

**For Immediate Release**  
Thursday, April 27, 2017

**JOINT STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF VERMONT'S AGREEMENT FROM SAINT-GOBAIN TO  
FUND DESIGN WORK FOR WATERLINE EXTENSION IN BENNINGTON**

**Bennington, Vt.** – Vermont Governor Phil Scott, Attorney General TJ Donovan, Senator Dick Sears, Senator Brian Campion, Representative Mary Morrissey, Representative Tim Corcoran, Representative Kiah Morris, and Representative Rachael Fields today issued the following statement:

“We are all pleased that important progress has been made in settlement discussions with Saint-Gobain relating to PFOA contamination. Yesterday, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the Attorney General’s Office secured an agreement from Saint-Gobain to fund critical design work to support the state’s goal of starting waterline extension construction in 2017. Saint-Gobain has agreed to fund that critical work regardless of whether we are ultimately able to reach a settlement agreement.

“While this agreement does not cover design work for the entire area and additional investigation and negotiation remains to be done, we continue to believe that settlement represents the best and fastest path to a permanent drinking water solution for the residents of Bennington and North Bennington. We also want to be clear that we will only continue to pursue and support a negotiated settlement if it remains in the best interest of the people of Bennington and North Bennington. We will continue to hold Saint-Gobain responsible because the ‘polluter pays’ model is critical to cleaning up contaminated sites across the state.”

Governor Phil Scott said:

“The entire state team is actively engaged in moving toward resolution for the people of Bennington and North Bennington, and my commitment has not and will not waver. I understand the residents impacted by this contamination are frustrated, and I share that frustration over the pace of negotiations with Saint-Gobain, but we will not let the settlement discussions stand in the way of preparing for construction.”

Attorney General TJ Donovan added:

“My team and I are committed to working with the Governor, our state agency partners, and members of the Bennington community to see this through to a solution for Bennington County. We’re working toward a commonsense solution that gives the people of Bennington and North Bennington comfort that their public health and water is being protected and we will continue moving forward on that track.”

Senator Dick Sears, on behalf of the legislative delegation, said:

“We remain committed to the settlement process, but the delegation has already been preparing for ‘Plan B’ in the event Saint-Gobain stops being a willing partner. The bill introduced to expedite waterline extensions has now passed the Senate and the House, and the Governor has committed to signing it as soon as it gets to his desk. Lastly, the entire delegation wants to reiterate how important it is to us that we make every effort to begin construction in 2017 and ensure that the ultimate resolution is protective of public health and holds the polluter responsible.”

###