



Vermont Emergency Management
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DATE: April 16, 2026

TO: Representative Teresa Wood, Chair, House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Eric Forand, Director, Division of Emergency Management, Dept. of Public Safety

SUBJECT: S.243 -An act relating to distributing funds to the Vermont Language Justice Project

Chair Wood- Please accept this memorandum as written testimony to the referenced bill currently in your committee.

As we all know, I am not here to directly advocate for funding that is not in the Governor's budget.

However, I would like to take a couple of minutes to discuss a gap that I see in the state's ability to respond quickly to disasters. Following disasters like the '23 and '24 flooding events, it was clear the State does not have immediately available multi-language videos that we can provide to survivors to ensure the entire population is receiving our messaging.

Having access to ready-to-deploy multi-language preparedness videos would be beneficial to Vermonters. Utilizing an existing network of producers to create these videos would be efficient.

VEM is currently working with a producer to create preparedness videos in 19 languages with the assistance of the Racial Equity Office. VEM is working with producers to help them be included on the State contractors list, so they can be used more quickly in a disaster.

In-closing: Thank you in advance for your consideration, if you need additional information please contact me directly.

Eric Forand, Director, Division of Emergency Management, Department of Public Safety
