

Written Comments: Climate Action Plan Update

March 2025

Topic Areas Color Coding: ●Buildings & Thermal, ●Transportation, ●Electricity, ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Equity & Justice, ●Resilience, ●Policy, ●Housing, ●Biofuels, ●Affordability, ●Health

Kate Williams, Middlebury

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ●Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Electricity, ●Transportation, ●Buildings & Thermal

Please consider prioritizing low emission, local energy solutions such as weatherization and community solar. These will reach more people than advocating biofuels and other combustibles, resulting in a bigger impact on climate change. Electricity ratepayer protection should be put in place for low and middle income households to ensure an equitable and just transition to electrification in the state. Electrification of Public transit systems and municipal vehicle fleets should be prioritized also.

Eesha Williams, Dummerston

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ●Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Electricity, ●Transportation, ●Natural & Working Lands

As recommended by the climate science community and some members of the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee, state agencies should eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed.

Biomass is phasing out across the Northeast:

New York removed biomass from the definition of “renewable energy” in 2019.

Massachusetts removed woody biomass from its Renewable Portfolio Standard in 2022.

Connecticut began phasing down RECs for biomass plants in 2022.

New Hampshire ended subsidies for six biomass plants in 2019.

Provide electricity ratepayer protection for low- and middle-income Vermonters in order to ensure a just transition as we “electrify everything.” The PUC is preparing a report to the legislature on the options; 350VT will urge the PUC to adopt specific, strong protections in what the PUC recommends.

Invest in affordable clean energy public transit systems in both rural and urban areas to reduce the use of resource-intensive cars and support individuals and businesses reliant on public transit, particularly BIPOC, migrant, low income elderly, and disabled Vermonters already disproportionately reliant on public transit.

Make better sidewalks and bicycle paths please!

Ban all logging. Get lumber by deconstructing vacation houses that are usually vacant.

Diana Bain, Bridport

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ○Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Electricity, ●Transportation, ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Buildings & Thermal

I ask that the Climate Action Plan be aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Climate Council's own Just Transitions Subcommittee. The solutions recommended by the Vermont Climate Council must be equitable. Some people are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change than others. Additionally, we will need to ensure workers in the fossil fuel and biomass industries can meaningfully transition their jobs and continue to support their families as we move to clean energy. This plan needs to work for everyone.

As recommended by the climate science community and some members of the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee, biomass must be eliminated as an energy source and it must not be referred to as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric should be disallowed. At a minimum, the Legislature should fund and undertake, as soon as possible, the study requested by the Climate Council in its biomass addendum regarding the implications of biomass as an energy source. In the meantime, enact a moratorium on approvals of new biomass utility-scale electric energy facilities.

There must be no place for biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass, RNG, green hydrogen) in Vermont's clean energy future. We need to stop burning things and buying high-emission fuels out-of-state, draining our energy dollars.

Low-emission local energy solutions such as weatherization, community solar and wind, and non-combustion thermal energy networks must be prioritized. These easy, low-cost solutions must be made affordable and accessible to all Vermonters. Through a combination of partners, including the State, our utilities, and financial institutions, Vermont must move proactively to clear the path for successfully achieving our Renewable Energy Standard goals of 20% in-state renewable electricity and 20% from the region.

Electricity ratepayer protection for low- and middle-income Vermonters must be supported in order to ensure a just transition as we "electrify everything."

There must be investment in affordable clean energy public transit systems in both rural and urban areas to reduce the use of resource-intensive cars and support individuals and businesses reliant on public transit, particularly BIPOC, migrant, low-income, elderly, and disabled Vermonters already disproportionately reliant on public transit.

The recommendations from the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee should be adopted as written including:

- Encouraging landowners/managers to implement practices that improve soil health, crop and forest resilience, increase carbon storage, increase stormwater storage capacity, and reduce runoff.
- Using braided Western science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge/Indigenous Knowledge (TEK/IK), and designed to represent diverse perspectives while addressing a diversity of audiences and age groups.

Vermont's carbon sinks and ecological resilience should be sustained by protecting biodiversity, including all existing public land. This includes:

- Allowing 9% of our forests in Vermont to become old growth
- Stopping logging and extraction from public lands (represents 1% of total revenue for the logging industry).
- Increasing intact habitat and migratory corridors.
- Ensuring a just transition for those whose livelihoods are bound up with forest management.

