

From the perspective of employers, particularly in those “clean” and “green” industries Vermont wants to attract, retain, and grow, proximity to qualified employees is almost universally cited as a critical factor in deciding where to locate. In other words, if they can’t find the workers, they’ll go elsewhere. Therefore, facilitating the development of housing that all families can afford, with accessibility to a range of quality jobs, is essential to building a future for all Vermonters.

I think we also all agree that we want our kids and their families to have a viable economic future that doesn’t require them to move out of state. However, according to recent analysis by the Washington Post, Vermont loses 58 percent of our college graduates, which is the lowest rate of retention among all states. Certainly, increasing our state’s stock of housing across all price points can only help improve this situation.

Finally, as I’m sure you know, employers desire and need predictable and stable business environments to thrive and provide jobs. This bill will make zoning and building requirements more consistent and predictable across the state, thus making home building less costly and promoting economic development.

In sum, by making it easier to build badly-needed homes, this bill will help overcome a critical challenge to Vermont’s future economic vitality and sustainability

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter E. Plumeau