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AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Martha Heath, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
From: Rep. Bill Botzow, Chair, House Committee on Commerce and Economic
Development
Date: May 5, 2014
Subject: Review of FY 2015 Senate Budget Provisions

Thank you for the opportunity to review the provisions of the Senate's FY 2015 proposed budget that fall under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development. After testimony and careful consideration of these provisions, the Committee voted to adopt the following recommendations:

1. Vermont Enterprise Fund

The Senate proposal concerning the Vermont Enterprise Fund—both the creation of the fund and the contingent FY 2014 appropriation—is included both in both the Senate proposal of amendment to H.885 (Secs. C.106.2 and E.100.5) and in the Senate further proposal of amendment to S.220 (Secs. 27–28). Procedurally, the Committee prefers that S.220 serve as the final vehicle for the proposal. Substantively, the Committee supports the Senate's proposed language in its entirety. Finally, the Committee also reviewed and endorses a proposal from the administration to strike out at the end of subdivision (e)(4) the words: "under a claim that it is confidential, proprietary, or subject to executive privilege".

2. Telecommunications

The Senate proposes to eliminate language from the House budget in Sec. E.234, 30 V.S.A. § 7523 that would require the Public Service Board to consult with the Commissioner of Finance and Management when establishing the annual rate of charge for the universal service fund.

Currently, the Senate proposal of amendment to H.297 provides that the rate of charge will be fixed at 2%. The Committee is of the position that if this language is adopted, then Sec. E.234 of the House budget bill is unnecessary and should not be included. However, if 30 V.S.A. § 7523 *is not amended* as proposed in the Senate proposal of amendment to H.297, then the language in Sec. E.234 of the House budget should be preserved.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review these provisions and provide input as you consider the Senate's proposed budget.