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**MEMORANDUM – DRAFT #2**

To: Rep. Heath, Chair, Committee on Appropriations  
From: Rep. Donovan, Chair, Committee on Education  
Date: May 2, 2014  
Subject: Review of Senate Changes to the Budget

Thank you for alerting me to several education-related provisions proposed by the Senate. My Committee reviewed them and took testimony on Friday, May 2, 2014.

I am writing to express the Committee's opposition to Secs. E.605.1 and E.605.2.

Vermont ranks 49th in the nation for its public financial support of higher education. Even if the State appropriation to the University of Vermont (UVM), the Vermont State Colleges (VSC), and the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) was increased by 50 percent, Vermont's ranking would improve only to 47th nationally.

The budget approved by the House for FY 2015 increased the FY2014 appropriation to the three entities by only 1 percent. That amount was reduced to 0.5 percent, or \$400,000, by making the effective date January 1. The \$400,000 was then targeted by the Senate for an aspiration pilot project and a need-based stipend for students engaged in early college or dual enrollment.

The net result of the reduction and diversion of funding for UVM, VSC, and VSAC is the elimination of any increase for the three entities and continues the State's assault on the financial instability of Vermont's public higher education institutions.

We urge you to reject the Senate's proposed addition of Secs. E.605.1 and E.605.2 and to consider increasing the State's appropriations to our fine public postsecondary institutions.