Public Hearings on the FY20 Budget
Monday, February 25, 2019 6:00 - 7:00 pm
Location: St. Albans City

Hello my name is Carlie Larrow, I'm from Sheldon Vermont and am a Senior at Castleton University. I wanted to talk to you all today about investing more in public higher education. Currently Vermont is ranked 50 out of 50 states for state support in higher education. This results in one of the highest tuitions in the country for public higher education, and also means our students on average graduate with more student debt than students from other states.

This is very troubling for our students in Vermont State Colleges because 83% of our students are from Vermont and 84% of our students stay and work in Vermont after graduation. Since a majority of our students stay and work in Vermont after graduation, an investment in their education truly is an investment in the future well-being of the state. If students graduate with little to no debt they will be able to stay, live, work, and raise their families in Vermont. I relate personally to this because I was born in Vermont, chose to attend college in Vermont, and want to raise my own family here someday. But my dreams of doing that have become cloudy as my financial situation is very troubling. Not only is my future unknown as my debt weighs me down with my degree, but my friends are in similar situations and they didn't even finish college. Who could've been nurses, teachers, and counselors never got the chance to complete their degrees because the financial demand was too high. What they could've brought to the state of Vermont will never be known because the social injustice of poor investment in public higher education.

Ways that we can invest in pubic higher education is 1) support the Governor's proposal for 3 million increase, 2) support the Chancellor's proposal for 5 million increase each year for the next 5 years (25 million total), and 3) to support free tuition for all Vermonters at public colleges and universities. Thanks for listening and I hope to see you all again soon.