



**Testimony in Support of H631: Ending Child Marriage  
Presented to Vermont House Committee on Judiciary | February 8, 2022**

Chair Grad, Vice Chair Burditt and Distinguished Committee Members:

Vermont Works for Women promotes economic justice by advancing gender equity and supporting women and youth at every stage of their career journeys. We are working to create an equitable Vermont where people of all identities and backgrounds have equal access to opportunities and to thrive economically - where they make confident, deliberate choices about life and work that reflect an expansive grasp of what's possible.

According to a brief issued by the Vermont Commission on Women, evidence shows that when young women enter into marriage before age 18, earning potential and work opportunities are limited by interrupted education and low education levels. Girls who marry under age 19 are 50% more likely to drop out of high school and 4x less likely to graduate college.

The economic impacts of child marriage which limit a woman's ability to become financially independent, combined with a myriad of other negative outcomes, increase vulnerability to multiple victimization and often result in consequences becoming cyclical and intergenerational.