Ethan Allen Institute

Newsletter – March 2018 (Printer Edition)

Top Stories

Mark Steyn to Star at EAI 25th Anniversary Gala!

See below for details

EAI Study Blows Holes in ESSEX Carbon Tax

The Ethan Allen Institute commissioned Dr. Jonathan Lesser, PhD, to do an analysis of the proposed ESSEX Carbon Tax. Lesser is an economist and energy expert who formerly served as the director of policy for the Vermont Department of Public Service, so it is hard to imagine a more qualified person to evaluate this policy.

Lesser's summary conclusions are as follows:

I was asked by Vermont's Ethan Allen Institute to prepare an economic analysis of The ESSEX Plan, the most recent carbon tax proposal for Vermont. I'm quite familiar with Vermont, having lived there for 14 years and because I served as Director of Planning at the Vermont Department of Public Service during Gov. Douglas's administration.

The ESSEX Plan proposes, when fully implemented over eight years, to impose a carbon tax on heating oil, gasoline, diesel, natural gas and propane sufficient to bring in $240 million a year. According to the Plan, the state would use those dollars to subsidize electricity rates and give rebates to what it calls "working families" and "rural residents." My economic analysis of the proposal yielded these conclusions:

- The Plan will provide an economic incentive for Vermonters to avoid paying the tax by purchasing fossil fuels from outside the state; the higher the carbon tax, the greater will be that incentive. Preventing such behavior will either be impossible or administratively costly. Such "free-riding" behavior will also inequitably transfer monies from Vermonters who do pay the tax to those who do not.
- The Plan will reduce Vermont's economic competitiveness by increasing the cost to produce goods and services, including Vermont's famous maple syrup.
- Many Vermonters will be unable to afford the capital investments necessary to reduce their carbon tax payments.
- Electric rates will increase under the Plan, not decrease. Rebates on current electricity rates will not compensate for the Plan's call for increased reliance on high-cost, locally-sourced renewable biofuels and solar power.
- The Plan will cause the cost of biofuels to increase because the demand for biofuels will increase as a consequence of the tax, harming lower-income Vermonters who rely on wood to heat their homes.
- The Plan's call for developing more residential and commercial solar power using "net-metering" will benefit higher-income Vermonters at the expense of lower-

income ones, who will bear increasing shares of the costs of back-up generation and the fixed costs associated with operating

- local utility infrastructure. Increased reliance on solar power will also mean having to pay the costs for more back-up generation and storage, which will cause electric rates to increase further.
- The Plan is likely to adversely affect funding to maintain Vermont's aging transportation infrastructure, which is already underfunded. To compensate, the state will likely have to increase taxes on motor fuel, levy a tax on miles driven, or raise the state's income tax. Alternatively, revenues raised by the carbon tax would have to be diverted from the proposed electric rebates, contrary to the Plan's promise of revenue neutrality.
- The Plan will be complex and costly to administer. Retailers will have no way of distinguishing the sales to residential, commercial, and industrial customers, and the Plan is silent on how the amount of money to be rebated to electric ratepayers will be determined. Administering the Plan will require providing the state's electric utilities with Vermonters' confidential taxpayer information. Connecticut estimated a similar carbon tax program would have a five percent administrative burden , meaning that the administrative costs could total $12 million per year.
- The Plan may increase local air pollution as more Vermonters switch to wood-burning to avoid burning natural gas and fuel oil.
- The Plan's rationale, reducing carbon emissions, will provide no climate benefits whatsoever because the predicted reductions in carbon emissions will have no measurable impact on climate. Nor will the Plan encourage other states or nations to enact their own carbon tax measures.

As a onetime Vermonter who was deeply involved in the state's energy planning, I conclude that the ESSEX Plan is premised on vague and incorrect economic assumptions. Enacting it will damage Vermont's economy, place an undue and unfair burden on lower-income Vermonters, and encourage more people to leave Vermont in search of better economic opportunity.

– Jonathan A. Lesser is President of Continental Economics. He is a former Policy Director for the Vermont Department of Public Service

Dr. Lesser's Full Report, *The ESSEX Carbon Tax for Vermont, an Economic Analysis. can be read* HERE.

Commentary:
What the ESSEX Carbon Tax Would Do for Vermont

By John McClaughry

With much fanfare, climate change activists have presented the legislature with two bills (H.791, S.284) to implement their latest (seventh!) version of a Vermont carbon tax. It's called the ESSEX Plan, which stands for "Economy Strengthening Strategic Energy eXchange".

