

**Theresa Utton**

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**Subject:** FW: I write to express my opposition to the \$750,000 cut to the VDTM budget being considered by the House Appropriations Committee

**From:** Todd Paton < >

**Date:** March 16, 2015 at 2:54:58 PM EDT

**Subject: I write to express my opposition to the \$750,000 cut to the VDTM budget being considered by the House Appropriations Committee**

Dear Representative Fagan:

I am writing to you as Vice Chair of the House Appropriations Committee to express my concern for the committee's consideration of cutting \$750,000 from the already meager Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing's budget. I realize that Vermont is under a great strain and that the collective Legislature is tasked with the unpleasant business of finding cuts in order to balance the budget. But I am very much convinced that cutting the budget of VDTM is shortsighted in that it will very likely result in a loss of revenue greater than the proposed cut. The Northeast is in a competitive tourism market. We are flanked by New York and New Hampshire which greatly outspend Vermont in terms of tourism marketing, as does Maine, also a small, rural state. An investment in marketing the Vermont brand results in more visitors coming to Vermont, spending money and supplying Vermont State Government with revenue through gasoline, rooms & meals and sales & use taxes. If less travelers come to Vermont, less tax revenue is generated. If other states gain market share from us, Vermont may find it difficult to win it back. Additionally, while private companies spend time and money marketing ourselves as well as Vermont as a whole, it is the state of Vermont that plays the key role in creating and marketing the "Vermont Brand" and in marketing the State as a destination, advertising in larger markets where most private businesses cannot afford to market.

As a former chair and sitting member of the Vermont Attractions Association and as a thirty-year veteran of the Vermont tourism industry, I encourage you and other House Appropriations Committee members to consider the potential loss of revenue that will likely occur long term if Vermont's ability to market itself is decimated by extreme budget cuts.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this matter.

Todd Paton  
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