



Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

S.85: Simplifying Government for Small Business

House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
April 5, 2018

Testimony by Daniel Barlow VBSR Public Policy Manager

Re: S.85, an act relating to simplifying government for small business.

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) is a non-profit, statewide business trade organization with a mission to advance business ethics that value multiple bottom lines- economic, social, and environmental. We strive to help members set a high standard for protecting the natural, human and economic environments of the state's residents, while remaining profitable. Founded in 1991, VBSR has 700 members across Vermont.

VBSR supports this effort to make it easier to start and maintain a business in Vermont. We routinely hear that the state needs to be more “business friendly” – and there often is not consensus on what that exactly means or easy routes to bring that vision to fruition. Creating a single portal for businesses is a common sense, non-partisan way to begin addressing these issues.

Access to the appropriate tools and guidance is a barrier to start and maintain businesses in all sectors. These pressures are especially burdensome for entrepreneurs and small business owners without the resources to hire an attorney or expert to guide them through the process. Larger businesses tend to have the experience and resources to navigate these channels.

Year after year, VBSR members report that easy access to government officials has been a major contributor to their success, often ranked almost as high as the benefits associated with the Vermont brand and quality of life.

In many ways, Vermont’s small size and our closeness with government officials, the Legislature, and other important policy-makers has alleviated some of these concerns over barriers to business creation and registration.

The state of Vermont, especially Secretary of State Jim Condos’ team, has made great strides in streamlining and compiling the information and procedures to start and maintain a business in Vermont. VBSR believes that an annual \$2 registration fee is an appropriate and cost effective way of making it easier to do business in Vermont.