They firmly believe that carbon dioxide released by humans burning fossil fuels – gasoline, diesel, heating oil, natural gas, and propane – will cause catastrophic climate change a century down the road. The ESSEX Plan is designed to make Vermonters stop burning fossil fuels.

Let's take a close look at how this is intended to work.

First, the ESSEX Plan carbon tax, rising steadily over eight years to roughly $240 million a year, will make fossil fuels increasingly expensive and thus uneconomical. People will thus invest in energy efficiency, and switch over to alternative energy sources, especially electric vehicles and electric home heating. Ultimately the tax will drive out fossil fuels, except for a few hard-to-replace uses like heavy equipment and aviation fuel.

The ESSEX Plan advocates declare that their plan is "revenue neutral" – 100% of the carbon taxes collected will be returned to... somebody (not necessarily the people who paid them).

Half of those tax proceeds will find their way to the Public Utility Commission, which will distribute them to electric utilities to reduce electric rates for everybody, by (their estimate) at least 27%.

The State will use the other half of the tax take to provide subsidies to "the most vulnerable and the middle class" through "fully refundable rebates for low income and rural Vermonters". This is necessary to compensate them for the higher energy costs imposed upon them by the ESSEX Plan.

How will people replace the fossil fuel energy they can't afford anymore? Some will turn to biomass heating, but most will choose electric heat and vehicles. But the ESSEX Plan doesn't finance the significant capital costs of those conversions. You can't afford fossil fuels any more, but financing a switchover to something else is your problem.

Even with more price-driven efficiencies, driving out fossil fuels will require the electric utilities to find lots more power to meet the increased demand. The Plan expects this additional electricity to come from sources – wind towers, solar farms, and net metering – that are much more expensive than present grid power.

More cheap, renewable Hydro Quebec power would ease this problem, but the ESSEX Plan coalition has demanded that "energy independent Vermont" reduce its reliance on HQ to force the utilities to buy more power from wind, solar, and (limited) biomass. (The wind and solar investors love this!) The increased reliance on wind and solar, however, introduces serious problems of maintaining the power grid in the face of intermittent and unpredictable wind and solar supply.

With fossil fuel consumption shrinking, carbon tax revenues will shrink, PUC subsidies to utilities will shrink, purchases of high-cost renewable power will increase, and electric rates will start back up.

Eventually, when the carbon tax drives out all fossil fuel and all users have switched (at considerable expense) to higher cost electricity, there's nothing left to subsidize that electricity. You're stuck.

This almost certain outcome assumes that legislators will faithfully maintain the promised "revenue neutrality" indefinitely into the future. Anyone familiar with the legislature knows well how tempting it is to pounce upon a revenue stream to finance popular spending. In fact, when first promoting the forerunner of the ESSEX Plan to legislators in 2014, the Energy Independent Vermont coalition archly observed, "Based on legislative priorities, carbon tax revenue could of course also be used for other purposes."

The most pressing of those purposes would probably be diverting carbon tax revenues from motor fuel sales into the Transportation Fund to pay for badly needed maintenance of highways and bridges, which VTrans estimates faces a 2018 funding shortfall of $227 million. But diverting carbon tax revenues to other state programs would destroy "revenue neutrality", and raising motor fuel tax rates to reduce the current shortfall would be politically impossible on top of the steadily rising carbon tax on those same fuels.

If imposing an ever-increasing carbon tax on Vermonters would save the planet from climate catastrophe, perhaps Vermont's sacrifices would be bearable. But no Vermont carbon tax, however painful, will ever produce any detectable effect on climate change, and the eventual higher cost of electricity, forced investments, grid instabilities, cross-border economic effects, administrative complexities, vastly expanded state subsidies, and ever-present threat of political diversion of the revenues all suggest that it's time to drop this idea, with a thud.

- *John McClaughry is the founder and vice president of the Ethan Allen Institute*

Commentary: ESSEX Carbon Tax Robs Poor to Pay Rich

By Rob Roper

Chris Miller, who works on the Social Missions Committee at Ben & Jerry's, testified to the House Energy & Technology Committee that his company is firmly in favor of the carbon tax bills (H.791/S.284) based on the ESSEX Carbon Tax plan. Why? Because under the legislation, Ben & Jerry's, which is owned by the British/Dutch company Unilever, will pocket an estimated $832,000 in electricity subsidies while avoiding the tax almost completely.

