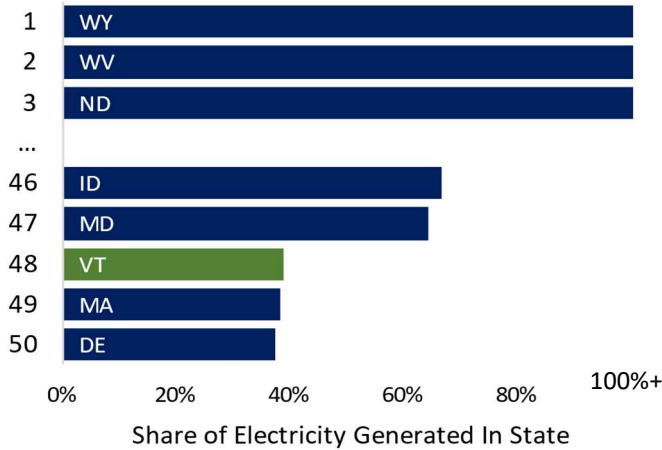


## Executive Summary

To meet our legally binding commitments under the Global Warming Solutions Act, we must electrify the transportation and thermal sectors. This will create new electricity demand which must be met with electricity from new renewable sources. Otherwise, we will not do enough to reduce our total greenhouse gas emissions.

### Vermont is 48<sup>th</sup> in the share of electricity that it generates in state...



Despite that, Vermont today ranks 48<sup>th</sup> nationally in the share of its electricity consumption that is generated within the state. Solar installations are lagging in Vermont while growing nationwide.

Over the last half-decade, REV members have faced an increasingly adversarial approach from the Public Utility Commission (PUC) and Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) towards renewable development. As a result, the permitting process has become less predictable, more time-consuming, and costlier **without any discernable public benefit**.

REV members fully support a permitting process for renewable energy projects that protects the public interest and our natural resources. But the current process is failing Vermonters. It halts or slows new renewable energy projects,

drives up the cost of renewable energy for ordinary Vermonters, and infringes on Vermonters' property rights, all of which ultimately blunts the state's fight against climate pollution.

This report examines 10 recent permitting case studies. These case studies demonstrate that ANR and the PUC often interpret administrative rules and statutes in a manner contrary to Legislative intent and that fails to prioritize climate change mitigation and energy security.

The case studies highlight three recurring barriers to permitting new renewable energy projects:

- lack of timeliness in the review process
- the inconsistent application of existing rules
- highly subjective evaluation criteria

In this report, REV has proposed solutions to provide more consistency and predictability to the permitting process. These solutions will protect the public interest and our natural resources. They will also allow Vermont to meet its statutory commitment by supporting new, responsible renewable energy development. Solutions include:

- mandating the development of clear and binding timelines for PUC decisions
- clarifying statutes to make the process for permitting renewables more objective and predictable
- amending the aesthetic assessment process so the burden to demonstrate an undue impact aligns with Act 250

### ... and in the last half-decade solar installations are accelerating nationwide but slowing in Vermont

