



OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

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CONTACT: Hazel Brewster
(802) 636-7047

*****PUBLIC STATEMENT*****

Statement of Lt. Governor Gray on the Proposed “New Vermont Employee Incentive Program”

Montpelier, Vt. —This afternoon, Lt. Governor Gray released the following statement on the Senate’s consideration of a “New Vermont Employee Incentive Program”:

“Today, the Vermont Senate considered S. 62 an act intended to create a ‘New Vermont Employee Incentive Program.’ In relevant part, the Program would further create grants for qualifying expenses to employees relocating to Vermont of up to \$5,000. Furthermore, enhanced grants of up to \$7,500 would be available to individuals willing to relocate to areas of Vermont experiencing above average unemployment.

It is no secret that Vermont continues to face a persistent demographic crisis. Our tax-base and workforce continue to shrink and we have struggled to keep a generation in Vermont and welcome a new generation to our state.

While I support creative programs to attract and relocate employees to Vermont, such programs are no substitute for the critical investments necessary to support the economic well-being of Vermont’s working families. Investments should include affordable, quality childcare as well as paid family leave so that no Vermonter has to choose between caring for loved ones and paying the bills. Investments should also include critical support for in-state workforce development programs and affordable higher education so that our next generation can access the jobs that currently exist in our communities. We also have an opportunity to support adults working to re-enter the workforce in doing so. These investments not only support the future economic viability of our state, but also allow our communities to be truly desirable places to live, work and raise a family.

As we work to recover stronger from this pandemic, let us align our budget with our greatest needs. We must invest in the economic well-being of working families and our Vermont workforce.”

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