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Vermont Joins First-of-its-Kind International Effort to Combat Climate Change

MONTPELIER – Gov. Peter Shumlin announced today that Vermont has signed on to a first-of-its-kind agreement with international leaders from 11 other states and provinces, collectively representing more than \$4.5 trillion in GDP and 100 million people, to limit the increase in global average temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius – the warming threshold at which scientists say there will likely be catastrophic climate disruptions.

Spearheaded by California Governor Jerry Brown, the dozen-state agreement called the “Under 2 MOU” provides a template for the world’s nations to follow as work continues toward an international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions ahead of this year’s United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris.

"There is no greater challenge than climate change," said Gov. Peter Shumlin. "From disastrous flooding in Vermont to devastating drought in California, we are already seeing the disruptive effects of changing weather on our lands, in our communities, and on our economy. Vermont is making this commitment because we know that states and regional governments have to work together for solutions on the ground to make a real difference. We must get this right for our kids and grandkids."

"As the chair of the Governor’s Climate Cabinet I am thrilled that we are joining other states in announcing today a bold goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions," said Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources Deb Markowitz. "Cutting carbon pollution matters. Science shows that because of carbon pollution we are experiencing environmental changes and climate disruption across the globe that threatens our economy, our communities, our ecosystems, our health and the safety of our families. In one year alone (2012), climate disasters cost the United States economy over 100 billion dollars."

The 12 founding signatories to the agreement span seven countries in both advanced and developing economies on three continents and would collectively constitute the fourth largest economic entity in the world by GDP. The signatories include: California, USA; Acre, Brazil; Baden-Württemberg, Germany; Baja California, Mexico; Catalonia, Spain; Jalisco, Mexico; and Ontario, Canada, who participated in today’s signing ceremony in Sacramento, as well as; British Columbia, Canada; Oregon, USA; Vermont, USA; Washington, USA; and Wales, UK.

Under today’s agreement, the signatories commit to either reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 to 95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 or achieve a per capita annual emission target of less

than 2 metric tons by 2050. These targets allow each individual government to tailor emission reduction plans to fit regional needs.

The pact seeks to enhance cooperation to achieve these goals through a range of activities, including:

- Developing mid-term targets needed to support long-term reduction goals;
- Sharing technology, scientific research and best practices to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy;
- Collaborating to expand the use of zero-emission vehicles;
- Taking steps to ensure consistent monitoring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Improving air quality by reducing short-lived climate pollutants such as black carbon and methane; and
- Assessing the projected impacts of climate change on communities.

The agreement's signatories have also committed to recruiting additional global partners ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris this December. To that end, California Air Resources Board Chair Mary Nichols hosted a reception with European partners today at the Business and Climate Summit in Paris.

For more information on the agreement, please visit: www.under2mou.org. The full text of the agreement signed today can be found [here](#).

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