

1. Pitch Submitted By [Name(s) and Organization(s)]:	Jim Bradley - President of the Vermont Home Builders & Remodelers Assoc
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4. Pitch Title: (one line)	Moving Beyond Discussion to Implementation and Verification of Vermont's Energy Efficiency Goals
5. Pitch Summary: (one paragraph)	<p>It is obvious that Vermont shares in the need for making big strides towards realizing their energy and emissions goals by the noted benchmarks of 2025 and/or 2050, and discussion around these topics has certainly accelerated during the past legislative session with a myriad of bills being sent through the various committees with the hope of getting meaningful legislation passed. However, through direct involvement in this past and the upcoming legislative sessions, it is apparent that most of the thoughtfully crafted bills were too fragmented as standalone pieces of legislation. The bills lacked a simple cohesive and codified message which could garner the needed support and funding allowing for the establishment of an effective process and program to assist Vermont in meeting its energy and emissions goals, while also providing for adequate consumer protection and verification of the existing energy efficiency standards which are already State law. It is therefore proposed that the State begin taking significant steps towards passing and establishing the Builder Registry Program in 2020 that the VBRA strongly supports. This program should also include RBES/CBES training for each registered builder/contractor. In addition, proper verification of the existing RBES/CBES standards should be required throughout the State with the RBES/CBES certificates submitted and entered into a statewide database. This would address primarily new construction and renovations. Performance of this verification process should be carried out by the approximately 130 certified Building Analysts / Energy Auditors that currently exist throughout the State, many of which are partners with Efficiency VT and members of the BPPA. This would require minimum State funding while offering significant consumer protection that is currently lacking without the necessary verification process. Additionally, non-compliance with the existing RBES/CBES should also affect the validity of the marketable property title which would serve as an effective means of confirming compliance with Vermont's existing energy code. By ensuring that these simple measures are properly implemented and verified, realistic results of Vermont moving towards their energy and emission goals will be achieved in a relatively short amount of time. Should the implementation and verification of these measures not be established, the discussion around these topics will continue without these goals being realized or furthered. This proposal would not serve as the ultimate solution to all of Vermont's energy and emissions</p>

challenges, but it would be an immediate and readily achievable part of the equation.

6. What Energy Sector(s) Does this Pitch Apply to? (Check all that apply):

Energy Efficiency
Electricity
Thermal Heating and/or Cooling
Consumer Protection, Health & Safety, Building
Durability/Materials Use Reduction

7. Which Criteria Category(ies) Does It Address? (Check all that apply):

Significant reductions in fossil fuel use and GHG pollution from energy
Clean energy jobs
Energy security and resilience
A stronger and more just Vermont economy
Sustainable energy landscape

8. Which Leverage Areas Would It Attempt to Shift? (Check all that apply):

Policy & Regulatory Reform
Public Engagement
Workforce Development/Workforce Transition
Technology Innovation
Capital Mobilization

9. Scale of Impact on Vermont's Energy and Emissions Goals: If this proposal came to fruition, how would it help meet Vermont's energy and emissions goals by 2025 and/or 2050? Please outline assumptions and, if available, provide calculations--especially for emissions reduction estimates.

As the RBES / CBES are made more stringent every three years, verifying that builders & contractors are properly building and remodeling to those standards is a simple yet necessary request that protects the investment of the citizens of Vermont. By ensuring that Vermont's builders/contractors are keeping pace with the ever-increasing RBES / CBES their buildings will be healthier, safer, more durable, and by default, more energy-efficient. When each of these considerations is correctly addressed the intrinsic costs of each item would be substantially reduced. Ultimately, less money would be spent on healthcare if our buildings are healthier and replacement costs of deteriorated materials would be minimized if the buildings are built to be more durable, along with the considerable energy savings that are produced from a more efficient structure. Currently, the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan calls for "net-zero new construction by 2030" and we won't get there without 100% code compliance which can only be achieved through the verification process. If this proposal is selected for a pitch, we will provide an estimate of the emission savings that would occur by making this legislative change.

