

My name Joshua Sevits, I am an adjunct faculty member at the Community College of Vermont. CCV has 12 centers around the state and is second largest state college after UVM.

I'm here to support Chancellor Spaulding's request for a \$4 million increase to the Vermont State College System and to support Representative Hill's bill H-122.

Today we find ourselves facing the challenges of student retention and, furthermore in the position of waving goodbye to potential college students, academics, and teaching professionals, in part, because the state has not provided adequate funding directly to the state college system.

Colleges in the VSC have no choice but to pass this funding burden onto students. Since I've been teaching at CCV I've worked with many students who take a few classes only to find the road ahead fraught with massive debt and, ultimately, decide an education is out of reach. While some students are savvy enough to take VSAC money out of state to more affordable colleges, others simply drop out.

I'm worried about the affect unaffordable education will have on low-income Vermonters, who rely on the state college system for the education they deserve. We should not forget what happened on a national scale this past November, when citizens who felt they have been overlooked and left behind championed the candidate that gave them attention and hope regardless of the impact on our communities as a whole.

Public education is part of the bedrock of our society and state college systems have become part of that bedrock as well. Pursuing a college education does not solely exist to position people for employment and to make a living, it also serves to unite people through common experience. The effects of education are proven to be the only antidote to bigotry and hatred, both on a local and national level.

My colleagues and I teach for embarrassingly low-wages because we know the value of education and the tangible results we see in the classroom and the community.

I urge this committee to find ways to remove the burden of funding higher education from the backs of students, families and faculty.

Therefore I want to ask you to support Chancellor Spaulding's request for a \$4 million increase to the Vermont State College System and to support Representative Hill's bill H-122. Thank you for your time.

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