

The Vermont Global Warming Solutions Act

The Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) became law in September 2020 when the Vermont Legislature voted to override Governor Scott's veto of bill H.688. The GWSA strives to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and achieve netzeroemissions across all sectors by 2050.

The Objective

The GWSA establishes a timetable for reducing statewide GHG emissions:

- 26% below 2005 levels by 2025, which is in line with Paris Climate Accord targets
- 40% below 1990 levels by 2030
- 80% below 1990 levels by 2050

Carbon offsets may account for up to 20% of statewide GHG emissions, based on 1990 levels. When combined with the reduction targets, this provides a path to net-zero emissions by 2050.

The Process

The GWSA does not prescribe how the state will meet emissions targets. Instead, it establishes a 23-member Climate Council to develop specific policy recommendations.

The Climate Council is comprised of public officials and private citizens representing various industries and organizations across the state. See the following page for a list of Council members. The **Climate Council** held its first meeting in November 2020 and is required to present its **Climate Action Plan** to the Legislature by December 2021.

The Legislature may then enact policies recommended by the Climate Council to reduce emissions. The GWSA also authorizes the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to adopt rules to regulate GHG emissions by the following year.

The GWSA establishes dates for regular progress reporting. If the emission reduction requirements are ignored by the State, Vermonters may take court action. The state could not be sued for damages, but the state could be court-ordered to improve efforts to meet the emissions goals.

AIA Vermont's Position

AIA Vermont supports statewide efforts to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, including the process outlined in the Global Warming Solutions Act.

Buildings account for 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions, with 11% from embodied carbon of building materials and construction processes. The AIA has prioritized Climate Action in its recently released Strategic Plan, and aims to position architects as community leaders to drive adoption of practical design solutions that will rapidly address and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

For its part, AIAVT will continue to engage with Vermont policymakers, including members of the Climate Council, and advocate for public policies that are effective, equitable, and achievable.

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Vermont
47 Maple Street, Suite 211B
Burlington, VT
05401

T 802-448-2169
www.aiavt.org

The Vermont Climate Council

The Global Warming Solutions Act established the Vermont Climate Council, which is charged with developing policy recommendations to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate Council is comprised of public officials and private citizens representing various industries and organizations across the state.

Climate Council Members:

Cabinet Members

- Susanne Young, Chair, Agency of Administration, Secretary
- Julie Moore, Agency of Natural Resources, Secretary
- Anson Tebbetts, Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets, Secretary
- Lindsay Kurrle, Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Secretary Sean Brown, Agency of Human Services, Commissioner of Department of Children for Families, designee
- Joe Flynn, Agency of Transportation, Secretary
- Erica Bornemann, Department of Public Safety, Director of Vermont Emergency Management, designee
- June Tierney, Department of Public Service, Commissioner

Members Appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees

- Abbie Corse, The Corse Farm Dairy, member to represent the farm and forest sector
- Chad Farrell, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Encore Renewable Energy, member to represent the clean energy sector
- Jared Duval, Executive Director of Energy Action Network, member to represent energy and data analysis
- Kelly Klein, Founder and CEO of Groennfell Meadery and Havoc Mead, member to represent the small business community
- Lauren Oates, The Nature Conservancy, member to represent the resilience and disaster response
- Sophia Clark, Hyde Park, member to represent Vermont youth
- Sue Minter, Executive Director of Capstone Community Action, member to represent the Vermont Community Action Partnership

Members Appointed by the House of Representatives

- Adam Knudsen, Dynapower, member to represent Vermont manufacturers
- Brian Gray, member to represent the fuel sector
- Catherine Dimitruk, Northwest Regional Planning Commission, member to represent rural communities
- Chris Company, Windham Regional Commission, member to represent the municipal governments
- Johanna Miller, Vermont Natural Resources Council, member to represent a statewide environmental organization
- Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Vermont State Climatologist, UVM Professor of Climate and Climate Change, member with expertise in climate change science
- Liz Miller, Green Mountain Power, member to represent distribution utilities
- Richard Cowart, Regulatory Assistance Project, member with expertise and professional experience in the design and implementation of programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions