

Louise Diamond Committee to Protect Next Generations

A Project of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

August 9, 2017

Executive Office of Governor Phil Scott
109 State Street, Pavillion
Montpelier, VT 05609

Dear Governor Scott,

Your Executive Order creating the Climate Action Commission presents an opportunity to table the proposed carbon tax. However, the tax could also be advanced by citizens lobbying the Commission.

What is needed, from the outset, is a focus on an alternative that promotes your Executive Order directives. Establishing a Vermont Green Bank can be a powerful counter to the carbon tax.

Your appointment of Commission members can facilitate this political strategy. Without projecting it as your initiative, Executive Branch members could support naming an Executive Committee to focus on legal and financial aspects of a Green Bank such as those established by Connecticut, New York, California and other States operating similar and less broad Banks.

You authorized that the Commission shall have the administrative, technical and legal assistance of the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Public Service and Agency of Commerce and Community Development. That is a strong intellectual asset you can encourage to hold the Commission's attention by sharing data and analysis regarding Vermont's potential to benefit from a Green Bank. And, including a currently enrolled student could invite participation by the Law School's Institute for Energy and Environment.

Your campaign promise to veto a carbon tax and your more important pledge to make Vermont affordable can be satisfied by establishing the Green Bank. The public record of existing Green Banks provide evidence it can benefit Vermont's low income population and particularly LIHEAP recipients whose dwellings are un-insulated while their credit worthiness prevents efficiency upgrades that provide comfort and reduce the Treasury's burden to provide that subsidy.

Vermonters are rightly concerned about impacts of climate change just as they want you to fix problems and do no harm (a carbon tax will impact many of them). You can follow the lead of Vermont's two great legislators: Senators Stafford and Jeffords. I believe they would have agreed with this strategy to table the tax while authorizing a Green Bank which pragmatically and fairly addresses this environmental threat.

With warm regards,



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