



March 10, 2015

Representative Janet Ancel, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Representative Ancel and Committee:

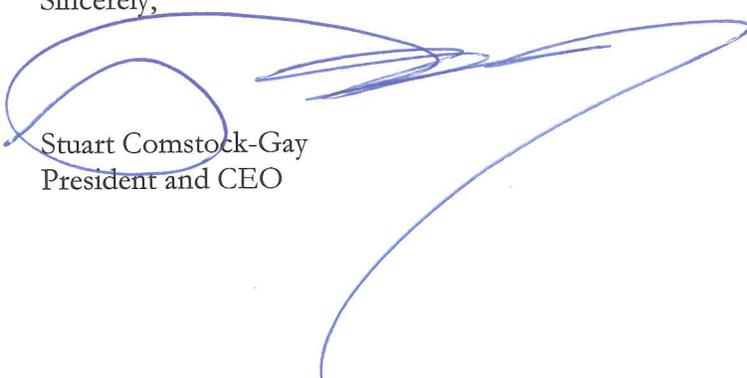
I write on behalf of the Vermont Community Foundation regarding the proposal to cap itemized deductions in Vermont. Specifically, I write about the inclusion of charitable tax contributions in that cap.

At the community foundation, we work every day with charitably minded Vermonters, to help them target their grant making to effective and important organizations across the state. Donors with whom we work have many motivations, of course – among them a love of Vermont, concern for particular issues, passion for their communities, and a general belief in giving back. For many donors, the value of the tax deduction is a factor in their giving. And while I cannot say that people will stop giving if their deduction is reduced, I can say with some confidence that a cap will make a difference to some donors.

This concerns us because of the importance of the civic sector in this state. It is a very American notion – that voluntary and nonprofit organizations provide core services, like arts programming, mental health services, and so much more. And as the state budget continues to be squeezed, those demands will only increase. Anything that reduces the financial support of those organizations is concerning. There are over 4,000 nonprofit organizations in the state. And we need them to remain vibrant and sustainable.

It is for these reasons that, on behalf of the community foundation, I urge you not to cap the deductibility of charitable contributions.

Sincerely,



Stuart Comstock-Gay
President and CEO