

From: Faye Mack [fmack@hungerfreevt.org]
Sent: Monday, January 21, 2019 3:39 PM
To: Theresa Utton
Subject: Re: public hearing on budget adjustment

Hi Theresa,

I'm stuck in Cincinnati due to the weekend's storms, so I would like to submit a statement for the Budget Adjustment public hearing in writing. Thank you for sharing this with the Committee.

Hunger Free Vermont has a mission of ending the injustice of hunger and malnutrition for all Vermonters. For too many Vermonters who are struggling to put food on their table and meet their basic needs, it can be close to impossible to move out of a cycle of poverty and securely into a place of long-term economic security. Programs like Reach Up are designed to help some of our most vulnerable - children and their families - make that challenging move to financial stability. Unfortunately, the current Reach Up benefit is too low to be that leg up for many participants. Vermont has an opportunity during this Budget Adjustment to make a difference for Reach Up households. We urge you to reject the concept of "caseload savings" in the Reach Up program and reinvest every penny available into the benefits for families with children. As you know, the Reach Up benefit is currently well below the statutory goal of a basic needs budget, which even at 100% would only be subsistence survival for a household. When fewer families with children need Reach UP, the funds allocated should be used to increase the benefit for the current and future recipients. Reach Up is fundamentally a program designed to ensure that children are safe, warm, sheltered, clothed and fed. Scooping "caseload savings" out of the budget is essentially taking much needed funds away from children living deep in poverty. The UN Declaration on the Rights of a Child declares that "mankind owes to the child the best that it has to give." We believe this is the state of Vermont's commitment and aspiration, and so we ask that you reject the Reach Up caseload savings and direct DCF to direct every available dollar to increasing benefits for Reach Up recipient families.

Submitted by: Faye Mack, Hunger Free Vermont

Thank you,

Best,
Faye

On Thu, Jan 17, 2019 at 4:23 PM Faye Mack <fmack@hungerfreevt.org> wrote:

Thank you! I will be making a decision today or tomorrow about whether I'd like to sign up in person.

Best,
Faye

Faye (Conte) Mack | Advocacy & Education Director

Hunger Free Vermont | 38 Eastwood Drive | Suite # 100 | South Burlington, VT | 05403

[802.231.1071](tel:802.231.1071) | DIRECT LINE

[802.865.0255](tel:802.865.0255) | HFVT MAIN LINE

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please note that my name has recently changed to Faye Mack, and my email address is now fmack@hungerfreevt.org

On Thu, Jan 17, 2019 at 4:10 PM Theresa Utton <TUTTON@leg.state.vt.us> wrote:

Faye –

You are welcome to submit written comments to me and I will make them available to the Committee. Thank you, ~Theresa

Theresa Utton-Jerman, Senior Staff Associate

Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

One Baldwin Street

Montpelier, Vermont 05633

<https://lifo.vermont.gov/>

(802) 828-5767 [direct] or (802) 828-2295 [main]

From: Faye Mack <fmack@hungerfreevt.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 17, 2019 4:02 PM
To: Theresa Utton <TUTTON@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: public hearing on budget adjustment

Dear Theresa,

I am wondering if the Appropriations Committees are accepting comments in written form for Tuesday's public hearing on budget adjustment, or if we need to deliver comments in person.

Thank you,

Faye

Faye (Conte) Mack | Advocacy & Education Director

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Faye Conte | Advocacy & Education Director
Hunger Free Vermont | 38 Eastwood Drive | Suite # 100 | South Burlington, VT | 05403
802.231.1071 | DIRECT LINE
802.865.0266 | FAX
802.865.0255 | HFVT MAIN LINE
LIKE | FACEBOOK FOLLOW | TWITTER
hungerfreevt.org