

STATE OF VERMONT

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 15-12

[Governor's Climate Cabinet and State Agency Climate Action Plan]

WHEREAS, there is broad scientific consensus that the Earth is undergoing a rise in overall atmospheric temperature driven by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions that is forecast to have profound effects on global, continental and regional climate conditions. In the northeast United States, the effects are expected to include higher peak summer temperatures; warmer, wetter winters; increased periods of drought; and increased frequency of severe precipitation events; and

WHEREAS, regardless of any reduction of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, there is scientific consensus that the world, the nation and the region will experience changes in climate associated with previous emissions that have the potential to affect both natural ecosystems and the built environment that will need to be adapted to; and

WHEREAS, state government has a critical role to play in reducing statewide greenhouse gas emissions, planning for impending changes in our regional climate, and leading by example; and

WHEREAS, Vermont has the opportunity to become a nationally and internationally recognized leader in transitioning to a more sustainable economy and society, in part through developing and implementing effective approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to adapting to the coming changes in the climate of the state and the region; and

WHEREAS, cultivating a "green economy" in Vermont will lead to the creation of new jobs and increase Vermont's prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the Vermont Legislature established a goal of the state to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from the 1990 baseline by, fifty percent by 2028 and, if practicable using reasonable efforts, seventy-five percent by 2050.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Vermont, I, Peter Shumlin, do hereby reconstitute the Vermont Climate Cabinet and re-establish Vermont's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from state government buildings and operations.

I. Vermont Climate Cabinet

The Vermont Climate Cabinet shall be chaired by the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources, and consist of the Secretaries of Administration, Agriculture Food and Markets, Commerce and Community Development, and Transportation; the Commissioners of the Departments of Economic, Housing and Community Development, of the Department of Buildings and General Services and the Department of Public Service. The Agency of Natural Resources shall provide staff support to the Vermont Climate Cabinet. The Vermont Climate Cabinet may from time to time call upon other state agencies or departments to assist as appropriate in implementing this Order and achieving its purposes.

The Vermont Climate Cabinet shall be advisory to the Governor and shall have the following functions and duties:

- (A) Provide comprehensive leadership by coordinating climate change efforts across all state agencies and departments.
- (B) Provide information to Vermonters on all matters relating to a changing Vermont climate, including what to expect in the coming years and actions citizens can take to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases.
- (C) Identify strategies to reduce Vermonters' dependence on fossil fuel for transportation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging alternatively fueled vehicles and more efficient vehicle and mobility choices.
- (D) Improve energy efficiency for existing and new buildings.
- (E) Foster development of in-state renewable and sustainable energy sources.
- (F) Partner with municipalities and regional planning and development agencies so that Vermont communities grow sustainably and are resilient to climate change impacts in the future.
- (G) Improve the understanding of the effects of climate change in Vermont and identify strategies to address these effects in order to protect Vermonters, their property, the state's economic well-being and the state's natural resources and the ecosystem services these resources provide.
- (H) Monitor and advance the recommendations set forth in the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan of 2011.
- (I) Establish policies and programs that expand Vermont's green economy, grow green jobs, reduce energy costs to households and the business sector, and improve the wellbeing of working Vermonters while reducing Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions.
- (J) Develop working groups to advance the efforts of the Climate Cabinet in topic areas such as adaptation; data and metrics; transportation; state operations; land use and any other topic area as may be deemed appropriate. The state operations working group shall replace the former Climate Neutral Working Group originally established under Executive Order 10-30 (No. 14-03).
- (K) Advise the Governor, the legislature, and Vermonters on ways to ensure that Vermont continues to be a national leader in developing and implementing strategies that effectively address the challenge of climate change and promote a successful and prosperous low-carbon economy.
- (L) Advise the Governor on the state's role in regional and federal efforts to address climate change and energy security.

(M) Identify and secure federal and state funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in Vermont.

## II. State Agency Climate Action Plan

To implement these goals, I hereby direct all state government agencies, offices and departments to:

- (A) Purchase only energy-consuming devices that meet or exceed the Energy Star® or comparable standards established by the U.S. federal government, and to operate these devices in a manner that maximizes their energy efficiency features;
- (B) Purchase vehicles that have the highest available fuel efficiency in each respective vehicle class (e.g., passenger cars, light duty trucks, etc.) pursuant to performance specifications recommended by the state operations working group established under section I (J). These performance standards should include consideration of vehicles that not only meet high fuel economy standards but that also provide lower total emissions of greenhouse gases, criteria pollutants, and hazardous air contaminants.
- (C) Develop programs to encourage state employees, through the use of incentives, to use transportation alternatives to a single person in a single motor vehicle for commuting business travel, including incentives as may be bargained with the collective bargaining units.
- (D) The Department of Buildings and General Services shall work with the state operations working group and all state facilities to ensure that every state building reduces its energy consumption to meet the outlined greenhouse gas reductions.
- (E) The Department of Buildings and General Services shall investigate cost-effective opportunities to purchase renewable energy to reduce the State of Vermont's reliance on fossil fuels. Renewable energy includes electricity derived from sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, landfill methane gas, or small scale (less than 30 megawatts) hydroelectric projects.

This Executive Order shall take effect upon signing and shall supersede and replace Executive Orders 10-38 (No. 05-11) and 10-30 (No. 14-03).

DATED December 28th, 2012.

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Peter Shumlin  
Governor