



Testimony of Rutland Young Professionals

In Support of the Proposed Reorganization of the Department of Labor and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to a New Agency of Economic Opportunity

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs

January 31, 2017

As directors of Rutland Young Professionals, an independent nonprofit social and professional networking organization in Rutland, Vermont, we offer our support to Governor Phil Scott's proposed reorganization of the Department of Labor and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to a new Agency of Economic Opportunity.

We appreciate that Governor Scott has made economic development a strong priority for the State of Vermont, and we consider the proposed alignment of Vermont's labor and commerce resources to be an important opportunity for Vermonters to begin reimagining our economic future.

As a volunteer group in a small community, we know that in order to create our vision of Rutland as a welcoming and vibrant place for young professionals to live and work, we need to collaborate as closely as we can with those who have the resources to help us build that vision. In everything we do, we rely on the generosity of our local businesses and employers. We believe these businesses are generous to us because their leaders understand that our success as young professionals is intimately linked to their business's ability to thrive and grow - and to our shared desire to offer a vibrant and welcoming community to newcomers - new workers, new business owners, new graduates, new entrepreneurs.

We have found the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Labor to be important partners in this work, especially for statewide events like the Young Professionals Summit of Vermont, an annual statewide conference that we produce in downtown Rutland. We look forward to continuing and strengthening our work with these departments, and we feel hopeful that by aligning the goals and resources of labor and commerce under one agency, Vermonters will see amplified benefits from both departments.

We urge the committee members to support proposed reorganization of the Department of Labor and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to a new Agency of Economic Opportunity.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Rutland Young Professionals,

Sara Gilbert, Board President
(802) 773-9147
info@rutlandyoungprofessionals.org