



**STATE OF VERMONT  
STATE HOUSE**

PHYSICAL SECURITY & POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DECEMBER 2015

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## STATEMENT OF NEED

The Vermont State House is one of the oldest and best preserved of our nation's state capitols. After 140 years, the State House is still a major presence in Montpelier, the smallest capital city in America, and the House and Senate Chambers are the oldest legislative chambers in their original condition in the United States. As you tour the halls and chambers, we hope you will develop a sense of what makes this historic building, and the State for which it was built, unique.

Guided tours are available free of charge. From July through mid-October tours are available Monday-Friday, 10:00 to 3:30, and Saturdays, 11:00 to 2:30. From mid-October through the end of June tours are available Monday-Friday, 9:00 to 3:00.<sup>1</sup>

Margolis Healy was retained to assist the State of Vermont, (State House) with recommendations towards the implementation of physical security enhancements, review and make recommendations to relevant security and emergency response policies and procedures and the identification of pertinent training opportunities for both the Capitol Police, Legislators and staff.

<sup>1</sup>Taken from "Visiting the State House" <http://legislature.vermont.gov/the-state-house/visiting-the-state-house/about-the-state-house/>, accessed November 2015

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Margolis Healy acknowledges the assistance and guidance of Janet Miller, Sergeant-At-Arms who served as our primary project liaison and Catherine Benham, Associate Fiscal Officer who has facilitated our work. We extend our appreciation to all parties who were essential in providing the appropriate context and historical information about the facility, security systems, technology, emergency response, and police operations. Everyone without exception was welcoming, forthcoming, and honest in his or her opinions and thoughts.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2014, Margolis Healy conducted a physical security assessment of the Vermont Capitol Complex and review of the Capitol Police Department (CPD). As a result of this assessment, a number of short, medium and longer-term recommendations were made to enhance the overall security posture.

In 2015, Margolis Healy was retained to provide guidance and leadership to the State House with the implementation of physical security enhancements previously recommended, review certain emergency and operational security policy and procedures as well as the identification of relevant training programs.

Margolis Healy visited the State House facility in late October 2015 in an effort to identify the specific opportunities to enhance physical security through the strategic use of electronic security systems such as access control, security cameras and other countermeasures and to provide cost estimates for these enhancements to inform the creation of a budget.

In addition, we worked with the Capitol Police and Sergeant At Arms to identify relevant training programs that can enhance the preparedness of legislators and visitors to the State House.

The goal of our recommendations is to establish the basis for a security environment that demonstrates a synergy among; people (staff), policy and technology (equipment) while simultaneously maintaining an environment that is open and welcoming to the public.

It is important that we acknowledge the significant amount of work that has been completed in 2015 since our last visit. During this time, there has been a change in leadership with the Sergeant-At-Arms that in our opinion has brought a renewed sense of energy and focus to security and emergency response. In our conversations, several individuals made note that their opinion was a “security mindset” was being created throughout the facility and the new Sergeant-At-Arms was largely responsible.

In fact, a number of strategic enhancements have been accomplished or are currently underway. These include; facility fire drills, VT Alert (email or text alert system), active shooter training and A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training, CPR training as well as policy and procedure updates such as active shooter, fire and bomb threat procedures. The Sergeant-At-Arms even attended the National Legislative Services and Security Association training in early fall 2015 as part of her professional development.

We believe that a commitment towards the implementation of physical security countermeasures, adopting and refining policies combined with enhanced training for members of the Capitol Police as well as Legislators

is the most effective approach to reaching the safety and security goals of the State House.

In light of current events and threats gripping the news, it is reasonable and necessary for the State House to increase its physical security capabilities, but critical that plans, policies, procedures and training programs are continually reviewed and revised.

In our experience, implementing change in the security of a facility can, to some extent be a stressful experience. Change could be the way someone enters the building, the time specific doors are locked or unlocked, carrying an access credential or many other examples. For that reason, it is important for the State House to communicate change in advance and implement new security program components, whether hardware or policy, gradually over time.

In addition to physical security and training, we also worked with the Capitol Police to identify equipment needs related to emergency situations including potential acts of civil disobedience such as sit-ins and protests. While the department has also undergone a significant amount of training in 2015, we believe certain equipment is required to enhance their operations effectiveness.

Therefore our findings and conclusions are intended to provide a succinct set of actionable recommendations that can be seamlessly implemented into the current facility, including the adoption of policy while causing minimal disruption to legislators, staff, visitors and the business of the state. We would hope that State House safety and security stakeholders would use this report as a guiding document as they work to enhance their emergency preparedness efforts.

## REFERENCES MATERIALS

### Attachment 1 – Firm Description and Qualifications

Margolis Healy is a professional services firm specializing in campus safety, security, and regulatory compliance for higher education and K-12. We provide our clients with a variety of specialized services that include, but are not limited to, campus safety and security assessments, Title IX and Clery Act assessments; emergency management risk and hazard assessments; emergency preparedness and crisis response systems and exercises; implementation of lethal and less-than-lethal force options; litigation consultation; and special investigations/independent reviews. Our team of professionals brings a diverse set of skills and expertise to client institutions ranging from large public universities to private institutions, community colleges and K-12 private and public school districts.

