

How Ruinous Floods Put Vermont at the Forefront of the Climate Battle

Media Mentions

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Vermont has enacted the first state law requiring fossil fuel firms to pay for damage caused by climate change. This comes while memories of last July's flooding — which inundated the state capitol of Montpelier, damaged thousands of homes and trapped people in small mountain towns — are still fresh in people's minds.

Bracewell's **Jeff Holmstead** shared with *The Washington Post* his skepticism of the law and if it will even survive any legal challenges.

"I think the courts are going to have problems with the idea that Vermont can penalize the companies for past actions that were completely legal and the state itself relies on," said Holmstead. "I'm skeptical this will actually pass muster."

The oil and gas industry's top lobbying group, the American Petroleum Institute, has said that states don't have the power to regulate carbon pollution and can't retroactively charge companies for emissions allowed under the law. It has also emphasized individuals' responsibility for climate change, noting that Vermont residents use fossil fuels to heat their homes and power their cars.

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