

March 28, 2025

To: House Ways and Means Committee,

Good morning, addressing you all again, after seeing the news regarding the House Democrats proposal of pushing this Education piece out through the summer is a good thing.

This will directly impact the Education Fund, and the current proposal of the Regional Education Districts. Which directly impacts Assessors and Listers across the state.

Time. Time is needed to ensure a bill that has been well thought out, planned out.

The possibilities that come out of this should be both achievable, and workable.

Everyone needs to be on the same page.

The Legislative Committee for VALA is trying to keep in the same path. With that,

The cart is before the horse. Before you can take the horse out and hook him to the cart, there are steps that need to happen. Not following with these steps can cause an upheaval, creating a domino effect.

Regional Assessment Districts: need to be in place with an advisor to oversee a staff to ensure the grand list maintenance is being met. This is for assessments to lodge a grand list.

Properties will need to be inspected, to fulfill permits in towns with zoning. (Zoning is a question here. All towns need to have zoning- to assess these parcels accurately, and timely).

Regional CAMA programs. Each Regional Assessment District needs to be working within the same CAMA software to provide an equal program of data. (Grand List)

This will included Homestead and Non-Homestead, and Current Use.

There are many questions that have not been answered as to how these districts will work. Many of these questions need to be directed to PV & R.

Regional CAMA programs will be very costly.

The state taking charge of Regional Wide Reappraisals, at no cost to towns, I ask how does this fit into the Governors idea of no increased property taxes?

This project alone needs to be in place before looking at how properties will be assessed.

We know how VTPie has been an extremely longer project than anticipated, as well as the expense when all is said and done.

We agree that adding additional District Advisors will be a needed part, however there will need to be training provided and that will be an additional cost to the state.

While this cannot be accomplished without increased staff, it is imperative that they receive the training needed along with a staff from each town to ensure this work is completed.

Which came first? The chicken or the egg. One needs to think of the overall picture.

What is being achieved by all of this?

Better education for every child/student in the State of Vermont.

Lower property taxes across the state.

One needs to happen before the other. Can these work simultaneously?

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Sherman  
VALA President