

Testimony of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Ted Brady, Executive Director
Senate Government Operations
Regarding S. 237 – Posting Municipal Employment Vacancies

My name is Ted Brady, and I am the Executive Director of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, which represents all 247 cities and towns in Vermont. I'm here today to discuss S. 237, a bill that would require municipalities to publicly post employment vacancies.

Municipalities, like all employers in Vermont, are struggling to fill jobs. VLCT's classified page currently has 45 job postings listed – from dump truck driver, to police officer, to assistant treasurer. Indeed lists more than 100 municipal job openings right now. And I read Seven Days job postings every week to see what municipalities are looking for – and it's typical to see between a half dozen and a dozen municipal job ads. Municipalities are posting their jobs because that's how you fill jobs – especially in a difficult job market.

The Legislature does not need to, and should not, pass legislation requiring municipalities to post open positions as doing so is a best practice that every employer understands is necessary.

However, should the committee decide to move forward with this proposal, I wanted to flag several provisions that may need additional work.

First and foremost, the committee may wish to consider what an employment vacancy is. Do elected positions count? Do communities that have appointed clerks, listers, auditors, etc., count? Do volunteer appointed positions including planning commissioners, firemen, or little league coaches count? Do part-time employees, appointees, or contractors count?

Second, I am concerned about how emergency vacancies would be handled. These occur more often than you may be aware of: one person road crews, appointed clerks, appointed treasurers. These positions can't remain unfilled for months.

Third, page 2, line 2 refers to something called an "online employee recruiting service". National online job advertisements cost hundreds of dollars. Even local classifieds in local papers cost hundreds of dollars. The vague reference here has the taste of an "unfunded mandate", and I'd encourage different terminology to be used, or a definition to be added to the section. VLCT maintains an online classified service that is free to our members. Would such a website meet the definition of online employee recruiting service?

Forth, page 2, line 3 requires posting on the Vermont Department of Labor's job bank. Is doing so a statutory requirement of any other employer? I wonder if the committee may consider including the site as one of the eligible online employee recruiting services mentioned above instead of including it as

an additional requirement.

Fifth, page 2, line 9, requires the compensation to be included in a job notice. Employers choose whether or not to include compensation in their ads for various reasons, most often because municipal positions may not pay as well as comparable jobs, and not including the compensation scale may increase the applicants.

Thanks, and I'd be happy to take any questions.