Vermont forest owners should be allowed to help increase carbon sinks, flood resilience and biodiversity by removing the logging requirement from the Use Value Appraisal Program.

Georgette Putzel, Jericho

Topic areas: •Biofuels, •Equity & Justice, •Electricity, •Transportation, •Natural & Working Lands

Dear Vermont Climate Council,

Thank you for listening. Here are a few points to consider:

1- Sustain Vermont's carbon sinks and ecological resilience by protecting biodiversity, including all existing public land. This includes:

Allowing 9% of our forests in Vermont to become old growth

Stopping logging and extraction from public lands (represents 1% of total revenue for the logging industry).

Increasing intact habitat and migratory corridors.

Ensuring a just transition for those who livelihoods our bound up with forest management.

2- Invest in affordable clean energy public transit systems in both rural and urban areas to reduce the use of resource-intensive cars and support individuals and businesses reliant on public transit, particularly BIPOC, migrant, low income elderly, and disabled Vermonters already disproportionately reliant on public transit.

3- As recommended by the climate science community and some members of the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee, state agencies should eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed.

Biomass is phasing out across the Northeast:

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Connecticut began phasing down RECs for biomass plants in 2022.

New Hampshire ended subsidies for six biomass plants in 2019.

At a minimum, ask the Legislature to fund and undertake, as soon as possible, the study requested by the Climate Council in its biomass addendum regarding the implications of biomass as an energy source. In the meantime, enact a moratorium on approvals of new biomass utility-scale electric energy facilities.

and 4:

Keep biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass, RNG, green hydrogen) out of our Climate Action Plan. There is no place for biofuels in Vermont’s clean energy future. We need to stop burning things and buying high-emission fuels out-of-state, draining our energy dollars. The McNeil Generating Station is the single largest source of carbon emissions in Vermont. Green hydrogen should only be used for on site energy storage for solar and wind generation facilities, to regenerate electricity when it is needed.

Thank you for your attention.

Ben Gordesky, Burlington

Topic areas: •Biofuels, •Equity & Justice, •Electricity, •Buildings & Thermal

I urge you to put forth a climate plan that promotes truly clean energy (wind, solar, geothermal networks), weatherization and support for mass transit. The transition away from fossil fuels and burning wood must be fair to people currently working in the fossil fuel industries. There must be support for them in the form of training assistance. Also the fair transition needs to protect low and moderate income Vermonters. The plan must include reference to legislation such as the Rate payer Protection Act which requires a study be done to determine the best to make sure low and moderate income folks do not pay more than a certain percentage pf their income for their energy needs. Thank you for all your hard work.

Please make sure that the VT Climate Action Plan remains true to its purpose and supports truly clean energy, mass transit, energy efficiency and conservation and conversion away from fossil fuels. From this policy a plan can be developed by the legislature to make sure that the transition away from climate pollution can be just and not add any burden to low and moderate income Vermonters.

Cynthia Taylor, Thetford Center

Topic areas: • Biofuels, •Equity & Justice

I would ask that you be sure that the Climate Action plan is aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Climate Council's own Just Transitions Subcommittee.

And that biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass (not a renewable energy source!), RNG, green hydrogen) be kept out of our Climate Action Plan.

Carole Petrillo, Thetford Center

Topic areas: •Biofuels

As recommended by the climate science community and some members of the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee, state agencies should eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed.

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New Hampshire ended subsidies for six biomass plants in 2019.

At a minimum, ask the Legislature to fund and undertake, as soon as possible, the study requested by the Climate Council in its biomass addendum regarding the implications of biomass as an energy source. In the meantime, enact a moratorium on approvals of new biomass utility-scale electric energy facilities.

Biomass is a dirty source of energy. Please stop the use of Biomass in our state. Thank you.

Lisa Lax, Burlington

Topic areas: •Biofuels, •Equity & Justice, •Transportation

Please work to ensure that solutions recommended by the Vermont Climate Council are equitable. Some people are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change than others. Additionally, we need to ensure workers in the fossil fuel and biomass industries can meaningfully transition their jobs and continue to support their families as we move to clean energy. This plan needs to work for everyone. Another point that I feel is critical along these lines, is the need to need to Invest in affordable clean energy public transit systems in both rural and urban areas to reduce the use of resource-intensive cars and support individuals and businesses reliant on public transit,

particularly BIPOC, migrant, low-income elderly, and disabled Vermonters already disproportionately reliant on public transit.

