

Dear Legislators,

My name is Linda Olson and I have been a faculty member at Vermont State University (VTSU) for 29 years. During those 29 years, I have seen the state disinvest in the State College System. It reached a crisis point in March of 2020, when the chancellor at the time made the terrible decision that we needed to close three of our five residential campuses. The legislature stepped up and kept the campuses open. We appreciate the support, but we are not out of the woods yet. The governor's recent budget proposal cut 5,000,000 from the bridge funding that was promised to us. This will have devastating ramifications. We are already struggling. Decisions were made by management to cut critical student facing positions which have put us in a precarious place, making it difficult for all of us to do our jobs. Another cut in the budget will mean more layoffs. While we are appreciative of the additional funds for the past several years, we have consistently ranked 49th out of 50 states for state support. This put us on the brink of disaster, we can't recover from that without consistent support. It is also critical that the legislature appreciates that an investment in VTSU is an investment in Vermont.

Thank you,

Linda Olson
Middletown Springs