10. Benefits/costs of this proposal for

The challenge that Vermont and Vermonters currently face is a Building and Remodeling Industry that is moving towards building safer, more durable, and energy-efficient structures if the RBES/CBES are correctly followed by properly educated builders/contractors in the areas of best construction practices and building science. However, without the proper training, implementation, and verification of Vermont's energy standards there is not much hope that Vermont's residential and commercial buildings will actually meet the prescribed requirements and thus, the emissions and energy goals will not be met which once again includes "net-zero new construction by 2030" as detailed in the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan. Should efforts be made to properly educate the

Vermont and Vermonters: Including, where possible, economic (local economic development and jobs), financial (consumer savings), social, public health, and environmental.

builders/contractors along with the general public as to why meeting and surpassing the RBES/CBES is so important, the health and comfort benefits that would be experienced within Vermont's homes and buildings would be substantial, while at the same time mitigating premature repair costs and the associated environmental impact, with energy efficiency being achieved as the desired result. Though there are other approaches to reaching Vermont's energy and emissions goals like requiring building permits in every town, this would prove to be inefficient and too costly. Therefore, that is why I propose this solution because while it is not without its challenges such as getting the necessary legislative change, it is the simplest and most readily achievable pathway forward at this time that has the support of numerous State organizations. Further, it motivates and stimulates growth in markets that currently exist such as energy auditors and builders/contractors for example, which builds off and strengthens tools and resources that we already have established here in Vermont.

Over the past 18 months, the VBRA has collaborated with the following State Organizations to help establish the programs and processes outlined within this proposal:

Representative Scott Campbell

AIA Vermont - A Chapter of The American Institute of Architects

Building Performance Professionals Association (BPPA)

Efficiency Vermont

Energy Futures Group

Home Builders and Remodelers Association (HBRA)

Housing Vermont

Sustainable Energy Outreach Network (SEON)

Vermont Green Building Network

Vermont Housing Finance Agency

Vermont Passive House (VTPH)

Office of Professional Regulation (OPR)

Attorney General's Office (AG)

It is believed that each of these entities would continue to serve as important voices in the process as this proposal is implemented and in further steps towards meeting Vermont's emissions and energy goals. Included in this process would be the additional collaboration with the BPPA in supporting blower door testing training and tester support while the VBRA aligns

11. Collaboration: Who have you collaborated with to develop this proposal and who else would need to be engaged for it to succeed?

with this effort to match builders with the trained testers as an additional resource.

12. Decision-makers: Who is necessary to move this proposal forward? (e.g., Legislature, Governor, a regulatory agency, a business, organization, media outlet, or financing institution, etc.)

Key support would be required from Legislature to get a comprehensive bill passed that covers these issues along with the support of the Governor in order to sign it into law. This would include a legislative change to the current RBES/CEBS legislation which would affect the validity of the property title if the proper verification and certification of the existing energy code have not been performed. There should be provisions for a sufficient grace period allowing for builder education and grandfathering-in of all previously constructed homes and additions that are covered under Vermont's energy code. Efficiency VT would be a viable resource for the RBES/CBES training, which they have confirmed they are willing to perform. OPR would be involved in the Builder Registry and Certification program. Verification of the RBES/CBES should be implemented by the 130 Building Analyst/Energy Auditors throughout the State who would perform the necessary testing and inspections while at the same time serving to educate the builders/contractors on best practices of Building Science. The media and/or PSAs would be necessary to properly educate the public about the existence and protections offered by this proposal. Finally, financial institutions and Efficiency Vt would be part of the loan and incentive programs to help the citizens with affording the improvements at initial construction and retrofit work.

13. Strategy and Key Considerations: Outline the overall strategy, including any gaps, barriers, and opportunities for moving this proposal forward.

It is hoped that legislation which includes the Builder Registry Program and RBES enforcement would be passed early in the coming session, allowing for a timely signature from Governor Scott and then implementation by July 1st, 2020 or at the latest, January 1st, 2021 since the Builder Registry Program has already passed the Senate and nearly made it out of the House this past session. Setting up the Builder Registry with OPR and RBES/CBES verification with a State Reporting Officer and the required database could take a bit of time but should not require significant time or additional funding. Part of the State Reporting Officer's salary and the necessary infrastructure would be funded by the RBES / CBES permit filing fees. The same could be true for the additional staff required to manage the Builder Registry Program within the OPR.

14. Timeline: To meet our 2025 goals, we need some proposals that can be implemented in the next year. How "ripe" is this idea and what timeline do you foresee for this proposal to be developed and implemented?

With new homes being built every day in Vermont and existing housing stock either being remodeled or needing efficiency upgrades, the timeline of this proposal would be immediate.

15. Budget: If this is a program or project for which you are seeking funding to implement, please outline a basic budget here, including both expenses and funding sources.

If this proposal is selected for a pitch, we will provide an estimate of the projected funding required for implementation. However, the majority of the costs should be self-fulfilling through the fees paid through the permitting and registration process.

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