



Good afternoon, my name is Kim Fitzgerald, and I am the CEO for Cathedral Square. We own, manage, and develop affordable housing with services in Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle counties. We serve over 1,300 people, from infants to centenarians. Although most of our residents are 55 and older, we serve those with disabilities of all ages, young families continuing their education, and over 200 people who were formerly homeless. We have residents who work full time, care for their grandchildren, and are active community volunteers to more frail and vulnerable residents in our two assisted living communities.

We cannot thank you enough for your generous support of permanently affordable housing in the past - and the \$8.6M bump to VHCB funding for this current fiscal year in the Budget Adjustment Act.

As you well know, the need for housing – especially affordable housing is great. It has taken us 47 years to build 1,100 homes or apartments, and we could build that tomorrow and not meet the need on our waitlist today! It can take 3-5 years to get into a Cathedral Square community.

A property we are building in St. Albans now, called Reid Commons, will have 33 apartments and we haven't even opened our waitlist for it yet, and we already have over 180 people wanting to get in – and that number will continue to grow before we open later this year.

When we open new age-specific housing, like Reid Commons, it is a win/win situation – the residents are thrilled to move into a community designed for their needs, that offers services and supports, maintenance, and all utilities included in the rent. In many cases, it frees up their single-family home where they raised their children, some with 2, 3, 4 bedrooms that can now be sold to families - the housing is built ready to go – no waiting.

In closing, please support the Governor's recommendation of full base funding for VHCB AND please understand we need \$40M more to solve the housing crisis. We've been at this for almost 50 years, and like all the non-profit housers, we transform lives and create communities for the long term. Do not let up on this critical funding now.

Thank you!