I also feel that it's important that state agencies eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. All new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed. The use biomass is not carbon neutral- to suggest otherwise is "greenwashing" and does not help the future of our state or the planet.

Thank you for the work that you're doing! It is so important for our future.

Brian Forrest, Williston

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ●Electricity, ●Buildings & Thermal

I urge the council to reject the use of biomass and the burning of anything as all combustible fuels contribute to the climate crisis we are encountering. The EPA accepts these fuels as they make it look like they are making progress on the climate and Vermont's following their lead instead of the science helps us look like we are making progress while we're falling behind the other New England states that acknowledge the role that bio-anything plays in the heating of our Earth. Please concentrate on transitioning off carbon-containing fuels and encouraging the use of geothermal networks, solar and wind sources of energy, weatherizing our homes, and the use of cold-climate heat pumps to heat and cool our buildings.

Susan Day, Castleton

Topic areas: State-level action and leadership

Please hold fast on ALL points of the original Climate Action Plan. We need all of Vt's state efforts to keep us from falling into deeper trouble as temperatures rise. We need the Climate Council to be national leaders beginning this year (2025).

Many thanks!

Noah Burke, Jericho

Topic areas: State-level action and leadership

Lacking federal or global leadership, we have a greater not lesser obligation to uphold our climate goals. It is my hope that the VT climate action plan is not dismantled as an easy scapegoat for fiscal conservatism. It is our moral duty to uphold this plan, like many other public services that don't look good on a balance sheet but serve the greater good.

Mackenzie, Norwich

Topic areas: State-level action and leadership

We need to protect the Global Warming Solutions Act. Vermont's Climate Council is integral in fighting the climate crisis. Especially in a time when our federal government is not taking appropriate actions to respond to climate change, state level action is crucial. As a state we need to commit to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

Lois Price, Colchester

Topic areas: State-level action and leadership

I think it's a bad idea to roll back the Global Warming Solutions Act. We must set our goals high in order to achieve progress in reaching a fair and equitable solution to our climate problems. Since the world is behind in addressing climate issues, it is vital that we strive to catch up with global warming and make up for time lost. Having an oversight authority like the Vermont's Climate Council is important in making sure this work gets done.

Dwight Kelly, Windsor

Topic areas: •Resilience, •Natural & Working Lands, ◦Affordability, •Equity & Justice

I'm a concerned citizen who supports the strongest possible climate action. I feel it is a necessity. When we consider the billions of dollars spent on recovery just in the last couple of years alone in the state, calling Climate action too expensive is simply not credible. Every dollar spent now will yield significant savings in real dollar terms and suffering later on. We are risking calamity if we do not act. I'm here to ask the Climate Council to adopt the recommendations of the Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee and the Just Transitions Subcommittee.

Sylvie Desautels, Tunbridge

Topic areas: ◦Affordability, •Electricity, State-level action and leadership

I urge the Climate Council to not back down from implementing the Global Warming Solutions Act. Vermont still lags behind all but New Hampshire in New England in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Clearly utilities, fossil fuels interests have a much bigger influence on Vermont's climate policy. Conservation must be at the forefront of our policy. We must give Vermonters more opportunities to control their power sources. Community Solar must have an easily accessible and affordable format. And we protect low income and minorities from bearing the costs.

Jerome Andrews, Glover

Topic areas: •Natural & Working Lands, •Equity & Justice, State-level action and leadership

PLEASE don't roll back legislation that will help prevent both economic and environmental devastation. PLEASE stick to the recommendations written by the Ag and Ecosystems Subcommittee. Stick to the recommendations from the Just Transition Committee. We can't afford to maintain the status quo. The world is burning up (or being flooded out!). Thanks for your efforts here.

Pam Parker, East St. Johnsbury

Topic areas: ●Electricity, ●Transportation, ●Buildings & Thermal, ●Resilience, State-level action and leadership

Vermont must not cut back on taking action to address the climate crisis. Clean, renewable energy - solar, geothermal - increased public transportation, increased weatherization of public buildings, increased stabilization of the electric grid, increased preparation for the impacts of extreme weather events.

