

Ways and Means testimony from fraternal organizations S.221  
Jessie Shubrook, Delta Delta Delta Chapter President  
April 17, 2014

My name is Jessie Shubrook, and I am the Chapter President of Tri Delta Eta Chapter at the University of Vermont. I am a current junior at the University and have been a sister of Tri Delta since the fall of my freshman year.

I wanted to thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to listen to our testimonies on Wednesday April 16<sup>th</sup>. I attended the testimonies in Montpelier and very much appreciated your kindness and willingness to listen. I feel our two speakers did a very good job highlighting the affect of this bill on our community, but I wanted to add some additional information.

I understand you have a difficult job and that the tax money has to come from somewhere. However, I would argue that our organizations contribute more to the community, both in money and time, than the property tax would bring in. I will use my own chapter as an example.

This academic year alone (August 23<sup>rd</sup> – present) we raised \$14,306 for our national philanthropy St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, \$3,781 for the B+ foundation, and \$1,640 for Relay for Life. This totals our amount raised at \$19,727. This is significantly higher than the proposed property tax of our home, which would be \$17,000 per year. This number is also growing as we are still fundraising for Relay for Life, a huge philanthropic event brought to campus by a Tri Delta sister a few years ago. This year UVM has raised over \$31,425 for Relay, much of it by the fraternities and sororities, who are typically the top fundraisers, and we are still actively fundraising.

We also give back to our community through community service work. My chapter alone has donated over 1,597 hours this year and we still have yet to participate in the 12-hour Relay for Life event together as an 80-woman chapter. The Burlington Free Press has recognized our impact on the community by naming us Volunteer of the Week a month ago, and Alpha Chi Omega sorority was also recognized this year under the same title.

Over the past 4 years, an average of only \$1,500 per year has come into Tri Delta's House Corporation through alumnae donations. The maintenance of the house is funded almost entirely through rent paid by the sisters in the chapter to House Corporation. Therefore a property tax burden would fall on the shoulders of the chapter members, 20% of whom are Vermont residents. Our chapter members that would take on this burden are the same women who are raising money and donating time to our Burlington community.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will find it is in the best interest of the university, Burlington community, and state not to repeal the tax exemption status for fraternities and sororities.

Sincerely,  
Jessie Shubrook  
Delta Delta Delta President

Eta Chapter, University of Vermont