



# VLCT LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

SERVING AND STRENGTHENING VERMONT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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**Date: May 5, 2015**

**To: Mayors, Managers, Selectboard Members, Planning Commissioners**

**From: Karen Horn, Director, Public Policy and Advocacy**

**Re: Towns to be Provided Limited Authority to Regulate Solar Facility Siting**

On Wednesday, the President Pro Tem of the Vermont Senate will propose an amendment to S. 40 that would provide statewide setback standards for siting of solar facilities, and provide municipalities authority to adopt a bylaw or ordinance that establishes screening standards for siting of solar facilities. The authority would be effective on July 1, of this year, thus providing municipalities authority to establish screening requirements this summer and fall. S. 40 is a bill that establishes a renewable energy standard.

The amendment would replace language that was approved by the Senate Natural Resources Committee last week that would provide for the legislative Joint Energy Committee to submit recommendations by February 15, 2016 for legislation, if any, which should be enacted regarding municipal adoption of setback and screening requirements for solar electric generation projects. Authority to adopt bylaws regulating setbacks and screening for solar facilities would take effect on July 1, 2016 (presumably if the Joint Energy Committee made no recommendations).

Please contact your Senators and urge them to support the President Pro Tem's amendment that gives municipalities authority to address screening of solar energy facilities through zoning bylaws or a stand-alone ordinance.

Senator's email addresses may be found at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/people/search/2016>). You may also call the Sergeant at Arms (802-828-2228) and leave a message.