Liem Berman, Bellows Falls

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ○Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Electricity, ●Transportation, ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Buildings & Thermal

Ensure that the Climate Action plan is aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Climate Council's own Just Transitions Subcommittee. Eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed. Keep biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass, RNG, green hydrogen) out of our Climate Action Plan. Prioritize low-emission local energy solutions such as weatherization, community solar and wind, and non-combustion thermal energy networks. Make these solutions affordable and accessible to all Vermonters. Invest in affordable clean energy public transit systems in both rural and urban areas to reduce the use of resource-intensive cars. Adopt the recommendations from the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee as written. Sustain Vermont's carbon sinks and ecological resilience by protecting biodiversity, including all existing public land. Allow Vermont forest owners to help increase carbon sinks, flood resilience and biodiversity by removing the logging requirement from the Use Value Appraisal Program.

Andrea Van Liew, Essex Junction

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ●Equity & Justice, ●Electricity

Please ensure that the Climate Action plan is aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Climate Council's own Just Transitions Subcommittee. We want to ensure that the solutions recommended by the Vermont Climate Council are equitable. Some people are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change than others. Additionally, we will need to ensure workers in the fossil fuel and biomass industries can meaningfully transition their jobs and continue to support their families as we move to clean energy. This plan needs to work for everyone.

As recommended by the climate science community and some members of the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee, state agencies should eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed.

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Keep biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass, RNG, green hydrogen) out of our Climate Action Plan. There is no place for biofuels in Vermont’s clean energy future. We need to stop burning things and buying high-emission fuels out-of-state, draining our energy dollars. The McNeil Generating Station is the single largest source of carbon emissions in Vermont. Green hydrogen should only be used for on site energy storage for solar and wind generation facilities, to regenerate electricity when it is needed.

Catherine Bock, Burlington

Topic areas: ●Electricity, ●Buildings & Thermal, ●Biofuels, ●Equity & Justice

Thank you for all your hard work on our terrifying Climate issues. I would like you to remember to ensure that the Climate Action plan is aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Just Transitions Subcommittee. And it’s important to ensure that workers in the fossil fuel and biomass industries can meaningfully transition to jobs that continue to support their families as we move to clean energy. Prioritizing local, low-emission energy solutions like weatherization, community solar and wind, and non-combustion thermal networks will be essential to this process. Other New England states are ahead of us on this: they’re already phasing out biomass from their renewable energy portfolios (Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut).

I would urge you to strengthen your support for thermal energy networks: there’s a lot to be done to incentivize the development of thermal energy exchange networks, which can help generate the clean energy we need and reduce strain on the electrical grids as we move to electrify,

Christine Anderson, Manchester Center

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Biofuels, ○Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Transportation

As a former vegetable farmer, I am worried about Vermont farmland being converted from growing food for Vermonters to growing biofuels. Considering the upheaval in global tariffs, we need all our farmland for food production, rather than for corn that is destined for ethanol. Plus, burning ethanol is certainly not a solution to our carbon problems.

The push for biomass plants as an alternative to fossil fuels is also misguided. Those plants take carbon sequestering trees from our forests, only to emit that carbon again. In addition, the burning adds particulate matter into the atmosphere with harmful health impacts, usually on neighborhoods whose families cannot choose where they live. For this reason, I hope that the 2025

Climate Plan will include electricity ratepayer protection for low- and middle-income families, continued funding for weatherizing homes and businesses, and affordable public transit in urban and rural areas to reduce the financial burden of owning and operating a vehicle.

I urge you to support the Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee's and the Just Transitions Subcommittee's recommendations. Their recommendations should be maintained as written, not changed to appease politicians or business stockholders. Dealing with climate change is going to affect us all, but some more than others. Everyone needs to be able to afford the changes we must make to our homes, our cars, our jobs, our lives.

Elizabeth Steel, Greensboro

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Biofuels, ○Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Transportation, State-level action and leadership

Having participated in some of the Climate Council's community input sessions I am interested in how our feedback is recognized and incorporated into the updated Climate Action Plan - especially given the current political shift in Vermont postponing climate action. It is important that the Climate Action Plan is aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Climate Council's Just Transitions Subcommittee. Please keep biofuels of any kind (LNG, biomass, RNG and green hydrogen) out of our Climate Action Plan and provide electricity ratepayer protection for low- and middle-income Vermonters, in order to ensure an affordable and just transition as we "electrify everything."

