

PHILIP B. SCOTT
Governor



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

May 1, 2018

Sen. Michael Sirotkin, Chair
Sen. Alison Clarkson, Vice Chair
Sen. Philip Baruth
Sen. Becca Balint
Sen. David Soucy

Dear Senators:

I am writing to urge your support for Karen O'Neill's appointment to the Vermont Labor Relations Board.

As you know, Ms. O'Neill's name came to me along with the names of four other well qualified candidates to fill a vacancy of a neutral position on the Vermont Labor Relations Board. All of the candidates were recommended after a unanimous vote by the Labor Board Review Panel made up of the Executive Director of the Vermont Bar Association, the Commissioner of Labor, the State Court Administrator, a Representative of Labor and a Representative of employers. The two public members, a representative of IBEW Local 300, a labor union that serves over 1,200 working Vermonters, and the President of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce were chosen after outreach by the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

Again, I must stress Ms. O'Neill's name came to me along with the names of four other well qualified candidates after a unanimous vote of the panel.

When I considered what to look for in a candidate, I determined first that the VLRB needed diversity. The State's labor force is better served during grievance proceedings by a Board which is more representative of the workforce as a whole. There had previously been a gender imbalance. Second, the outgoing neutral member had been an attorney and I had been advised a legal background would be a desirable skill set for the Board to retain. Given these criteria, Ms. O'Neill was one of the candidates who quickly rose to the top. After speaking with Ms. O'Neill I learned she was seeking a volunteer position in public service in her retirement, as so many do, because she feels strongly it is her civic obligation to give back to the people and State of Vermont.

Vermont Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs

May 1, 2018

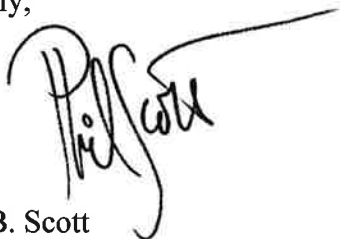
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As an employment lawyer, Ms. O'Neill has spent much of her career advising her clients on best practices for compliance with State and federal employment laws in such areas as non-discrimination and sexual harassment. I believe Ms. O'Neill's experience and the gender diversity she brings to the Board will be critical when the VLRB hears employee grievances involving these matters.

Throughout her career Ms. O'Neill has worked with mediators, arbitrators, administrative boards and judges for purposes of dispute resolution. Like a litigator who has been appointed to the bench, Ms. O'Neill is both familiar with rules and process and understands the value of the critical role played by a neutral and impartial arbiter.

I, like the nominating panel, was impressed by Ms. O'Neill's professionalism, direct manner and love for the State. I am quite convinced of her ability to serve on the VLRB as required by law. Again, I ask that you move Ms. O'Neill's candidacy forward with a recommendation to the Senate to approve her appointment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Scott". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip B. Scott
Governor