

This document has been filed electronically using ePUC

Board of Directors:

FEDERAL

John Roberts *USDA Farm Service Agency*

John Sinclair *Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forest*

Sarah Waring
USDA Rural Development

STATE

Tayt Brooks *VT Agency of Commerce & Community Devel.*

Xusana Davis
VT Agency of Administration

Julie Moore
VT Agency of Natural Resources

Anson Tebbetts *VT Agency of Agriculture, Food, & Markets*

LOCAL

Shannon Barsotti
Town of Bennington

Ted Brady
VT League of Cities & Towns

Erika Hoffman-Kiess *Green Mountain Economic Devel Corp*

David Snedeker *Northeastern Vermont Development Association*

NON-PROFIT

Megan Camp
Shelburne Farms

Judy Geer
Craftsbury Outdoor Center; Concept 2

Aly Richards
Let's Grow Kids

Lisa Ryan
Vermont Law & Graduate School

Dan Smith
Vermont Community Foundation

PRIVATE

Harry Chen
Consultant and Advisor

Eun-Young Denny
VEDA

Rob Miller
VSECU

Curtiss Reed
VT Partnership for Fairness & Diversity

INVITED GUESTS

Rebecca Ellis
Office of Senator Welch

David Scheer
Office of Congresswoman Balint

Kathryn Van Haste
Office of Senator Sanders

June 28th, 2023

Ms. Holly Anderson, Clerk
Vermont Public Utility Commission
112 State Street
Post Office Drawer 20
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2701

Re: **Case No. 22-2954-PET**, Vermont Council on Rural Development comments on equity and electric system benefits within Efficiency Vermont's 2024-2026 Demand Resources Plan Update Proposal

Dear Clerk Anderson,

The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) would like to share our thoughts and perspective on the issue of electric system benefits as it relates to this proceeding.

VCRD is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to supporting Vermont's rural communities in defining their futures. We work with our partners, including Efficiency Vermont, to bring deep engagement and equitable access to all Vermonters regardless of how they identify themselves.

In VCRD's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Commitment statement we acknowledge that Black people, Indigenous people and People of Color (BIPOC) have long faced and continue to face historic and systemic barriers of racism which impede or exclude them from civic participation, decision-making, and equal and fair educational and economic opportunity. We also see that especially in rural communities, renters and low-income households are disproportionately cost and energy burdened.

Over the past year we have worked with Efficiency Vermont to identify and address ways in which these barriers have impeded their services reaching BIPOC and other marginalized populations in Vermont. While we agree that it is important for Efficiency Vermont to place a continued focus on delivering electric systems benefits, we also see that they must continue investing resources to address these barriers. We hope that regulators can understand that sometimes equitable access to services costs more, but pay abundant dividends in health, well-being and trust in our public systems.

While the work we have done Efficiency Vermont may not yield large electrical savings projects, we do feel it is critical to helping all Vermonters get the most benefit from their payment of the Energy Efficiency Charge.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective on this proceeding and would be happy to discuss further with the regulators if needed.

Sincerely,

Jessica Savage

Director of Community Collaboration
Vermont Council on Rural Development