

Theresa Utton-Jerman

From: Elizabeth McHale <elizmchale@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2020 2:28 PM
To: Theresa Utton-Jerman
Subject: Funding for VSC

I am concerned about woefully inadequate funding for VSC in the current budget. CCV and the Vermont State Colleges are not a special interest; they are essential pieces of the Vermont economy. Vermont students rely on our colleges. Our students deserve better!

I have read that we are 49th nationally in state support for our VSC system. This results in one of the highest tuitions in the country for public higher education (Second highest tuition in the country). This means our students on average graduate with more student debt than students from other states.

Vermont has not always neglected higher education, but state support has consistently been reduced since 1980. In 1980, state appropriations covered 51% of the costs of the VSC. Currently they pay for less than 14% of the costs. Compare that with these facts:

- 83% of our students are Vermonters
- 84% of our students stay and work in Vermont after graduation

In addition to that, 57% of our students are first generation college students. An investment in PUBLIC higher education is an investment in Vermont.

For these reasons, I support Chancellor Spaulding's proposal for 5 million increase each year for the next 5 years (25 million total) to bring us up to the national average in terms of state appropriation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth McHale

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