

From: Coriell, Scott [Scott.Coriell@vermont.gov]
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To: Coriell, Scott
Subject: Gov. Shumlin Signs Laws to Enhance Protections for Vermont Social Workers

For Immediate Release

June 2, 2016

Gov. Shumlin Signs Laws to Enhance Protections for Vermont Social Workers

Burlington - Joined by Department for Children and Families (DCF) employees, Gov. Peter Shumlin today signed two laws to enhance penalties for threatening or assaulting social workers and provide funding for additional security measures at DCF offices. Both measures were passed in response to the killing of DCF social worker Lara Sobel in August 2015.

The Governor signed S.154, which aligns charges and penalties related to assaulting a social worker to that of assaulting a police officer, first responder, or medical provider – all which carry a stronger penalty than assault of an average person. The legislation also makes it easier for victims of stalking to obtain civil protection orders more swiftly.

The Governor also signed H.878, which includes \$1 million to fund security upgrades at DCF and other state office buildings around the state.

“Lara's dedication to caring for Vermont's most vulnerable children will continue to serve as an inspiration to all of us,” Gov. Shumlin said. “These new laws will help ensure the safety of all those who, like Lara, have dedicated themselves to protecting the Vermonters who need it most.”

In addition to funding security upgrades at state office buildings, the H.878 also funds:

- Additional funding for the “true-up” for replacement of Waterbury State Office Complex and other Irene related construction projects
- \$5.4 M in construction for the replacement of the Roxbury Fish Hatchery
- Appropriation of funds to continue ongoing safety and security needs at our correctional facilities
- A 10-year replacement study for future needs of correctional facilities
- Over \$15M in FY 2017 for Clean Water State/EPA Revolving Fund; Forest Parks and Recreation Renovation Projects and Fish and Wildlife Infrastructure
- Support for major maintenance projects at Vermont State Colleges and the University of Vermont
- Community grants and support for Military

- Investments in the redevelopment of downtowns for St. Johnsbury and Newport City

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