

Entering the conversation

As we work to strengthen our messaging on this campaign by gathering supportive materials and stories, we also need your help to disseminate that message far and wide through the mass media *and* push back against the inevitable wave of misinformation the fossil fuel industry will pour in these same channels. **We have a number of tools in place to do just that.**

Social media:

⇒ One of the simplest things you can do to help us get our message out there is follow us on social media and like and share our posts. **Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.**



Facebook.com/
energyindependentvt



@EnergyIndVT



@EnergyIndVT

- ⇒ **Social media is exponential!** Think of it this way - we have nearly 1,000 followers on Facebook. If each of those followers has 250 friends of their own, that's a combined social reach of 250,000 people. But to reach that potential we need you — our followers — to **like, share, retweet those posts.**
- ⇒ **Pro tip:** To ensure you're seeing our posts in your Facebook newsfeed, visit our Facebook page, select the drop down menu next to the "liked" button the page, and check the option "see first." This will put Energy Independent Vermont posts at the top of your newsfeed!

Online Comments

- ⇒ We want media coverage of our campaign — and we'll continue to organize events and opportunities that will put our efforts in the spotlight. That **media attention also creates the space for public debate on the merits of our campaign** — and this debate often happens in internet comment sections. We know that **lawmakers read these comment sections** and for better or worse can sometimes use them as a barometer of public sentiment.
- ⇒ If you're interested in joining the debate email our communications director Zach Tomanelli at zach@vpig.org and let him know!

Getting Our Voices into the Media

Writing a Strong Letter to the Editor (LTE)

* ALL letters must include your **NAME, ADDRESS and PHONE.** *

*** Please limit all letters to 300 words or less. ***

LTEs are a quick, simple appeal for readers to support a specific policy goal or piece of legislation. Following these three simple guidelines will make your LTE shine:

Speak from the heart and from vivid personal experience:

- ⇒ Do you have an experience with the effects of extreme weather and climate change?
- ⇒ Have you benefited from renewable energy in your own home, and would like to see others have the same opportunity?
- ⇒ Have you been involved or witnessed another successful social movement that others were skeptical of, or thought was impossible?

Tie the LTE to a specific article or recent political debate that has garnered media attention.

Need help finding something? Contact us and we'll help!

Make it happen and follow up! Utilize our attached media list to distribute your letter far and wide. Keep in mind, some outlets – such as VTDigger – allow for longer commentaries, so if you have a longer version, don't be shy about submitting that! Finally, let us know if you are published and send us a clipping in case we missed seeing it!

Staying on message is also key to a successful LTE. Try to incorporate one or more of these themes into your LTE, but remember short and sweet is the way to go, unless you're submitting a longer commentary:

A MORE AFFORDABLE VERMONT

Putting a price on carbon pollution raises revenue by taxing something we all want less of – dangerous and dirty fossil fuels. These revenues can then be dedicated to helping Vermonters **save money** by lowering other taxes, investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy, or both. A well-crafted carbon pollution tax benefits the environment AND the economy.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE FOR ALL

Many Vermonters have already weatherized their homes and businesses, put up solar panels, and switched to cold-climate heat pumps. But for many, these technologies – which help households, individuals, and businesses become less dependent on imported dirty energy – are just out of reach. Revenues from a carbon pollution tax could help thousands of low and middle income Vermonters reach energy independence.

LEAVING A STRONG LEGACY

This past year has been the hottest on record. Unmitigated global warming will leave our grandchildren with a Vermont that we wouldn't recognize. We are lucky to enjoy our beautiful state and want future generations of Vermonters to as well. Our actions now will make that possible and leave a legacy our grandchildren can be proud of.

SAMPLE LETTER:

Saving energy saves money. We need to support those with the biggest energy burden, low-income Vermonters, in efforts to weatherize homes and implement the efficient, non-fossil fuel heating options, like cold climate heat pumps, that are available today. Establishing an Energy Independence Fund — paid for with a carbon pollution tax on the big oil and gas companies — will help us all, especially those struggling to heat their homes. This plan will save money, create jobs, reduce global warming emissions, and keep more money here in Vermont. Our legislators should take up the carbon pollution tax proposal. It's the game-changing policy we need to pursue if we're serious about tackling climate change and meeting our clean energy goals, while also lifting low-income Vermonters up.

IT'S YOUR TURN. PRACTICE WRITING YOUR OWN LETTER TO THE EDITOR!