

Vermont General Assembly Enacts Landmark 100% Renewable Energy Bill- Governor's Veto is Conclusively Overriden

Montpelier, VT — The Vermont General Assembly voted today to overwhelmingly endorse H.289 to modernize the Renewable Energy Standard and set Vermont utilities on track to deliver 100% renewable electricity by 2035 at the latest. The House, needing 97 votes to override the veto, voted 102-43 to override. The Senate, needing 20 votes, voted 21-8 to override the veto.

H.289 is thoughtfully-crafted compromise legislation stemming from the work of a months-long Legislative Working Group composed of a diverse array of stakeholders. It is supported by nearly all of the state's electric utilities, environmental organizations, Vermont's renewable energy sector and others.

This landmark legislation would be the first major update to the Renewable Energy Standard in nearly a decade and would represent the most significant action Vermont has ever taken to cut carbon pollution in the electric sector. This bill requires all electric utilities to get to 100% renewable energy by 2035, and gives each the flexibility to pursue the resources, large or small, in-state or in-region, that are most economical for its ratepayers.

"Today Vermont has taken one more step toward safeguarding a livable world for all. We thank legislators for joining the many people in Vermont working for a clean energy and resilient future," stated **Vanessa Rule, Co-Director and Lead Organizer of 350VT**.

"As the impacts of the climate crisis continue to grow, the Legislature recognized that we have a responsibility to our children to build a clean energy future. I'm grateful legislators stood up for what is right and urgent in today's important vote for climate action," said **Lauren Hierl, Executive Director of Vermont Conservation Voters**.

"I'm grateful for the forward-looking leadership of lawmakers who are committed to solving hard problems that serve Vermonters well today, and into a changing future," said **Johanna Miller, energy and climate program director at the Vermont Natural Resources Council**. "We have an obligation to cut climate pollution as quickly and equitably as possible. Thankfully, our state's utilities also recognize that. And, with legislative leadership, we can now build the clean, resilient, 21st century electric grid that will make our communities stronger and healthier and create well-paying jobs while doing it."

"This was a historic vote," said **Ben Edgerly Walsh, Climate and Energy Program Director for VPIRG**. "With this override, the legislature voted to cut carbon pollution, and advance renewable energy, more than any other action Vermont has ever taken. We deeply appreciate the commitment the legislature, and legislative leadership in particular, has shown to climate action, equity, and an affordable, just electric system."

“I’d like to thank the General Assembly for showing bold leadership and overriding Governor Scott’s veto of the Renewable Energy Standard update,” said **Elena Mihaly, Vice President of CLF Vermont**. “We don’t need to look far for reminders of climate change’s devastating impacts. This week’s coming heat wave predicted to scorch parts of Vermont is a reminder that we must cut carbon pollution now – and policies like this update are how we do so. This is a win for Vermonters, our future, and our health.”

“I am grateful that after a decade of watching other states pass us by, Vermont is once again leading on renewable energy and for the dozens and dozens of legislators, Republicans, Democrats, Progressives and Independents, who stood up today to say yes to a fossil fuel free future. 100% renewable energy is imperative if we are going to move to electric vehicles and other fossil fuel free technologies. It makes no sense to drive an EV and have it powered with electricity from burning oil and natural gas. Thankfully, the General Assembly recognized this today and took this historic vote for climate action,” said **Peter Sterling, Executive Director of Renewable Energy Vermont**.

“The General Assembly’s vote and hard work in developing a bill in which regulated utilities, environmental advocates, and policymakers all agreed is a major victory in increasing affordable and renewable energy. The Sierra Club applauds this major victory to expand renewables, and further reduce the burning of gas and coal in New England,” said **Robb Kidd, Conservation Program Manager, Vermont Sierra Club**

“Climate change is having significant impacts on Vermont businesses and our economy – and the General Assembly’s action demonstrates a clear understanding of this reality. VBSR applauds this move away from fossil fuels and toward a clean energy future, as well as the leadership that made it possible,” said **Roxanne Vought, Executive Director, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility**. “Our vision for a just, thriving, and transformative economy that works for all people and the planet comes closer into focus thanks to this landmark legislation.”

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