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Vermont League of Cities and Towns 2025 Legislative Priorities



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What is VLCT?

Every city and town in Vermont, including yours, is a member of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT), the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that was founded in 1967 to serve and strengthen Vermont local government. In addition to legislative advocacy, VLCT provides:

- Educational workshops for local officials
- Comprehensive insurance coverage for municipalities
- Confidential legal guidance from experienced municipal attorneys
- The Vermont Municipal Data Project
- Help for state agencies and legislative working groups



NEW Our Municipal Operations Support Team is funded by a \$1 million USDA RD grant to assist local officials with financial management, grant funding, ARPA, project development, and more

VLCT 2025 Legislative Priorities

Support municipalities in meeting the obligations and functions of today's local government and help them take action to solve the challenges of the 21st century.

2025

Support

Lower Property Taxes

Enable municipalities to raise local revenues and control expenses, avoid shifting state costs and obligations to local budgets.

Invest Locally

Provide reliable funding beyond competitive grants to municipalities to support the delivery of essential services, innovative programs, and the maintenance of public infrastructure.

Improve Accountability

Ensure transparency, fiscal responsibility, compliance, and equity across state and local government.

Action

Create Housing

Authorize new incentives and investment in infrastructure to support housing growth and create shelter, transitional housing, and services to address Vermont's homelessness crisis.

Promote Public Safety

Increase treatment options, law enforcement training opportunities, and judicial accountability.

Build Resilient Communities

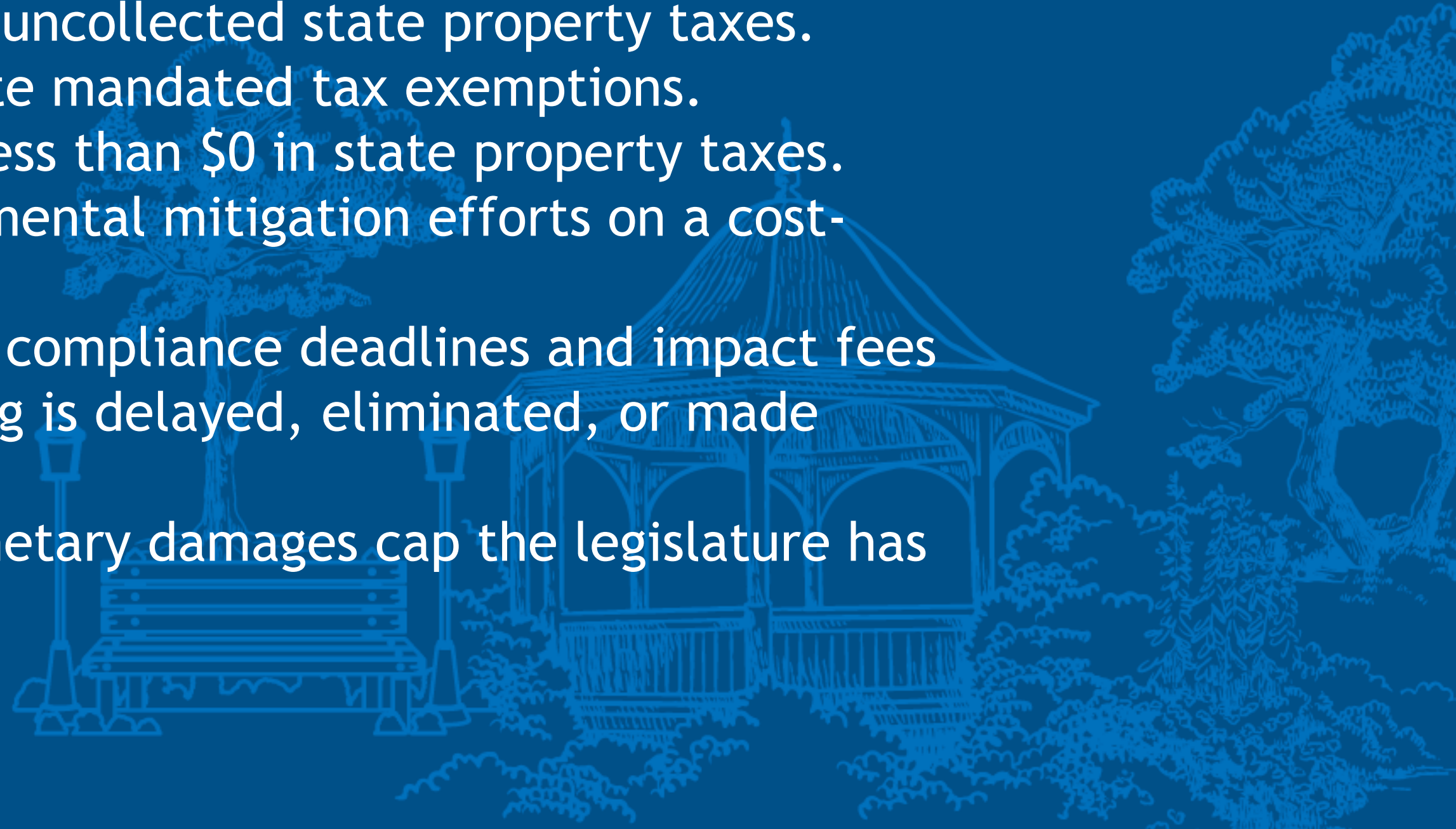
Work across government silos to address flood resiliency, water quality, sustainable growth, and the impacts of climate change.



Lower Property Taxes

Municipal property taxes account for 20-30% of Vermont homeowners overall tax burden.

- Modernize the state withholding formula for Local Options Taxes (LOT)
- Return the growing special Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) fund surplus to the municipalities that raised it.
- Hold municipalities harmless for uncollected state property taxes.
- Reimburse municipalities for state mandated tax exemptions.
- Ensure no property owner pays less than \$0 in state property taxes.
- Base implementation of environmental mitigation efforts on a cost-effectiveness analysis.
- Afford municipalities relief from compliance deadlines and impact fees when corresponding state funding is delayed, eliminated, or made competitive.
- Adopt for municipalities the monetary damages cap the legislature has already enacted for the State.



Improve Accountability

Ensure transparency, fiscal responsibility, compliance, and equity across state and local government.

- Strengthen a robust and transparent partnership between state and local government and enable intermunicipal collaboration to tackle multi-jurisdictional issues at scale while maintaining local control.
- Clarify open meeting law to ensure equity and enable compliance.
- Allow municipalities to employ the prudent fiscal practice of providing for an unassigned fund balance within the municipal general fund budget.
- Extend to municipal government the same protections from monetary damages and **liabilities** that the legislature has enacted for the State.



Clarify Open Meeting Law

Enable compliance and ensure consistency of application and judicial interpretation.

- Technical changes related to the posting of recorded meetings
- Compliance for non-advisory bodies; definition, exempt site visits, create working groups
- Public Safety and Security; executive sessions for cyber security, ability to edit obscene content



Update Vermont Election Law

Our Municipal Assistance Center (MAC) team, while working with local municipal officials, has encountered areas of Vermont election and government operations law which are unclear, conflict with other statutes, or may create unworkable vacancies or conflicts within the systems of local government.



Other VLCT Priorities Related to Expanding Municipal Authority

- Authorize local governments to use performance-based contracts and extend tax stabilization to support infrastructure and housing development.
- Establish a default statewide ban on firearms in designated municipal buildings/property, from which a municipality may opt out.



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Questions???



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