

Katherine Freygang
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Re: Governor's Bill 6360- Energy Strategy

To Whom it May Concern,

This is a request that public outreach be placed and funded as a high priority.

Thank you for the opportunity to report from the NW Corner, an example of existing struggles in energy advocacy. I am a Cornwall resident and chair the Cornwall Energy Task Force. CETF has won awards from the Governor, CEFIA and the EPA for promotion and administration of educational and state energy programs such as Light-Up, Clean Energy Option and Home Energy Solutions. As Co-chair of the Environmental Ministries Team of the UCC Congregational, we, the ETM, has designed outreach programs that have been adopted throughout New England, the US and by other denominations. Professionally I am a retired Museum educator and architectural designer.

My request is that public outreach be addressed fully. What is lacking is **accessibility** to state energy programs (both CEFIA and CEEF).

Advanced accessibility would included:

- comprehensive marketing materials (varying and plentiful in media).
- ease of use, meaning a clear line of point-people for administration and information, and
- simplified financial structures (including timetables). Complex financial maneuvers are the greatest barriers to public participation.

For Example:

We just finished an HES Campaign that was mired by a complex rebate plan, delays in marketing materials, confusion as to eligibility, difficulties in registration, etc. In three months of tireless work, we finished 30 completed audits with 15 more registrations. Meanwhile, the town of Sharon used a grant to create a completely free program. In two months they enlisted 240 homes. We found an annual savings from the audit repairs alone to be \$350 per home making the program well worth promoting.

There are 3 important spin offs from this request for advancing public outreach.

Firstly there is potential for local jobs in the areas of marketing, data collection and administration.

Secondly, we have have a burgeoning population of elders to consider. They want to stay in their homes, are on fixed incomes, feel the pressures of increased energy bills,

and are unable to administer complex incentives, often falling through the cracks being not quite low income.

Thirdly, making energy conservation and production as visible and local as possible keeps the issue a matter of local concern and consciousness. Seeing solar collectors and re-opened hydro plants stimulate discussion and action. I get calls requesting information on solar because we outfitted our school and people want to know about home-hydro possibilities.

People are ready for local involvement but need accessible tools and incentives. The need for advanced public outreach would become the source.

Many thanks for this opportunity to contribute to this bill and strategy,

Sincerely,

Katherine Freygang