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To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my support for Chancellor Spaulding's request for a \$4 million increase to the Vermont State College system, and to urge you to support Representative Hill's bill H122.

I started teaching at CCV in 2010 and at Castleton University in 2013. Over the last seven years, I have had the opportunity to teach and interact with hundreds of Vermont students. I have found Vermonters to be inquisitive and thoughtful students, and working with them has brought out my best as a teacher.

In my time here, however, I have also been appalled by the number of instances in which quality students were forced to adjust or abandon their plans and aspirations because of the high costs of education. Two years ago, one of my most promising students at Castleton University informed me that she was leaving school because she simply couldn't afford to go into any more loan debt. Another outstanding student shifted her major because she couldn't afford the extra class time needed for her original major. Such instances are altogether too common in our present situation.

I have also been shocked by the number of students working multiple jobs while taking a full schedule of classes. Although I have seen that such a scenario is technically feasible, their academic achievements are greatly reduced by the simple fact that they lack available time to produce high-quality work. Imagine their accomplishments were they able to focus on their academic training.

I believe that the present situation is unsustainable and detrimental to our state. In addition, I believe that the funding increase proposed by Chancellor Spaulding and Representative Hill is modest, yet still capable of making a significant difference in the lives of many Vermonters.

Thank you for your consideration of support of H122.

Sincerely,



Matthew D. Moriarty

My name is Dr. Michael Talbott. I'm Assistant Professor and Chair of the Communication Department at Castleton University. I'm here to talk to the committee members about the need to increase support for higher education in the state of Vermont.

I moved here from Los Angeles, and one of the most significant factors that drew me to the region was my perception that New England places a high value on education, particularly higher education.

I was shocked to discover that the Vermont's support for public higher education has been in decline since 1980, and can now be characterized as in a state of neglect. Vermont currently ranks at the bottom of state support of higher education, and our students are burdened with some of the highest tuitions in the country, leaving them with higher-than-average student debt upon graduation.

One of my students works 30/hours a week at the local Dunkin Donuts to pay for college. His family lacks the means to assist with his college tuition—in fact, he sends a portion of his wages home each week to help his single mother. His shifts begin at 6am. Upon completing work, he would come straight to my afternoon class, and though he is a bright and diligent student enthusiastic about his education, he struggled to stay engaged because of sheer exhaustion. I worry that this promising young man, and so many others who face the same financial challenges, will not be able to continue his education because of a lack of support from the state of Vermont.

Unfortunately, this student's struggle is not an aberration—his plight is a common one faced by young people at Castleton University and the other Vermont State Colleges. To balance a full-time job and a full-time education is unrealistic. It is unconscionable and impractical to foist the burden of funding public higher education on the backs of students.

I support Chancellor Spaulding's request for a \$4 million increase to the Vermont State College System with an annual inflator. I urge you to support Representative Hill's bill H122.