The way the ESSEX Carbon Tax works is distributors of fossil fuels will pay an excise tax of 32 cents per gallon for gasoline, 40 cents for diesel and heating oil, and 24 cents for propane and natural gas. This cost, which will be passed along to customers, will go into a special fund that will be handed over to Vermont's electricity providers in order to subsidize electric bills. Ben & Jerry's uses a lot of electricity and very little fossil fuels. Miller explained that the ice cream manufacturer's Vermont plants are almost entirely electric, and the company subcontracts its shipping needs to trucking companies based mostly outside Vermont. These subcontractors, Miller said, would likely never fill their tanks in Vermont, thus avoiding the carbon tax, and not incurring any cost that would be passed along to Ben & Jerry's.

This is great for ice cream giant because they are part of a well-capitalized, multi-national corporation that has the resources to invest in the latest technology, and the geographic flexibility to best position itself to take advantage of government policies like the ESSEX plan. As such, they would be able to extract much from the subsidy pool, while putting next to nothing in.

But, there is another side of this coin (many coins, actually) that ESSEX Carbon Tax supporters fail to mention, and that is the Vermont businesses, perhaps less capital rich and without the flexibility of scale, that will end up paying a lot into the pool but take out little. Who? Businesses that do rely on fossil fuels, such as plumbers, electricians, contractors who depend on trucks and vans to reach their customers, the general store that has been around since 1850, heats with oil, and isn't well insulated, etc. and so on. It's folks like this who are going to be forced to pay $832,000 worth of Ben & Jerry's electric bill.

It is also important to note that because Ben & Jerry's is already fully invested in non-fossil fuel and efficiency technologies, the $832,000 in subsidies paid to them would do nothing further to reduce Vermont's carbon footprint. Ben & Jerry's is already as low as it can get. The ESSEX subsidy would just be a taxpayer funded gift to one of the state's wealthiest business financed by many of its poorest. Is this fair? Is it smart?

This same dynamic will play out on the individual level. Under the ESSEX Carbon Tax the mom in the used minivan will end up subsidizing through her gasoline purchases the electricity bill of the hedge fund manager in the brand new, $80,000 Tesla.

Even though the ESSEX Carbon Tax includes a rebate program for low-income and rural Vermont households, Rep. Sarah Copeland-Hanzas (D-Bradford), lead sponsor of the House version of this bill, confessed that a hypothetical single mother living in a rural part of the state (someone qualifying for the maximum amount relief) would still have to invest in an electric vehicle, electric heat pump, or some such thing in order to come out ahead under the ESSEX Carbon Tax. If said single mom doesn't have or cannot find the financial capital necessary to do this, the scheme will be a net drag on her household bottom line.

However, wealthy Vermonters who do have the financial wherewithal to install solar panels, buy Priuses, and live in newer, better insulated housing can take full advantage of the ESSEX plan, the subsidies they receive provided courtesy of Rep. Copeland-Hanzas' single mom.

During a meeting of the Vermont Climate Caucus, a group of environmentally focused law makers, one member raised this concern, "It seems to me that if you're among the most wealthy Vermonters you could easily save a lot more than lower income [Vermonters], because if you have fossil fuels heating your home you can go out and buy a pellet stove, you can go buy heat pumps, you can go buy a Tesla, and you won't even notice the bump in your budget… You're reaping all the benefit. How is this helping lower income Vermonters?" Sen. Chris Pearson (D/P- Chittenden), lead sponsor of the senate version of the bill, responded, "Yeah, it would be a good problem to have if wealthy people stopped using fossil fuels to heat their homes and drive around. I mean, that is the goal."

Is it? Well, thanks for letting us know.

- *Rob Roper is president of the Ethan Allen Institute.*

Events

Mark Steyn to Star at EAI's 25th Anniversary Gala!

Internationally known, best-selling author, television commentator, and frequent guest host on the Rush Limbaugh Show Mark Steyn will be the keynote speaker at the Ethan Allen Institute 25th Anniversary Celebration.

He's brash, brilliant, and drawn to controversy like a moth to a flame. For decades, Mark Steyn has dazzled readers around the world with his raucous wit and brutal honesty. "Mark Steyn is the funniest writer now living." - John O'Sullivan, editor-at-large of National Review

THURSDAY, APRIL 26TH

At the DoubleTree by Hilton Conference Center
(Formerly the Sheraton South Burlington)
6:00pm social hour. Dinner & Program 7:00 pm.

