

Liza Chapman

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

The governor's proposal of \$2 million toward safety is a good gesture, but not very meaningful.

There are several office buildings that have yet to be evaluated and assessed for security and safety. The Rutland State office building has yet to be reviewed. We do not know the cost for changes and improvements to each location.

DCF-FSD staff continues to receive threats.

Our safety should be top priority, as our task is to provide safety and well-being to the most vulnerable in our State, our children.

Safety is triangular, in that there is a significant relationship between Child & Family Safety, SW's capacity to engage families, and work load.

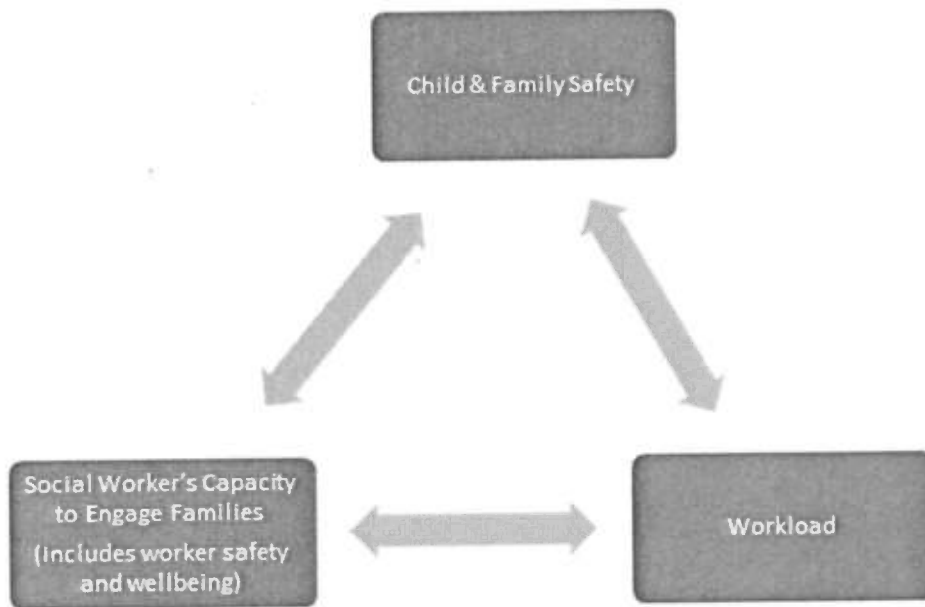
(Diagram)

- 1) Child & Family Safety is dependent up on SWs to help them

- 2) SW's capacity to engage families affected by the following
 - building safety
 - metal detectors and trained law enforcement security
 - secure parking lots at every state office building
 - enhance criminal penalties to a felony for threatening, harassing, abusive or violent conduct toward state employees
 - field safety
 - ongoing safety training, such as de-escalation procedures, evacuations, drills, and personal safety
 - VOSHA recommendations dated 2/4/2016

- 3) Work load contributes to safety
 - Need more front line SW, 53 not 28 to get to the national average

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2016 VSEA Legislative Priority on Safety

Increased Workplace Safety and Security for all State Employees

Explanation: State workers have long been victims of verbal and physical violence while performing their duties. VSEA will advocate for a five-point plan to address this problem.

- 1.) Fund and implement the security mechanisms needed to bring the Vermont Judiciary's operations in conformity with the standard of national best practices consistent with the recommendations included in the independent study that was completed and presented to the legislature by the Vermont Judiciary in January 2015.
- 2.) Create a police force that is charged specifically with protecting Agency of Human Service's state workers and their offices, as well as the clients they serve.
- 3.) Install metal detectors at each major state office building's entry point and staff each state office building with security personnel.
- 4.) Enhance the criminal penalties to a felony for those who have been found to have engaged in threatening, harassing, abusive or violent conduct towards a state employee.
- 5.) Ongoing safety training for all State Employees, no limited to, but including de-escalation procedures, evacuations, drills, and personal safety.