In addition, we need to ensure workers in the fossil fuel and biomass industries can meaningfully transition their jobs and continue to support their families as we move to clean energy. Prioritizing local, low-emission energy solutions like weatherization, community solar and wind, as well as non-combustion thermal energy networks will be essential to this process. Other New England states are ahead of us on this - already phasing out biomass from their renewable energy portfolios (MA, NH and CT).

More affordable public transit in both rural and urban areas is also a priority. Investing in clean public transit will cut emissions and support Vermonters most in need. Also, we must consider the balance between the need for affordable housing with the need to protect our public lands holistically. The Ag and Ecosystems Subcommittee has submitted important and thoughtful wording to braid Indigenous knowledge with decision making around climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Recommendations include: forest protection; watershed management; housing for smart growth; biomass study; and smart farming practices.

Marisa Keller, Montpelier

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ●Equity & Justice, ●Resilience, ●Natural & Working Lands

I'm only 36 years old, but I've experienced Vermont's climate change dramatically since I was a kid in Burlington in the '90s. Today, as a food grower, a skier, and a resident of a flood-vulnerable city, I'm painfully aware of how thoroughly my life—and the well-being of Vermont's communities—

depends on the health of our land and ecosystems, as well as our adaption and resilience to floods, droughts, storms, and other extreme weather events.

I'm here to ask the Climate Council to adopt *as written* the recommendations of its own expert working groups: the Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee and the Just Transitions Subcommittee. These groups have brought a great depth of experience and knowledge and put in an enormous amount of work into laying out the climate and resilience solutions that will most effectively safeguard our wild lands, our working landscapes, and our communities. Please don't undercut their efforts (wasting their time and yours) by changing or watering down the original language of the recommendations.

I'd like to especially note and support the biomass study and moratorium. We should not be transitioning off fossil fuels by burning a different carbon-based fuel with equal or worse emissions, harmful health impacts, and damages to biodiversity and ecosystems. Instead, we should invest our available resources in truly clean, beneficial energy solutions that improve the lives of Vermonters and the strength and resilience of our energy economy: solutions like community solar and wind, weatherization, and thermal energy networks.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Vermont.

Lisa Moir, Westminster

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Resilience, Business

I am a Vermont entrepreneur who works in the local food industry, and I manage a small farm plot to source my food business.

Weather dictates my business.

If it's sunny- the tourists come.

If it's raining... not so much.

If it's a flood or drought- I lose my farm produce and I have LOTS more work and expenses to deal with.

A stable climate, resiliency efforts and STATE officials working to PROTECT and DECREASE carbon levels... is crucial to my business.

Stand to protect our global warming solutions act from years of work that we did Do not cave to governor Scott's wrath.

Please -

Catherine Lickfield, Worcester

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Biofuels

hello folks,

I am another concerned Vermonter making my voice heard for our climate resilience.

I want to highlight two points that i care deeply about:

Sustain Vermont's carbon sinks and ecological resilience by protecting biodiversity, including all existing public land. This includes:

Allowing 9% of our forests in Vermont to become old growth

Stopping logging and extraction from public lands (represents 1% of total revenue for the logging industry).

Increasing intact habitat and migratory corridors.

Ensuring a just transition for those whose livelihoods are bound up with forest management.

As recommended by the climate science community and some members of the Agriculture and Ecosystems subcommittee, state agencies should eliminate biomass as an energy source and stop referring to it as renewable energy. Additionally, all new biomass electric and thermal energy facilities should be disallowed.

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At a minimum, ask the Legislature to fund and undertake, as soon as possible, the study requested by the Climate Council in its biomass addendum regarding the implications of biomass as an energy source. In the meantime, enact a moratorium on approvals of new biomass utility-scale electric energy facilities.

Andy Robinson, Plainfield

Topic areas: •Resilience, •Natural & Working Lands

Wild lands are necessary for climate resilience. They store carbon and provide habitat for species, including those migrating due to climate change. Specific proposals:

-- Allow more of our forest (+/- 10%) to become old growth through a "forever wild" strategy.

