



April 7, 2015

Senator Tim Ashe
Chair
Senate Committee on Finance
Vermont State House

Dear Senator Ashe and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to offer comments on sections 9 and 10 of H. 184, the Executive Branch Fee Bill.

The Chamber has always understood that fees are paid by users of a specific government service in order to recoup the cost of that service. Our members appreciate the need for reasonable increases in fees tied to increases in the cost of providing services. Our concerns with the changes proposed in H. 184 for both restaurant and lodging facilities is the rate of increase. Under the House-passed version of the bill, some restaurants would see an 70% increase in their license cost and all lodging establishments would see at least a 50% increase. A small bed and breakfast that also has a restaurant on site would see their fees increase from \$165 to \$245. While businesses plan for increases in their cost of doing business, they are under many cost pressures and an unexpected jump in a license fee puts additional strain on their budgets.

We understand that this is a difficult budget year but are concerned with the rate of increase for fees paid by our members in the restaurant and lodging industry.

Sincerely,

Catherine Z. Davis
Vice President for Strategy & Public Affairs
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce