



**House Commerce and Economic Development**  
**S.85, Simplifying Government for Small Business**  
March 29, 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.85. VLCT supports the notion of a single portal for Vermont citizens and businesses to access information about starting and operating a business in the state and that enables registration with all required state entities without duplicating information.

Last September, the City of Burlington launched a “Startup in a Day” portal (<https://business.burlingtonvt.gov>) to help entrepreneurs start new businesses in the city. Burlington was one of 25 cities across the country that won funding to help streamline and consolidate the processes required to start a small business. The portal provides information on all the processes required to start a business and on state and federal requirements. Most importantly, it provides for questions to be sent directly to pertinent staff.

In January, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) launched a new Environmental Notice Bulletin ([www.dec.vermont.gov/permits/enb](http://www.dec.vermont.gov/permits/enb)) that provides a web based application and significantly streamlines the notice process for many applications. Municipalities – along with every other entity that has or seeks permits with the DEC – are already participating in the new Environmental Notice Bulletin and have found it to be a substantial improvement over previous practice. Certainly, if a single portal for businesses, entrepreneurs, and citizens were developed, the same efficiencies would be helpful to municipalities.

S.85 would build on both of those efforts, making it easier for new businesses to figure out what is required of them to start up in Vermont and reducing the requirement for duplicative information. Beyond the ease of entering information only once, simplifying payment mechanisms, registration and annual filing requirements, we believe the provision of mentoring, assistance, and direct support to businesses in a timely manner would be key to the success of such a program. The committee may want to consider defining what “in a timely manner” means. For example, how prompt will the response time to inquiries or requests for assistance be?

Establishing a single portal for businesses and citizens would provide a singular opportunity to assess where duplicative and therefore unnecessary permitting or registration requirements exist in statute. Some of those requirements have never before been aligned at the state level. We urge you to include in the report a list of those duplicative processes that could be either merged or eliminated.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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