



Vermont Association of Conservation Districts

Our Land. Our Water. Our Future.

To: Senate Natural Resources Committee

From: Michelle Monroe, Executive Director, Vermont Association of Conservation Districts

Re: Comments on H.481 as it passed the House

April 15, 2025

Vermont's Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDs) are interested in this bill because they do stormwater projects across the entirety of the state and most of the funding for that work comes from the Clean Water Fund.

Section 2

NRCDs support repealing the sunset of the surcharge on the property transfer tax.

Section 7

NRCDs oppose setting aside \$1 million annually within the Clean Water Fund specifically for 3-acre permit compliance for the following reasons:

- No other group of permittees receive a specific amount of funding from the Clean Water Fund. Establishing a precedent in which one sector receives a carve out of a specific amount of funding will encourage others to seek to do the same.
- The Clean Water Board and the Secretary need to have flexibility when allocating these funds to respond to changing conditions both on the ground and with other sources of available funding.

Section 8

NRCDs do not oppose this one-time allocation.

Section 10

NRCDs seek inclusion on the study committee. As regional governmental entities whose work includes stormwater mitigation projects, often done in partnership with municipalities, the conservation districts would bring valuable expertise.

NRCDs concur with testimony from the Vermont Association of District Planners that the study committee should also examine options for expanding the use of natural resource based approaches to managing stormwater from the permittees, examine the jurisdiction of the 3-acre permit, and explore options for prioritizing compliance support and enforcement so that the focus is on properties where the stormwater is resulting in either direct or indirect nutrient loading into an impaired body of water.