

January 18, 2024

Dear Rep. Lanpher,

Please find this letter as the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (HGOMA) response to the Governor's Recommended Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Adjustment as it relates to areas that touch on our jurisdiction. We have reviewed several proposals and have additional recommendations as well.

**Treasurer's Recommendation: State Teachers' Retirement System (\$9.3M) E.514.2**

We support this recommendation. The one-time COLA payment made last year to VSTRS retirees of approximately \$3M in response to the unusually high inflationary year is projected to be fully resolved by this additional \$9.3M payment. We believe this amount is likely to put this issue of the COLA calculation to rest moving forward, at least while inflation remains below 5%.

**Treasurer's Recommendation: Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Fund**

We support this recommendation to amend *Sec. 3173. 20 V.S.A. chapter 181* to allow a payment of \$80,000 to each qualifying survivor. There was committee discussion about whether this fund could eventually be open to Law Enforcement, but we are not taking a position at this time on expanding the potential qualifying beneficiaries.

**Treasurer's Recommendation: VT Saves Technical Changes**

We support these changes proposed by the Treasurer.

**Dept. of Public Safety B.209 (\$1.8M)**

We support this recommendation. Commissioner Morrison testified that VSP has had significant increases in overtime due to multiple major investigations and vacancies.

**Cannabis Control Board Proposal for 2 Additional Positions (\$175k)**

The committee has requested additional information from the CCB and has not taken a position on this request. Brynn Hare testified that the CCB needs 2 additional compliance staff in order to support licensees. Given that revenues are ahead of projection and public safety and consumer safety are priorities, this seems like a reasonable request.

**Public Safety Communications Task Force (B.1100) (\$11M state funds for Regional Dispatch)**

HGOMA supports the draft language updates legislative counsel crafted to capture the PSCTF's updated timeline. JFC needs to approve any planning funding beyond the additional \$1M and the timelines do need to be extended. We support adding additional requirements on the \$9M in federal COPS grant funding requiring the PSCTF to approve the plan and provide on-going oversight to maximize the potential that these investments will fit in to the future regional dispatch framework the PSCTF is tasked to develop.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mike McCarthy', written in a cursive style.

**Representative Mike McCarthy**

Chair, House Government Operations & Military Affairs Committee  
Franklin 3 District - Saint Albans City