this into consideration.