

Richard Westman
Chair Senate Transportation
Montpelier, VT
February 11, 2025

Dear Mr. Westman,

I understand from Senator Becca White that your committee will shortly be introducing a bill that attempts to put limits on noise levels across the State of Vermont. Senator White has asked me to write a letter in support of your efforts.

My husband and I live on a hill overlooking Willoughby Lake. We moved here upon retirement and our best days happen when we hear only the loons down on the lake. The worst days happen when we hear unchecked (and probably illegally retrofitted) mufflers on Rt 5A below or when we hear the late night partying of unapproved wedding venues exploiting the serene and natural beauty of the area. I realize how this sounds like a “first world” problem and that our State has many other issues facing us that are serious and need our attention, but the issue of noise pollution, if left unchecked, could jeopardize our health and the health of our environment. Among Vermont’s 251 towns and villages there are varying degrees of ordinances cropping up. St Albans and Essex will impose fines on the owners of cars whose mufflers are adjusted to make more noise than they normally would and in Montpelier, there is an engine brake ordinance (for night time only, but it is a start).

Excessive noise is a health issue and that which creates noise very often is also creating air pollution.

VPR’s Main TV channel aired a fact-filled presentation on this topic recently: [‘The Quietest Year’ film explores the impacts of noise pollution across Vermont](#) . I implore you to look at this film for its well researched statistics and data on the health impacts of excessive or sudden sleep disrupting noises.

I am not as religious as Mother Theresa, but I do agree with her when she tells us:

We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature - trees, flowers, grass- grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence...We need silence to be able to touch souls.

Living in Vermont is a gift for which I will be forever thankful. And part of the gift is a chance to sit in silence and listen. I know I am not the only one who values all that our State has to offer and I know there are more like me who would like to see limits on the level of noise.

I realize you have a lot of bills coming your way that need to be discussed and voted on. This effort to try to put limits on noise in the State, in my opinion, should be a top priority.

Most sincerely,
Peggy Zimmer, Westmore, VT