Dr. Gary J. Margolis and Mr. Steven J. Healy founded Margolis Healy in January 2008 when they merged their practices, Margolis & Associates, LLC and Strategic Security Consulting, LLC, into Margolis Healy & Associates, LLC. With more than fifteen years each of providing consulting services to clients in the education, public and private sectors, their combined experience quickly earned Margolis Healy recognition as one of the leading professional services firms for safety and security needs in North America. In August 2013, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded Margolis Healy the responsibility of developing and operating The National Center for Campus Public Safety, established by Congress in early 2013.

The Margolis Healy team has personally managed or been intimately involved with numerous high profile higher education cases. These cases include Clery Act and Title IX compliance issues at institutions such as Penn State, Swarthmore and Emerson, or critical incidents on college campuses ranging from violent crimes at universities such as Virginia Tech to natural disasters (including the 9/11 tragedy and its impact on the schools in NYC). We have first-hand experience in strategic security planning, crisis response and recovery planning and campus public safety management at institutions of higher education. Dr. Margolis was contracted to review the Federal Emergency Management Department's Incident Action Guides to assure their relevancy to the higher education environment. Shortly after the tragic mass-shooting incident at Virginia Tech in 2007, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools asked Mr. Healy to participate in the development of the first ever emergency management guide for higher education. That document, *Action Guide for Emergency Management at Institutions of Higher Education*, is considered an essential playbook for campuses developing or refining their emergency management programs. In addition, Mr. Healy and Dr. Margolis are the lead authors of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrator's *Blueprint for Safer Campuses: An Overview of the Virginia Tech Tragedy and Implications for Campus Safety*. This document,

unveiled at a press conference sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, is a roadmap for campus safety and security. Margolis Healy also manages competitive grants from the U.S. Department of Justice (Community Oriented Policing Services Office and Bureau of Justice Assistance) on topics ranging from behavioral threat assessment to crime prevention and study abroad safety.

Mr. Healy and Dr. Margolis have worked tirelessly to assemble the best and brightest in the campus safety and security, and regulatory compliance fields in order to provide Margolis Healy clients with outstanding service. The high-level of professionalism and breadth of experience each member of the Margolis Healy team has is second to none and allows us to provide each of our clients, no matter how difficult or challenging their case may be, with personalized attention and, most importantly, high-quality work.

**The MHA Methodology**

Margolis Healy & Associates serves our clients through the development of a Risk Tolerance Profile that assists the institution with identifying the range of realistic threats and vulnerabilities it faces, and then implementing a decision making process to determine which require prevention, mitigation and/or response plans. Without such a process, universities and colleges face the daunting task of giving equal attention to all perceived and real threats. Our process recognizes the range between high impact/low probability and low impact/high probability events. The active shooter tragedy (high impact/low probability) and the iPod theft from the library (low impact/high probability) each require different strategies. Impact is defined through the institution and the individual.

MHA has developed a unique, proprietary methodology for evaluating safety and security needs at institutions of higher education based on years of educational campus safety and security experience, research, reflection and evaluation. We assess safety and security at educational institutions through our proprietary 3 Circles of Prevention System.™ We have extensive proprietary checklists that support our methodology.

The First Circle asks to what extent relationships and services exist for early interception and intervention for problems and issues germane to faculty, staff and students. Such services may include drug and alcohol education and counseling, behavioral threat assessment teams, grievance policies, workplace violence policies and prevention systems, sexual assault, stalking and domestic violence victim advocacy; mediation services and grievance policies and procedures for faculty and staff; and other similar policies and services that address problems before they become a crisis.

The Second Circle explores the extent to which institutions of higher education have employed physical obstacles, delaying tactics and security technology to control, secure or regulate access to the physical plant. This





may include systems that direct vehicular traffic; security cameras; networked or standalone door locking systems and hardware; campus lighting (interior and exterior); E911 capacity and PBX phone systems; mass notification systems (high and low technology); fire and life safety systems; visitor management policies and practices; inclusion of crime prevention through environmental design considerations; and access control and other security technology tools.

The Third Circle explores measures that enable the institution to respond to events and security and safety related needs in an organized, timely, and efficient manner. This may include a public safety function with organized involvement of students, faculty and staff in the security of the campus; memoranda of understanding with area police, fire and emergency medical services; emergency response and recovery systems, policies and procedures that have been trained to; and adoption and implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS). Combined, this third circle of prevention builds capacity for the human response to safety and security requirements.

Taken together, the various strategies depict the interconnected nature of campus safety and security. Changes or decisions made to one area impact the others. The deployment of security technology (cameras, door prop alarms, controlled access points) may or may not have an effect on the number of public safety officers, which may or may not impact other security needs. MHA works with our clients to develop a reasonable campus safety and security program based on their current state and the desired future state.

The measures taken to address safety and security are as much data and metrics driven as they are based on perception. We believe that our expertise, knowledge and experiences uniquely qualify us to assist our client institutions with recommendations tuned to their culture and needs.

Margolis Healy & Associates, LLC is a minority and veteran-owned small business. For a complete listing of available services, please visit [www.margolishealy.com](http://www.margolishealy.com).





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