

Hello, my name is Addie Brooks and I am a senior at Vergennes Union High School. I am 3 time secretary of my class, a leader in my community, and an avid student activist. A few years ago, after the Parkland school shooting, a friend and I decided that we were going to organize a walk out in support of the victims. Using modern technologies, we inspired other students to join us in this act of solidarity. Everyone who wanted to, about 100 students and some teachers, walked out of class at 9:15 and joined us in the auditorium. There, we had a discussion about gun laws and the importance of safety in our school. Some students suggested total gun control law reform by restricting all automatic rifles while others suggested that the government enforce stricter background checks. It was incredible to see a room filled with students looking to make change. Vermont youths are filled with compassion, conviction, and integrity. I saw this yet again as a member of Girls State in

2019. We were in this very state house, taking on jobs as Girls State senators, house members, Governors, Treasurers, and more. The rooms of this state house were filled with smart, incredible young women all learning the workings of government. We gave speeches and worked with our hall-mates to make posters. That experience proved to me again the importance of student activism. Youths are the future of this State and of this Country. We will soon be making decisions about who runs this country and even which of you will be back here for your next term. Vermont youths are ready and willing to be activists for their own time. Like me, they are ready to give it their all to make the future that they want. Whether it be cleaning the earth and reversing the effects of global warming, or opening our borders and knocking down walls, Vermont youth is here to make change.