Reserve Your Seats today

Call 802-695-1448, email EAI25@ethanallen.org
or order online at ???

- Individual Tickets: $100 with RSVP, deadline is April 16, 2018 ($125 at the door if space available)
- Early Bird Tables: $700 for table of 8. Deadline 3/26/18
- Entre choices include beef, salmon, or a vegetarian pasta

Become a Sponsor

Silver - $1000. Includes two tickets to dinner and two tickets to private pre-dinner reception with Mark Steyn.
Gold: $1200. Includes eight tickets to the dinner and two tickets to private pre-dinner reception with Mark Steyn.
Platinum: $3000, includes eight tickets to the dinner and eight tickets to private pre-dinner reception with Mark Steyn.

(Sponsor's Reception will take place from 6:00 – 7:00 pm)

April 7. EAI President Rob Roper will give a presentation on Carbon Tax legislation to the Lamoille County Republican Committee, 8:30-11:00 am at the Charlmont Restaurant, Morrisville, Vt. If you would like to have this or another EAI presentation in your community, email rob@ethanallen.org.

News & Views

$15 Minimum Wage Will Explode Child Care Crisis. If Vermont adopts a $15 minimum wage, our current childcare "crisis" is likely to explode on three fronts – cost, availability, and assistance. First, and most obvious, is that if the legislature artificially raises the wages of childcare workers, the cost for childcare (already unaffordable) will increase. These higher costs will cause some providers to go out of business, creating more scarcity. And lastly, there is what's called a "benefits cliff" for low wage earners. As wages rise, people lose income-sensitive benefits, particularly child care subsidies. The Joint Fiscal Office did a study showing that a single parent working a full-time, minimum-wage job would lose $765 in annual benefits, $469 of that in childcare subsidies). This would be offset by a gain of just $633 in annual income for a total net loss of $132. So, what our legislators would accomplish by passing a $15 minimum wage is a situation where our most vulnerable families will have less money and fewer subsidies to pay for more expensive, less available childcare services. They're from the government, and they're here to help!

Chittenden County to rake in carbon tax proceeds at expense of rest of Vermont. "According to an Efficiency Vermont map, the area with the lowest spending on thermal heat (show in blue) is Greater Burlington – a/k/a the wealthiest part of Vermont. By contrast, the highest thermal energy expenditure is in the farm towns of northern Addison County, and in rural Orange and Windsor counties. These towns, and virtually every other town in Vermont, will be paying the lion's share of the home-heat component of the carbon tax revenues. Beneficiaries will be the relatively well-paid residents of the energy-efficient apartment, condo, and modern single-family homes of Burlington, South Burlington, Essex Junction, Colchester, Shelburne Williston, and neighboring towns." Guy Page, State House Headliners.

Shrewd Comment on the ESSEX Plan. "A carbon tax will re-distribute money, but it will have little if any material impact on global temperature. It will certainly make a subset of people feel good about themselves. Feeling good about oneself is important. The question is, is feeling good about oneself worth hundreds of millions of dollars, much of it coming from people who will not feel good about themselves because they are angry that they are paying a tax to accomplish a goal that will not achieve its stated objective?" Gerry Silverstein, So. Burlington (VTDigger comment 2/16/18)

Vermont Judge Rules Votes Were Illegal. The vote fraud case in Victory, Vermont, concluded with eleven "voters" being removed from the town checklist. For the small Vermont community, this means a full 13 percent of registered voters were illegitimate, and these illegitimate votes were more than enough to alter the outcomes of elections.

Vermont Highway Ranking. "Vermont ranks 39th in the nation in highway performance and cost-effectiveness in the Annual Highway Report by Reason Foundation. Vermont ranks 5th in fatality rate, 37th in deficient bridges, 3rd in rural Interstate pavement condition, 1st in urban Interstate pavement condition, and 6th in urbanized area congestion. Vermont's best rankings are urban Interstate pavement condition (1st), rural Interstate pavement condition (3rd) and fatality rate (5th).

Vermont's worst rankings are rural arterial lane-width (47th) and rural arterial pavement condition (38th)." (Reason Foundation 2/8/18) Adopt the ESSEX carbon tax on motor fuel and hand it out in rebates, and how will Vermont ever improve its highways?

