



**Testimony on H.136**  
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### **Main Street Alliance of Vermont**

Main Street Alliance of Vermont is a statewide, small business public policy organization. Our mission is to **elevate the voice of small business owners on important public policy issues in Vermont.**

We are committed to ensuring that workplace standards in Vermont promote public health and safety, equity of opportunity, and are responsive to the needs of Vermont's workforce and families.



### **Status of Working Women**

The workforce has evolved significantly over the past fifty years with increasing numbers of women entering the workforce. **Currently, 66% of adult women participate in Vermont's labor force**, as compared to the national average of 58%<sup>1</sup>.

Notably, women's workforce participation peaks between the ages of 22 and 54, and a large percentage of

those are prime years for bearing and raising children.<sup>2</sup>

The current status of working women in the state tells us that **we need more effective women-centric policies** and workplace standards to ensure that women have equal opportunity in the workforce and are able to balance work and family needs.

### **Our Support for H.136**

MSA-VT fully supports this bill. We support this bill because more women are working through their pregnancies than ever before.

Pregnant workers may need reasonable accommodations or temporary adjustments to their job so that they can continue to work safely throughout pregnancy and maintain necessary income for themselves and/or their families.

We see this bill as simply filling a gap in existing state and federal laws. We support the guarantee of this important workplace protection to pregnant women regardless of whether or not they are experiencing complications with their pregnancy.

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<sup>1</sup> Change the Story (CTS) 2016 Status Report: Women, Work and Wages in VT. (2016).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*