

"I am so sheltered from interaction with racial minorities in Addison County that I have not had that direct experience. Yet I have seen plenty of explicitly racist graffiti and home made signs to let me know that racism in Vermont is an issue. I have had enough exposure to local sheriffs to believe that they have had little training in dealing with diversity. I am friends with a professor from St Josephs in Rutland who is married to a black man, and has worked for years to promote diversity training within the Rutland police force. My daughter was upset when last year the Burlington police surrounded a jewelry store where a black man was examining gold jewelry. In short, the elements for potential problems not only exist in Vermont, I feel that Vermont, in the current national political climate of permissiveness for racial hatred, must take pro-active action to ensure that no stain of police or judicial misconduct sullies our deserved national reputation as a people of thoughtful and measured legislation that ensures the well-being of all of our citizens. It is vital to our economy as well. I know bright 30-somethings who will not consider looking for work in Vermont because they fear racial bias."

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