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March 11, 2014

Representative Donna Sweaney
Chair
House Government Operations Committee
Montpelier, VT

Dear Representative Sweaney:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H. 516 - An act relating to establishing the Vermont Center for Geographic Information as the Division of Geospatial Technologies under the Department of Information and Innovation.

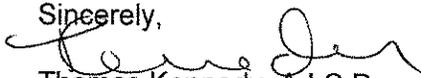
Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA) has a very strong working relationship with the Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI) and believes that VCGI provides a very valuable service to the State of Vermont. Furthermore, VAPDA has no issues with VCGI's move to the Department of Information and Innovation.

The concern VAPDA has with VCGI's move to the Department of Information and Innovation is VCGI is currently funded through the Property Transfer Tax. VCGI's move to state government, it would be more appropriate for VCGI to be funded through the General Fund for the following reasons: it will become a department within state government; their status as a non-profit will be discontinued; and their scope of work, as a department within state government, will be expanded to areas which don't necessarily apply to municipal and regional planning.

Presently, VCGI is funded by formula through 24 V.S.A.; Chapter 117; Section 4306, commonly referred to as the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund. In FY 14, VCGI received approximately \$378,000.00 through the fund. VAPDA suggests that a statutory change be made that removes VCGI from the formula, and the funding associated with VCGI's allocation be directed to the General Fund. The result of the statutory change will result in increased funding to the General Fund which the Appropriations' Committees can redirect it to the Department of Technology and Innovation to support VCGI; and there will be no net increase in funding for municipal and regional planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue and if I can provide the committee with any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Thomas Kennedy, A.I.C.P.
Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission
Executive Director

cc: Rep. Kathleen Keenan

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