



Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce

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Responsibly Improving the Climate for Doing Business in the Central Vermont Community.

Statement to
Vermont General Assembly
Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs
William D. Moore, President and CEO
Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce
April 19, 2019

RE: H533 An Act Relating to Workforce Development

Senator Sirotkin, Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs. . .

My name is William D. Moore. I am the President and CEO of the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce. The Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce is the largest business organization serving Washington County and a portion of Orange County. Our diverse membership consists of some of the largest businesses in Vermont as well sole proprietorships. Virtually every sector of Vermont's economy is represented in our membership.

Thank you for the opportunity offer comments on H533 An Act Relating to Workforce Development. The Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the measure, and respectfully urges the members of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to report it out with a favorable recommendation.

H533 will expand access to Vermont training opportunities, something that is critical in this time of near-record unemployment. Increased funding for training will open the doors for those high school students and graduates who are still considering their long-term career options. It will enable older workers to obtain the training necessary to change career tracks from that which they may currently be on. The bill will enhance opportunities for others to re-enter the workforce and obtain gainful employment. All will benefit from the high wages that these careers offer.

The Vermont Futures Project clearly and consistently reports that we need to fill a workforce supply gap and set a target of adding 10,000 workers to the workforce annually to meet current and future workforce needs. Enactment of H 533 will help to get us on a pathway to reach that goal.

The measure also calls for the state to take the steps necessary to achieve a postsecondary attainment goal that not less than 70 percent of working-age Vermonters

possessing a degree or credential of value, as defined by the State Workforce Development Board, by the year 2025. This objective is an important one that will lead to a better prepared workforce. We have testified repeatedly before this committee and others that education and training are the keys to success. We must be educating students and workers to be prepared for the jobs of the twenty-first century. Strengthening educational and training opportunities will present better avenues for those looking for high paying careers. The Central Vermont Chamber firmly believes that a better educated worker will see the direct benefit of better education and training in higher wages every week.

The creation of the Adult Career and Technical Education Study Committee will lead to a system that is responsive to the needs of the 21st century workplace.

The on-base recruiting pilot program is an innovative way of attracting those completing their military service to Vermont, helping to fill that gap identified by the Vermont Futures Project. A similar result can be found through the task force on workforce development opportunities for refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers living in Vermont. For the same reason, we support the efforts of the Vermont Talent Pipeline Management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H533 An Act Relating to Workforce Development.