My name is Kendra Ross and I am a student at Castleton University. I feel lucky not to have to deal with worries about paying for college now, but I am extremely worried about the future. I am not the only one who feels this way. Many of my friends who I go to school with are worried about their future. They are worried about how they will pay for the debt that they have accumulated and how they are going to be able to pay for this debt in the future. This semester, one of my best friends had to leave halfway through the year because of the government shutdown her loan never went through and she had no other way to pay for school. Then later this week my other good friend who I live with is talking about not being able to return next year because of how much it will cost her.

We are individuals who want to change the world. Many of my friends are those who are social workers, psychologists, and teachers. We just want to have the opportunity to change the world and the only way to do so now is to have a higher education. Having free tuition will only better Vermont in the future and will help those who want to make a difference. Free tuition is not a want, but a right. It is a social justice that needs to be served for the state because without we will lose our younger workforce and some amazing individuals who can make a great impact on the world.

Vermont is beautiful, but it is aging. We need young people to stay and many of them that I do know want to stay. They just can't afford to stay because of their debt. They need to go where the money is and the money is not in this state. We need to create an environment where we can stay in a place that we want to stay in. I want to work for Vermont and to make it better than it already is, but with the amount of debt that I am in it is almost impossible. Something needs to change and free tuition is the change that needs to happen. Therefore, free tuition is the best possible option to keep the young people here at Vermont and then it supports those who want to make a difference.