



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

January 21, 2015

The Honorable Robert Introne, Chairman
House Science, Technology and Energy Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 304
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 213 Establishing an Energy Awareness Commission

Dear Chairman Introne and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Department of Environmental Services (DES) regarding House Bill 213, which seeks to establish an energy awareness commission to develop an energy awareness education program. DES concurs there is a significant need to raise awareness of New Hampshire residents and businesses about the causes and impacts of climate change and promote broad action to respond to them.

Numerous studies and reports have documented the need for concerted, sustained education and outreach efforts relative to energy use, including the 2009 *New Hampshire Climate Action Plan*, the 2011 *Independent Study of Energy Policy Issues*, and the 2014 *New Hampshire 10-Year State Energy Strategy*. These reports also highlight the need for the state to “lead by example” on energy and climate issues, itself a form of outreach and education.

The Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy (ESEE) Board, established by RSA 125-O:5-a, was given the broad charge “to promote and coordinate energy efficiency, demand response, and sustainable energy programs in the state.” Among the specific duties assigned to the Board is to “develop tools to enhance outreach and education programs to increase knowledge about energy efficiency and sustainable energy among New Hampshire residents and businesses.” The ESEE Board’s Education and Outreach Committee, staffed by volunteer ESEE Board members and interested third parties, put together an education and outreach plan in 2014, but that plan has yet to be implemented because the Board lacks the resources to implement the plan. Therefore, DES supports this bill, applauds the inclusion of educators on this commission, and suggests the duties of the commission be expanded to include identification of a sustainable funding mechanism to support outreach and education programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Should you have further questions or need additional information please feel free to contact either myself or Rebecca Ohler, Air Resources Division (271-6749, Rebecca.ohler@des.nh.gov).

Sincerely,




Thomas S. Burack

Commissioner