-- Reduce logging on public lands in Vermont. Harvesting trees on public lands provides a tiny percentage of revenue for Vermont loggers, since so much of our state is privately owned. We need to protect public lands as refuges for biodiversity.

-- Connect protected lands with buffers and corridors to support migration and species resilience.

Hannah Morgan, Plainfield

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Biofuels, ●Equity & Justice

Hi there, I live in Plainfield VT, and grew up in Hartland VT. As a mom with young kids I am deeply concerned about the climate crisis, and how children will be impacted all over the world. I wish I could promise my own children a safe place to grow up, and I want my state to do its part in ensuring that we are doing everything we can to protect a livable future. I am asking that the Just Transition Committee recommendations should be followed and incorporated into the final document of recommendations to the Legislature. Please Fund and undertake, as soon as possible, the study requested by the Climate Council in its biomass addendum, and in the meantime, enact a moratorium on approvals of new biomass utility-scale electric energy facilities. Finally please use the language adopted by the Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee, and not water it down or change the meaning. thank you very much.

Roger White, Middlebury

Topic areas: ●Biofuels, ●Equity & Justice, ●Buildings & Thermal, ●Resilience

I appreciate the work that the Council has done to conceptualize our state's necessary, inevitable transition to renewable energy. I hope that the Council will continue to center questions of justice and equity as they review our state climate guidelines. I'm concerned about the role of biomass in our plans and support a moratorium on biomass projects. We can look to our neighbors states for ways to implement local, low-emission energy solutions (such as Thermal Energy Networks) that make our communities climate resilient, keep money in our state economy, and provide ways for fossil-fuel-industry workers to transition into new roles. Thank you.

Heather Johnson, East Calais

Topic areas: State-level action and leadership, ●Equity & Justice, ●Buildings & Thermal, ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Electricity

I am a 60 year old Central Vermont resident of modest means. I have seen big changes in our weather patterns and seasons over the last several years. This winter was a welcome return to what was the norm. But, I do not expect that to be the case again next year. I am deeply worried and concerned about our climate future both globally and here in our state. I often hear comments about Vermont not being able to make a dent on the global scale. Whether or not that is true, I do know that we are experiencing a quickened climate change pattern now and I believe we should be actively taking steps to get off the cause of all this (fossil fuels and our dependency on them) by adopting the recommendations of the Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee as well as the Just Transitions Subcommittee.

As a citizen I am asking you to be forward thinking and support and invest in our future through clean energy such as community solar, wind, thermal energy networks, weatherization and protecting our old growth forests and habitat corridors.

Thank you very much for your hard work.

Bella O'Connor, South Royalton

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Biofuels, ○Affordability, ●Equity & Justice, ●Transportation

Please ensure that the Climate Action plan is aligned with the Just Transition principles developed by the Climate Council's own Just Transitions Subcommittee. Most importantly, I ask that you remove biomass from Vermont's renewable energy portfolio. There has been a consensus for well over a decade that biomass is not a low-carbon energy source. Countless other states are far ahead of us on this, and we remain the outliers in New England for allowing this practice.

In addition to removing biomass from VT's renewable energy portfolio, I would like the Climate Action Plan to review 4 additional considerations.

(1) Rate Payer Protection: Provide electricity ratepayer protection for low- and middle-income Vermonters in order to ensure a just transition as we "electrify everything." Please keep biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass, RNG, green hydrogen) out of our Climate Action Plan.

(2) Old Growth Forest Protection: We must protect all public lands, allowing at least 9% of forests to become old growth, in Vermont, stop logging on public lands, and expand habitat corridors.

(3) Public Transit: We also need better, more affordable public transit in both rural and urban areas. Many Vermonters depend on transit that doesn't meet their needs. Investing in clean public transit will cut emissions and support the individuals most in need.

(4) Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee Recommendations: Please utilize the language of the Ag and Ecosystems Subcommittee, as written by them. I ask that you do not water down or rewrite this important language that works to braid Indigenous knowledge in our work and decision making regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Their recommendations included forest protection, watershed management, housing for smart growth, biomass study and climate smart farming practices.

Amelia Murphy, South Royalton

Topic areas: ●Natural & Working Lands, ●Biofuels, ●Equity & Justice

Dear Esteemed Council Members,

I am writing today to echo other comments urging the council to adopt the recommendations of its expert working groups.

