

VERMONT LEGAL AID, INC.

56 COLLEGE STREET
MONTPELIER, VERMONT 05602
(802) 223-6377 (VOICE AND
TTY)
FAX (802) 223-7281
(800) 789-4195

OFFICES:

BURLINGTON
RUTLAND
ST. JOHNSBURY

OFFICES:

MONTPELIER
SPRINGFIELD

January 22, 2019

Theresa Utton-Jerman, Staff Associate
House Committee on Appropriations
Vermont State House
115 State St.
Montpelier, VT 05633
Tutton@leg.state.vt.us

Re: BAA comments regarding Reach Up caseload savings


Dear Ms. Utton-Jerman:

Please submit the following comments regarding Reach Up caseload savings to the House Committee on Appropriations:

Vermont Legal Aid is urging that the committee reinvest any available funds, referred to as "caseload savings", back into the Reach Up program to benefit families and children. The idea of "caseload savings" is misleading. There are currently unspent funds because the Reach Up rules require that households only receive grant amounts that cover 49.6 % of their basic needs based on the 2003 cost of living index. The rule is designed to ensure that expenditures do not exceed appropriations. If there are funds remaining in the Reach Up budget, it is because we are only giving families less than 50% of what they need to survive. The money should be used to increase grant amounts so that families with children can come closer to meeting their basic needs.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Sandra Paritz, Attorney
Poverty Law Project Director
Vermont Legal Aid