

**From:** Springer, Darren [Darren.Springer@state.vt.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 27, 2015 1:46 PM  
**To:** Tony Klein; 'Rebecca Ellis'  
**Subject:** Fwd: Gov. Shumlin Statement on Legislative Session

Thank you both!

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Coriell, Scott" <[Scott.Coriell@state.vt.us](mailto:Scott.Coriell@state.vt.us)>  
**Date:** February 27, 2015 at 12:51:41 PM EST  
**To:** "Coriell, Scott" <[Scott.Coriell@state.vt.us](mailto:Scott.Coriell@state.vt.us)>  
**Subject:** **Gov. Shumlin Statement on Legislative Session**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 27, 2015

**Gov. Shumlin Statement on Legislative Session**

**MONTPELIER** – Gov. Peter Shumlin issued the following statement as the Legislature worked to wrap up early session efforts in advance of Town Meeting week.

“I want to thank the House and the Senate, and especially Speaker Smith and Senate Pro Tem Campbell, for the hard work so far this session. In January I laid out a number of priorities to keep Vermont moving forward, including cleaning up Lake Champlain and other Vermont waterways; strengthening Vermont's clean energy innovation to create jobs and save Vermonters money on their electricity costs; reducing the Medicaid cost shift to save Vermont businesses and those with private insurance on rising insurance rates; reducing school spending to relieve the property tax burden on hard working Vermonters; advancing economic development proposals to ensure additional support and more trained workers for growing Vermont businesses; and passing a budget that makes the difficult but necessary decisions required to put our state on sound fiscal footing going forward.

“On those priorities, this has been one of the most productive beginnings to a legislative session that I have seen in many years.”

**Water Quality**

“The House Fish and Wildlife and Agriculture Committees have approved a comprehensive proposal for improving the water quality of Lake Champlain and its tributaries. Other committees in the House and Senate have taken hours of testimony on this subject, and the Legislature has already made unprecedented, tri-partisan progress to provide the appropriate tools and resources to improve the state's water quality. We know our economic vitality and quality of life are inextricably linked to the health of our natural environment, and I am very encouraged that all parties are collaborating to make real progress on this problem that affects us all.”

**Clean Energy**

“The House has given overwhelming initial approval to a clean energy bill that will grow jobs, reduce energy costs for Vermonters, and make tremendous progress in our efforts to fight climate change. I want to thank the House, Reps. Tony Klein and Rebecca Ellis,

the Natural Resources and Energy Committee, and the Ways and Means Committee, for their hard work in moving forward this important energy legislation. We've made incredible progress growing a clean energy economy in Vermont, which currently supports over 15,000 jobs. The legislation the House passed today will strengthen Vermont's energy innovation leadership, create over 1,000 jobs, save Vermonters a net of \$275 million on our energy costs, and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions at the same time. I look forward to continuing to work with the House and with leaders in the Senate, including Senators Chris Bray and Tim Ashe, and members of the Senate Natural Resources and Energy and Finance Committees, so that we can move this bill forward and capitalize on the energy innovation opportunities we have in Vermont."

#### **Health Care**

"I am pleased that the legislation being considered by the House Health Care Committee contains priorities that align very closely with the ones I laid out in January. There is broad consensus that we need to strengthen primary care to improve health care quality and access for Vermonters, and that we must address the Medicaid cost shift to begin to fix a broken system that drives up private insurance premium rates on Vermont businesses and individuals. These are not easy tasks, but we must do them if we are to have a more affordable, accessible health care system going forward. I appreciate the hard work being done by the House Health Care Committee and its Chairman Bill Lippert, and I look forward to continuing to work to advance this important legislation through the House and Senate."

#### **Education**

"The House Education Committee has made an important start under the leadership of Chairman David Sharpe by passing a bill that will serve as a strong foundation for work the rest of the session to provide higher quality education at a more affordable price. Lawmakers of all parties have made good on the promise to address rising property taxes by listening to all ideas and creating an atmosphere of collaboration that will be key to making progress on this issue. Together, I am hopeful that we will pass legislation to help districts control education spending, strengthen academic offerings, and ensure their schools are able to provide the best education for our children at a price taxpayers can afford."

#### **Economic Development**

"The House Commerce and Economic Development Committee and the Senate Economic Development Committee are currently taking up important legislation to move our economy forward. This year, we are working together to build upon the innovative Vermont Economic Growth Incentive (VEGI) program by broadening participation and making it easier for businesses to expand and create jobs. Just last year VEGI awarded \$4.7 million that will help create 708 new full-time jobs, generate \$15.3 million in new payroll, and \$136 million in investment in Vermont. Making it so more Vermont entrepreneurs can access this program will grow jobs and economic opportunity for all."

#### **Budget**

"As we face one of the most difficult budgets in recent memory, we are working closely with the Legislature to craft a balanced approach to align Vermont's spending with revenue growth so we are not back here year after year facing the same problem. This will not be easy and it will require us all to make difficult decisions. I am committed to balancing the budget thoughtfully and in a way that does not simply raise more money to fix this year's gap without real, long-term cuts to put us on a more stable fiscal

footing going forward. I am pleased with the progress we've made thus far and I look forward to continuing to work with all involved to accomplish this."

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