State Replaces Parent with a Shoe Box. Seven Days recounts this story from a "high quality" childcare center: "'Wanna see my brand-new box?" the [five-year-old] girl asked Smith [director of the center]. Smith bent down to inspect a Nike shoebox decorated with photos of the girl and her mother and asked about its purpose. "It makes me calm down so I don't get nervous about my mom so I don't miss her anymore…'"(Seven Days). And this is highlighted as a wonderful story! Exemplary of the quality of the program. Sorry, folks, this is depressing. A child has been traumatically separated from her mother. The solution is a used cardboard box, and our leaders call this "high quality" care for our children. No wonder kids are dealing with more mental health issues than ever before.

Licensed to Cut Hair. In his October 11, 2017, address Governor Scott noted: "If we want to protect the public investments we value, and if we want to make more of them, we must reverse the decline in our workforce. The slow growth in Vermont's economy, the decline in Vermont's working-age population and tightening labor market conditions don't allow us to be complacent." A big step forward in this regard would be to reform and liberalize Vermont's occupational licensing requirements...

Surprise! "Four liberal political action committees (PACs) that support only Democrats gave more than $393 million in independent campaign contributions during the 2016 election cycle, an amount that collectively was seven times more than that reported by the NRA. Even the average for the four liberal groups — $98.25 million – exceeded the $54.4 million total spent by the gun rights group, according to an examination of Federal Election Commission (FEC) campaign funding data compiled by opensecrets.org. (Polizette 2/20/18)

Nations Skip Out on Climate Obligations. The signers of the Paris Agreement were to pay "dues" on January 1, 2018, to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Only 31 of the 197 countries signing did so. The 84% who did not included China, Brazil, France, Germany and the US. (SEPP 2/3/18). Vermont's environmental "leadership" doesn't seem to be garnering many followers.

Vermont Leads in Special Ed Spending. "The UVM study, which focused on funding, found that while Vermont is similar to other New England states in the number of students identified as needing special educational help, the state spends more per special education student than any other state in the nation." – VT Digger (2/5/18)

Canadian Single Payer Wait Times. "Canadian patients waited a record 21.2 weeks to receive treatment from a specialist after being referred by their general practitioner in 2017, according to the latest survey of wait times by the Fraser Institute, a Vancouver-based think tank. That's a week longer than last year -- and more than double the corresponding figure from 1993, when Fraser began keeping track." – Sally Pipes (PRI 1/18/18)

Scott on Carbon Tax. "We know Vermonters cannot afford a carbon tax. It would also be highly regressive. A regional carbon pricing system would also put the region – which currently has the highest wholesale energy prices in the nation – at another comparative disadvantage when we're trying to retain and attract working age residents and create more and better paying jobs." – Gov. Phil Scott to his Climate Action Commission (1/28/18)

Expanding Ownership. "Instead of destroying private property to promote a Marxist equality in poverty, perhaps we can bring property rights to all mankind. Where property rights are ensured, so are the prosperity, freedom and ownership of wealth that brings real stability and peace." – Phil Gramm and Hernando de Soto (WSJ 1/28/18)

Background Check Fallacy: "A University of Chicago study found that only 3% of Windy City gun crimes were committed with legally purchased guns. A federal study in 2004 put the percentage of gun crimes committed with legal guns at 11%." – John Carlson (WSJ 2/21/18). People engaged in criminal activity do not get their work tools at the local gun shop.

New Media Source: Vermont Chronicle. is a new on-line report published periodically by veteran Statehouse reporter Guy Page, who formerly edited the Colchester Chronicle. It comes to you free, and you can sign up at https://www.pagecommunicationsvt.com/

Book of the Month

The Righteous Mind

Why Good People are Divided by Politics
By Jonathan Haidt

It has become an unfortunate characteristic of modern politics that each side views itself as moral and good and the other as immoral and evil. The Righteous Mind by Jonathan Haidt does a wonderful and necessary job of showing that all sides operate from a moral framework. Those frameworks, however, are different, and Haidt does his best to understand how and why in hopes of fostering mutual understanding.

Haidt describes himself a liberal in the Jewish, New York, Yale graduate, college professor mode, but describes a three month trip to India that challenged his moral framework in a profound way. He embedded himself in an Indian family in the Indian culture where, for example, women were relegated to secondary roles and he was admonished not to thank servants. Given his moral matrix, these were things he reflexively viewed as sexist, oppressive, and ammoral. However, rather than judge his hosts, whom he liked and knew to be kind and good people, he devoted his time to understanding the morality behind this culture, and found that it was deeply moral – just with a different moral matrix than his own.

