



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Governor Shumlin  
From: Senate Committee on Government Operations  
Date: April 29, 2015  
Subject: Request for the appointment of independent counsel

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Allegations of campaign finance violations have been made against the Attorney General. Yesterday, the Attorney General testified in our committee that he welcomes an investigation of these allegations, but that if he were to hire a person to conduct an independent investigation of the allegations, that independent investigation may have the appearance of impropriety.

We also heard testimony from the Executive Director of the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs. Vermont's State's Attorneys have concurrent authority with the Attorney General to investigate alleged campaign finance violations. While the Department has recently created a Campaign Finance Review Commission in order to address this concurrent authority, the Executive Director testified that State's Attorneys generally lack the resources to conduct such investigations.

Therefore, we are writing to request that you appoint, in consultation with the Department's Campaign Finance Review Commission, independent counsel to investigate and pursue, as necessary, the campaign finance allegations made against the Attorney General. We further suggest that funding for the independent counsel come from the budget of the Attorney General.

We feel your appointment of independent counsel will help resolve the potential conflicts created by this particular situation. It is our intent to review further our campaign finance laws during the 2016 legislative session in order address the investigation of these laws in general.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information. Thank you for your consideration.