



VERMONT
COMMUNITY ACTION
PARTNERSHIP

- ❖ Tom Donahue, BROC Community Action (BROC)
- ❖ Sue Minter, Capstone Community Action
- ❖ Paul Dragon Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)
- ❖ Jenna O'Farrell, Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)
- ❖ Stephen Geller, Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)

February 20, 2022

To Representative Ancel and the House Ways & Means Committee,

This past week, assistance was given to a 75-year-old gentleman who spoke almost no English and needed our strict attention to prepare his taxes. Because of VITA we were able to give him the help he needed.

For decades, the five Community Action Agencies have worked with the IRS to assist Vermonters with low income to complete their tax returns, Renters Credit and Homestead Declaration applications. For decades, our funding has been woefully inadequate and insufficient. This year we are able to assist **households** whose income is \$58,000 or less. We know that the majority of people we help are the elderly, single parents, students, those with disabilities and those who have great difficulties with the English language.

As we head into the third year of the pandemic it is more important than ever to ensure that Vermonters can access funding from Earned Income Credit, the Child Tax Credit, Stimulus funding and all other avenues that can sustain and stabilize their families.

We need your help. We are asking for an annual ongoing **\$400,000** shared among the five Community Action Agencies to cover the entire state on a full time, full year basis. To file more than 8,000 returns for Vermonters with low-income, the Vermont Community Action Partnership will utilize this funding (valued at \$50 a return) to employ five full-time VITA Tax Coordinators (\$80,000 for salary, fringe, indirect, occupancy, technology) located at each of the 5 Community Action Agencies to provide year-round professional tax services to income eligible Vermonters. AND we will always rely heavily on volunteers.

The two-page VITA document accompanying this request give the practical and economical foundation for this work.

Thank you for your consideration and support. We are available to you and your committee for additional testimony and to answer any questions you might have.

In gratitude and on behalf of the five Community Action Agencies,

Our best to you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Geller'.

Steve Geller, Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)



- ❖ Tom Donahue, BROCC Community Action (BROC)
- ❖ Sue Minter, Capstone Community Action
- ❖ Paul Dragon Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)
- ❖ Jenna O'Farrell, Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)
- ❖ Stephen Geller, Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Thomas L. Donahue'.

Tom Donahue, BROCC Community Action

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sue Minter'.

Sue Minter, Capstone Community Action

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Paul Dragon'.

Paul Dragon, VCAP President, Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jenna O'Farrell'.

Jenna O'Farrell, Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)