In particular, I write to encourage the council to:

1. Follow the Just Transition Committee recommendations and incorporate them into the final document of recommendations to the Legislature;
2. Fund and undertake, as soon as possible, the study requested by the Climate Council in its biomass addendum, and in the meantime, enact a moratorium on approvals of new biomass utility-scale electric energy facilities; and

3. Use the language adopted by the Ag & Ecosystems Subcommittee, and dilute or change its meaning.

It is imperative now, as ever, to defer to recognized experts in policy matters affecting the livelihoods and wellbeing of Vermonters.

I am confident the Council, in upholding its mandate, will do the right thing and adopt the recommendations of its expert working groups.

Thank you sincerely for your service to our Vermont communities.

Best,

Amelia Murphy

Eli Hecht, Norwich

Topic areas: •Natural & Working Lands, •Equity & Justice

The language and recommendations made by the Just Transition Committee and Agriculture and Ecosystems Subcommittee should be incorporated into the final documentation submitted to the legislature. These committees were entrusted to make recommendations based on the expertise of their membership and their work should not be watered down.

Christopher, Hardwick

Topic areas: •Transportation, •Buildings & Thermal, •Electricity, Education

In regards to EV incentives, ensure that the power grid is able to support more EV charging stations. California had rolling blackouts due to too many EV's charging at one time, as the power supply could not handle the demand. Also, cost is a big part of why consumers are avoiding EV options.

Solar fields/solar housing should be adopted by the State.

Oil heating is still the most common form of heating in Vermont. If the mission is to cut down on emissions and move away from fossil fuels, programs should be put in place to help low-income families update or replace oil furnaces with wood or electric based heating.

Education concerns are being raised in relation to the dissolution of the Department of Education on the federal level, along with taxes and costs increasing year-over-year. Whereas it is important that children be educated on the importance of our environmental impact, it must be weighed with lower-income residents in mind.

Annette Smith, Danby

Topic areas: •Electricity, •Natural & Working Lands

Please keep this recommendation as is: "17) State agencies should utilize financial incentives, siting polices, rules, and regulations to motivate solar and wind energy capacity on new buildings,

parking lots (by installing solar roofs), in compact settlement areas (including renewable energy and charging facilities at rental housing) as well as in previously-disturbed/developed areas and using disincentives to avoid or minimize forest clearing and use of agricultural land (particularly prime agricultural land) for renewable development.”

For reasons I do not understand as the objection was not explained, Liz Miller of GMP seeks to change the recommendation to be about all development and not single out renewables. The Ag & Ecosystem has recommendation #3 that does that. Recommendation #17 needs to be specific to renewable energy because it is regulated differently from other types of development. Act 250 and local zoning are the regulatory vehicles for development, while Section 248 is the regulatory vehicle for renewable energy. Act 250 contains mitigation requirements for development on wetlands and agricultural soils. Section 248 contains no mitigation requirements. Act 250 and local zoning do not set prices for development on one area rather than an area, while Section 248 (or the legislature) sets rates for specific types of renewable energy. Eliminating the specificity in #17 regarding renewable energy ignores the regulatory structure and the need to guide development of renewable energy to the built landscape through financial incentives. The watered-down language suggested by Liz Miller of GMP is not providing the legislature with the guidance that it needs. Please let the public weigh in on #17 as it is written and do not allow a councilor who appears to have a conflict of interest to make the recommendation meaningless.

Laura Asermily, Middlebury

Topic areas: •Transportation

Public Transit: We need better, more affordable public transit in both rural and urban areas. Many Vermonters depend on transit that doesn't meet their needs. Investing in clean public transit will cut emissions and support the individuals most in need. Consider microtransit busing, allowing public to ride school buses, electrifying buses, expanding rail use for short transits hub town to hub town through the Rt 7 corridor (bud cars), van and car pooling incentives, more high level EV charging stations .

Kenneth Freer, Morristown

Topic areas: •Transportation

Everyone is assuming that we have a Climate problem without doing any research on the topic. The previous administration told a big lie because they wanted to sell electric cars. That plan failed and the price of gas fueled vehicles went up because of this. Take a look at the CO2 Coalition comments on the internet. This is a group of real scientists who refute most of what is being said about the climate. Electric vehicles are bad for the environment, the batteries are with us forever and young children are being sacrificed to mine materials.