In The Righteous Mind, Haidt applies this lesson to liberal and conservative cultures, and how our different moral matrixes affect our politics. This is a sincere effort to get the waring sides to understand each other in hopes that such understanding will help us to better get along.

While Haidt is certainly no conservative, and, as a libertarian/conservative there are times when his descriptions make one squirm, it's nice to hear a liberal recognize that conservatives are moral and warn is fellow liberals not to make the mistake of believing that we are not.

In fact, Haidt concludes that conservative are more broadly moral than liberal. He offers that there are six fundamental ideas that commonly undergird moral systems: care, fairness, liberty, loyalty, authority and sanctity, that he likens to taste receptors on the tongue. While liberals' moral matrix is formulated around two or three of these, principally "care", conservatives' morality embraces all six – and this, he sees, as a fundamental problem with liberalism. It is one reason why, he asserts, that conservatives can generally understand a liberal's position on an issue, liberals, more often than not, can't understand conservatives.

Another deficiency in liberals, according to Haidt, is their disregard for the value of "Moral Capital", which he says in important to the conservative moral matrix, but not the liberal. "This is the fundamental blind spot of the left. It explains why liberal reforms so often backfire, and why communist revolutions usually end up in despotism. It is the reason I believe that liberalism, which has done so much to bring about freedom and equal opportunity, is not sufficient as a governing philosophy."

Writing on the dynamics of markets, Haidt says, "Care and compassion sometimes motivate liberals to interfere in the workings of markets, but the result can bring extraordinary harm on a vast scale." He offers a terrific example of how government interference in the healthcare market has been disastrous, and offers an example of what buying groceries would be like if the government distributed food like it does healthcare.

Hadit writes, "I find it ironic that liberals generally embrace Darwin and reject intelligent design as the explanation for design and adaptation in the natural world, but they don't embrace Adam Smith as the explanation for design and adaptation in the economic world. They sometimes prefer the intelligent design of socialist economies, which often ends in disaster from a utilitarian point of view."

Hadit offers this insight into how to solve racial animosity, "Increase similarity, not diversity…. Don't call attention to racial and ethnic differences. Make them less relevant by ramping up similarity and celebrating shared values and common identity…. There's nothing special about race. You can make people care less about race by drowning race differences in a sea of similarities, shared goals, and mutual interdependencies," and later asserts, "Highlighting differences makes people more racist, not less." He wrote this in 2012. Given liberals' approach to the issue in ensuing years one must conclude that they haven't read this book.

The underlying assumption of Hadit's work is that people are not rational beings, but intuitive. He agrees mostly with philosopher David Hume's assertion that reason is the slave of emotion. We form opinions based on intuition, than reason comes in to construct rationality for why our intuition is correct. As such, it is very difficult to change someone's mind. If in writing this book his own liberal mind and moral matrix didn't change, one would have to agree with his point.

- *Reviewed by Rob Roper, president of the Ethan Allen Institute.*

The Final Word

First Annual Town Meeting Day Legislative Survey

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the direction Governor Scott is taking Vermont?

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the direction the Legislature is taking Vermont?

3. Should lawmakers increase the VT state minimum wage from $10.50 to $15.00 per hour?

4. Should VT lawmakers enact a Carbon Tax on gasoline (32¢/gal) diesel fuel, home heating oil (40¢/gal), natural gas, and propane (24¢/gal), with the revenues used to subsidize electric bills?

5. Should VT lawmakers mandate that all employees participate in a paid family leave program financed by a new payroll tax on employees?

6. Should VT lawmakers enact a "per parcel fee" on all Vermont land holdings to finance the clean-up of Lake Champlain?

7. Should VT lawmakers enact stricter gun control laws?

8. Vermont's taxpayer financed Pre-Kindergarten programs should be:
    a. available to all children, regardless of income or special needs.
    b. focused on helping low-income families and special needs children catch up with their peers.

9. Which of the following is a more important goal of education finance reform?
    a. Lowering overall education taxes by decreasing overall spending.
    b. Shifting how we pay for education from the property tax to the income tax, while maintaining current spending levels.

10. Which of the following describes the best way for Lawmakers to make Vermont "affordable?"
    a. Enact policies that will lower the cost of living, spur economic activity, and increase salaries.
    b. Provide more generous welfare programs to subsidize the cost of living.

February Survey Results: Education Funding

Should Vermont move away from the current property tax based financing system for public schools, and adopt a progressive income tax based system?

Yes. 43.24% (16)
No. 56.76 (21)