

House Transportation Committee
Comments on S.280

Chris Campany, Executive Director, Windham Regional Commission
April 13, 2022

- I agree that idling is an unnecessary waste of energy and source of harmful emissions, especially in areas with a lot of stop-start traffic, such as downtowns, and in areas where there may be a proliferation of drive-up windows. It can be an environmental justice issue.
- The most effective public awareness campaign would likely be executed at the state level through media. Public service announcements on radio and podcasts, heard by drivers while in their cars, may be the most effective.
- I don't believe adding an element to the municipal plan would have any effect at all. I've come to think of the elements required of municipal plans to be akin to ornaments on Charlie Brown's Christmas tree; they are unnecessarily weighing down the plans and diffusing the effort of local planning commissions. Plans need fewer elements that have substantial impact rather than more elements with little to no impact, so planning commissions can focus on those policies that make a real difference.
- I'm not sure this is a good fit with official municipal action generally. Who would take on the task (i.e., selectboard, planning commission, clerk, road foreman, administrator or manager if they have one)?
- If there's to be a local focus, resource local energy and/or health committees with micro-grants to use state-generated materials to mount a local awareness campaign. Funding could come directly from DEC to local committees that apply for funding, or if there's an administrative efficiency benefit to doing so, the agency could work with regional planning commissions on a distribution strategy to minimize the number of contracts managed by the agency. In any case, keep the application process and requirements for local action simple. There may be an opportunity to support this through the Transportation Planning Initiative managed by VTrans, but that would need to be taken up among the two agencies and the regional planning commissions.