



STATE OF VERMONT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

April 9, 2026

Dear Speaker Krowinski and Chair Sheldon,

We are writing as members of the Rural Caucus following our recent listening session on Act 181, which was attended by approximately 85–90 Vermonters in person and virtually.

We convened this session to hear directly from rural Vermonters about what is working, what is not, and what actionable steps the Legislature can take in the final weeks of the session. As we shared with participants, the Rural Caucus is a tripartisan group that does not take positions lightly. We listen first, and where there is agreement, we work to advance practical solutions.

We are listening. There was consistency across a wide range of voices.

Participants expressed concern about the pace and implementation of Act 181, particularly the uncertainty created by incomplete mapping, evolving rules, and the layering of new regulatory triggers. Many spoke to the real impacts on housing, farm viability, intergenerational land transfer, and the ability of rural Vermonters to live and work in their communities. Comments we heard raised questions about data, methodology, and unintended consequences, including impacts on housing, working lands, and long-standing patterns of family land use. We also heard concerns about equity and **displacement**.

We also heard repeated concerns that the current process has been top down, with insufficient clarity, notice, and time for communities and landowners to understand and respond.

We want to be clear about how we got here. Members of this caucus introduced legislation to delay implementation, and we worked with the Senate to expand those delays. Our caucus's goal was to give Vermonters time to understand what this law does before it impacts their property and community. While the process sought in H.730 has not yet been realized,

Vermonters have worked to inform themselves on the impacts of Act 181, and many are not supportive of how this may affect their land and their communities.

Based on what we heard, two points stand out.

First, if nothing else, the delays included in S.325 **must pass** this session. Additional time is necessary to align mapping, rulemaking, and implementation so that Vermonters, municipalities, and regional bodies can engage in a meaningful and informed way.

Second, there is broad agreement among the undersigned that we should make amendments to Act 181 rather than delays:

- Repeal Tier 3
- Repeal the Road Rule
- We support completing the accessory on-farm business work and expect the Board to deliver final recommendations on that issue, independent of the broader Tier 2 report

These elements are driving significant uncertainty and anger in rural communities.

We recognize the goals that Act 181 is trying to advance, including conservation and housing. However, it is evident from what we heard that aspects of the current approach are not working for rural Vermont.

We offer this in the spirit of collaboration and problem solving. The Rural Caucus stands ready to work with you and other stakeholders towards a path forward that is workable and grounded in the realities facing rural communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The undersigned Rural Caucus members:

Rep. Laura Sibilgia, Dover

Rep. Allen Demar, Enosburg

Rep. Lisa Hango, Berkshire

Rep. Ashley Bartley, Fairfax

Rep. Monique Priestley, Bradford

Rep. Beth Quimby, Lyndon

Rep. Lucy Boyden, Cambridge

Rep. Bill Canfield, Fair Haven

Rep. Abbey Duke, Burlington

Rep. Carolyn Branagan, Georgia

Rep. Alicia Malay, Pittsford

Rep. Chris Keyser, Rutland City

Rep. Chris Morrow, Weston	Rep. Leanne Harple, Glover
Rep. Chris Pritchard, Pawlet	Rep. Leland Morgan, Milton
Rep. Dan Noyes, Wolcott	Rep. Mark Higley, Lowell
Rep. Dave Yacovone, Morrisville	Rep. Marty Feltus, Lyndon
Rep. Debbie Dolgin, St. Johnsbury	Rep. Mary Morrissey, Bennington
Rep. Debra Powers, Waterford	Rep. Michael Morgan, Milton
Rep. Elizabeth Burrows, West Windsor	Rep. Michael Southworth, Walden
Rep. Emily Carris Duncan, Whitingham	Rep. Michael Tagliavia, Corinth
Rep. Gina Galfetti, Barre Town	Rep. Michelle Bos-Lun, Westminster
Rep. Greg Burt, Cabot	Rep. Pattie McCoy, Poultney
Rep. Herb Olson, Starksboro	Rep. Richard Bailey, Hyde Park
Rep. James Gregoire, Fairfield	Rep. Richard Nelson, Derby
Rep. Jay Hooper, Randolph	Rep. Rob North, Ferrisburgh
Rep. Jed Lipsky, Stowe	Rep. Sandra Pinsonault, Dorset
Rep. John Kascenska, Burke	Rep. Saudia LaMont, Morrisville
Rep. John O'Brien, Tunbridge	Rep. Shawn Sweeney, Shelburne
Rep. Jonathan Cooper, Pownal	Rep. Thomas Charlton, Chester
Rep. Karen A. Lueders, Lincoln	Rep. Todd Nielsen, Brandon
Rep. Kate Lalley, Shelburne	Rep. VL Coffin, Cavendish
Rep. Ken Wells, Brownington	Rep. Wayne Laroche, Franklin
Rep. Kevin C Winter, Ludlow	Rep. William Greer, Bennington
Rep. Kumulia Long, Milton	Rep. Woodman Page, Newport City
Rep. Larry Labor, Morgan	

