

From: John McCormick <jmccormick@imtd.org>

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To: Roisman, Anthony <Anthony.Roisman@vermont.gov>; Tierney, June <June.Tierney@vermont.gov>

Cc: Wilson, Brittney <Brittney.Wilson@vermont.gov>; Poor, TJ <TJ.Poor@vermont.gov>; Moore, Julie <Julie.Moore@vermont.gov>

Subject: S.5

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Good morning Commissioner Roisman and Commissioner Tierney

The Climate Council included the Affordable Heat Act as a default remedy after the TCI negotiations collapsed. It was not fully analysed prior to submitting it to the Legislature. My attached VT Digger Commentary gives several reasons why S.5 is the wrong and harmful approach to complying with GWSA. I and many thousands of Vermonters will be trapped, in this complex and extremely expensive program, because of our inability to shift to alternative technologies. Our buildings may not accommodate them but we will pay higher prices for years to come while S.5 struggles to achieve the CO2 reduction mandates.

There is an alternative that begs your consideration. I am determined to find support, in January, for PUC's Thermal Efficiency Benefit Charge. A fuel fee increase of 2, 4 or 6 cent is reasonable given the workforce shortage. Vermonters annually consume 250 million gallons of heating fuels. Secretary Moore's estimate of 70 cents/gal. increase would generate \$175,000,000 annually; an amount that cannot possibly be expensed for alternatives by 2030 -- or ever. Again, workforce shortages will prevail.

I am beginning a public information campaign to encourage citizens to persuade Governor Scott to include, in the SFY 2025 budget, a line item reflecting implementation of the Thermal Efficiency Benefit Charge using a reasonable fuel fee increase based upon workforce availability. This matter cannot wait for PUC's 2025 study report. The tragic floods and evident change in Vermont's climate -- along with repair costs, increasing affordable housing stock, homelessness -- warrant a careful approach to increasing revenues without harming building owners and families. I believe public awareness of the true costs of S. 5 will make this alternative a reality. PUC and PSD have been given a thankless task to implement S.5 and Governor Scott can correct the Legislature's mistake.

On a personal note: when you were Senior Staff Attorney for NRDC I was a lobbyist for the Environmental Policy Center lobbying Congress with Dick Ayres, Gus, Jonathan, Donniger and Lashof to enact the coal strip mine reclamation law and later the acid rain section of the CAA.

I thank you for your time and attention to my note.

John McCormick, Director
Bristol Chapter of the Louise Diamond Committee to Protect Next Generations
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