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**TESTIMONY TO HOUSE COMMERCE
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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Good afternoon and Happy New Year.

For the record, my name is Lisa Ventriss, President of Vermont Business Roundtable. I am a native of Addison County, a product of the University of Vermont, and have been the chief spokesperson for the Roundtable since 2002.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I'd like to use my time to 1) provide an introduction to the Roundtable and, 2) give an overview of our 2017 work plan and policy agenda.

2017 is an auspicious year for the Roundtable, as it represents our 30th anniversary. In fact, we will be convening our 30th annual membership meeting tomorrow here in Montpelier. Formed in 1987, the Roundtable is

- A nonprofit, nonpartisan civic welfare organization of chief executive officers of Vermont's leading private and nonprofit employers, representing geographic diversity and all major sectors of the Vermont economy.
- We are committed to sustaining a sound economy and preserving Vermont's unique quality of life by studying and making recommendations on statewide public policy issues.

Interestingly enough, our first policy paper was released in 1988 and entitled "Population and Employment Forecast." It was the first economic forecast ever developed specifically for the Vermont economy by the private sector.

- The report was intended to be used as a basis for subsequent policy analyses and design, modified by various "what if" scenarios.

Since that time and in addition to our other policy work, the Roundtable has continued to identify and focus on "critical success factors" that we believe are essential for our economic and social survival.

And we have created or helped to create meaningful initiatives that focus on the economic and social well-being of all Vermonters. These include, among others:

school, and post-secondary levels; communicate successful models to larger audiences

2. Convene the VT Talent Pipeline Management Project

a. Design: statewide, systems model designed by US Chamber and being successful employed in a number of states

- i. Employer-led, employer-designed model of collaboratives that focus on solving workforce talent problems;**
- ii. Members will include businesses and business industry associations;**
- iii. Steering Committee will make strategic decisions: AOE, ACCD/DED, BDCC, GBIC, SBSU, SWDB, VSAC, VTCOC**
- iv. Funding from private, public, and philanthropic sources**

b. Functions:

- i. Determine critical shared workforce needs**
- ii. Communicate needs to education, economic development providers**
- iii. Measure performance and provide incentives to providers**

c. Actions to Date/Next Steps:

- i. Convened introductory meeting with 40 business leaders, education and economic development providers**
- ii. Had 8 businesses opted-in to go to next level (1/25 mtg.) —which is to meet and share "pain points";**
- iii. 5 providers have signed up to attend TPM Academy to lead collaborations (Feb and May)**
- iv. Launch formally in 01/2017**

And with that I will conclude my remarks and take your questions.

Thank you.