



Memo To: Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
Senator Claire Ayer, Chair
FROM: Auburn Watersong, Policy Director, The Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
RE: S.261
Date: January 23, 2018

Dear Sen. Ayer and Committee Members,

The Vermont Network strongly supports passage of Senate Bill 261.

Section 4, Coordination of Trauma-Informed Systems

Vermont needs state level trauma/resiliency coordination at the Agency of Human Services.

The Vermont Network fully supports the creation of a position dedicated to keeping initiatives moving, holding trauma services providers accountable to their commitments, keeping and maintaining focus on the effects of trauma, facilitating the coordinated responses to traumatic events that occur in Vermont, continually seeking advice from community responders, and through training and education, ensuring that providers are using best practice approaches.

Section 5, Childhood Trauma Tri-Branch Commission:

Vermont needs a multidisciplinary group of experts and providers to fully assess the gaps and barriers in current services for persons who have experienced childhood trauma or toxic stress in order to promote new services necessary to overcome such challenges.

Recommendations:

1. As research indicates that children of marginalized populations (First Nations, New Americans, people of color) are more likely to experience more trauma due to systemic inequities, the Network would recommend that the committee add representation from these communities.
2. Given the prevalence of domestic violence in Vermont and in the lives of children who are experiencing trauma, the Network would also like to be added as a member. This language for this member would read as follows: *The Executive Director of the Network or her/his designee.*

Thank you.