



Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) is a non-profit, statewide business trade organization with a mission to advance business ethics that value multiple bottom lines- economic, social, and environmental.

We strive to help members set a high standard for protecting the natural, human and economic environments of the state's residents, while remaining profitable. Founded in 1991, VBSR has more than 700 members across Vermont.

VBSR represents some of the most innovative and iconic businesses in Vermont – many of them closely tied with the Vermont brand and way of life. These companies are concerned with a looming threat to the Vermont economy – and worried because Vermont has not taken the necessary steps to address this crisis.

Despite well-intentioned efforts, Vermont is not meeting our climate goals and that threatens not only our environment, but also every aspect of our economy – from winter recreation to our local food and drink-driven tourism economy. Failure means the end of Vermont as a “green” state.

Climate change has been called the biggest crisis of our times. It has also been called the greatest wealth generating opportunity in a generation.

Moving off of imported fossil fuels, investing in clean energy and efficiency, and building out our electric transportation infrastructure will jumpstart the Vermont economy and restore our standing as a dynamic, innovative “green” state.

Yesterday I was joined at the Vermont State House with the CEOs and founders of six iconic Vermont companies – Rhino Foods, Ben & Jerry’s, The Alchemist, Seventh Generation, Black River Produce, and Danforth Pewter. These business leaders together employ thousands of Vermonters and generate hundreds of millions in annual revenue and have facilities and stores across the state.

Economic Growth through Climate Action

House Appropriations Committee
February 21, 2019

Testimony by Daniel Barlow VBSR Public Policy Manager

They are worried about our failure to fight climate change – and optimistic about the future of the state if we do rise to the challenge. Many of these companies have already taken steps to curb their own emissions and have transitioned to clean renewable energy.

VBSR urges the House Appropriations Committee to prioritize the Climate Package in this year’s budget. This investment in Vermont’s future will fight climate change, grow jobs, protect Vermont’s brand and way of life, and harness the economic engine represented in transforming Vermont’s fuel economy.

- Allocate \$4.5 million as a match to the auto emissions settlement payment fund programs helping Vermonters move off of fossil fuel vehicles and over to electric vehicles and used hybrids. At least one-third of these funds should be used to directly help low-income Vermonters purchase more fuel-efficient vehicles and transition off of fossil fuels.
- Use the Volkswagen settlement funds to jumpstart the electrification of Vermont’s transportation system, with 85% funding the transition to electric buses and trucks and the remaining funds used for the smaller vehicle electric infrastructure.
- Increase funding by \$5.5 million to state programs that weatherproof the homes of low and moderate income Vermonters, putting the state on the track to double the number of homes weatherproofed annually from 2,000 to 4,000.

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