

From: Coriell, Scott [Scott.Coriell@state.vt.us]
Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2015 2:33 PM
To: Coriell, Scott
Subject: Op-Ed from Gov. Peter Shumlin
Attachments: GPS OpEd 1.8.2014.docx

I'm writing to submit this op-ed, attached and copied below, from Gov. Peter Shumlin. Let me know if you have questions/concerns.

Thanks,

Scott Coriell
Office of the Governor
(802) 353-1449

An Agenda for Progress
By Gov. Peter Shumlin

It's an incredible honor to continue serving as Governor for another two years. Vermont is an amazing state which holds a certain promise that has led so many like me to live, work and raise a family here. But our state faces present and future challenges that have left many feeling that for their family, the promise of Vermont is becoming harder to grasp. Our charge over the next two years is to reverse that sense, to make life a little more affordable for Vermont families and to preserve, protect and advance jobs and the quality of life that makes our state the envy of America.

To do that, I will propose a robust agenda to build on the considerable progress we've made over the last four years. It is an agenda that I will pursue with determination, but also with a willingness to partner with anyone who has good ideas. My promise to all Vermonters is to listen, to learn, and to build on our strengths to create greater opportunity and a better future for all.

That starts with jobs. In the 1930s, Vermonters with a vision cut the first ski trails, forging an industry that today accounts for over 30,000 jobs and over a billion dollars in annual economic activity. I believe that today we are at a similar point with renewable energy innovation in our state. Through innovation, expertise, collaboration, and strong, supportive public policy and regulation, we can power Vermont forward and give our state the tools needed to become the nation's energy innovation leader.

We have the foundation to achieve this success. The clean energy sector has created over 15,000 good-paying jobs for Vermonters and, at a time when other neighboring states have seen energy prices spike, our largest utility Green Mountain Power was able to lower rates by 2.46 percent. I am proposing to build on this progress with a new Energy Innovation Program that will spur community-based renewable energy development, create more than a 1,000 new jobs, put money

in Vermonters' pockets with a net savings of hundreds of millions of dollars on energy bills, and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

A better future for Vermonters also means preserving what has defined our past and drawn so many to our state. Without our mountains and waterways, Vermont would be just another place to live. Our lakes, mountains, forests and farm fields connect Vermonters deeply to our state and inspire others to put roots down here. That is why we must focus on cleaning up the Crown Jewel of our natural resources – Lake Champlain. To do that, I am establishing a new Clean Water Fund that will help us address lake pollution and cleanup. And to kick start that fund, Keurig Green Mountain has generously pledged \$5 million.

On those two issues and others, we have much more work to do together. We owe it to Vermonters to bring spiraling health care costs under control, to begin to address the pressure of property tax increases, to continue the work on job growth, and on education and training from pre-K through college and beyond. We should continue bolstering our mental health system, investing in our downtowns, and turning the tide of opiate addiction to keep families healthier and communities safer.

In these and so many other areas, we have an agenda for progress that we will work to fulfill in this term and the coming years. It is an agenda that I will continue to lay out in detail in my budget address in mid-January.

I firmly believe that our best days are ahead of us and that Vermont continues to be the best place in America to live, work and raise a family. Over the next two years, I will work hard every day to ensure that is a reality for every single Vermonter.

An Agenda for Progress

By Gov. Peter Shumlin

It's an incredible honor to continue serving as Governor for another two years. Vermont is an amazing state which holds a certain promise that has led so many like me to live, work and raise a family here. But our state faces present and future challenges that have left many feeling that for their family, the promise of Vermont is becoming harder to grasp. Our charge over the next two years is to reverse that sense, to make life a little more affordable for Vermont families and to preserve, protect and advance jobs and the quality of life that makes our state the envy of America.

To do that, I will propose a robust agenda to build on the considerable progress we've made over the last four years. It is an agenda that I will pursue with determination, but also with a willingness to partner with anyone who has good ideas. My promise to all Vermonters is to listen, to learn, and to build on our strengths to create greater opportunity and a better future for all.

That starts with jobs. In the 1930s, Vermonters with a vision cut the first ski trails, forging an industry that today accounts for over 30,000 jobs and over a billion dollars in annual economic activity. I believe that today we are at a similar point with renewable energy innovation in our state. Through innovation, expertise, collaboration, and strong, supportive public policy and regulation, we can power Vermont forward and give our state the tools needed to become the nation's energy innovation leader.

We have the foundation to achieve this success. The clean energy sector has created over 15,000 good-paying jobs for Vermonters and, at a time when other neighboring states have seen energy prices spike, our largest utility Green Mountain Power was able to lower rates by 2.46 percent. I am proposing to build on this progress with a new Energy Innovation Program that will spur community-based renewable energy development, create more than a 1,000 new jobs, put money in Vermonters' pockets with a net savings of hundreds of millions of dollars on energy bills, and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

A better future for Vermonters also means preserving what has defined our past and drawn so many to our state. Without our mountains and waterways, Vermont would be just another place to live. Our lakes, mountains, forests and farm fields connect Vermonters deeply to our state and inspire others to put roots down here. That is why we must focus on cleaning up the Crown Jewel of our natural resources – Lake Champlain. To do that, I am establishing a new Clean Water Fund that will help us address lake pollution and cleanup. And to kick start that fund, Keurig Green Mountain has generously pledged \$5 million.

On those two issues and others, we have much more work to do together. We owe it to Vermonters to bring spiraling health care costs under control, to begin to address the pressure of property tax increases, to continue the work on job growth, and on education and training from pre-K through college and beyond. We should continue bolstering our mental health system, investing in our downtowns, and turning the tide of opiate addiction to keep families healthier and communities safer.

In these and so many other areas, we have an agenda for progress that we will work to fulfill in this term and the coming years. It is an agenda that I will continue to lay out in detail in my budget address in mid-January.

I firmly believe that our best days are ahead of us and that Vermont continues to be the best place in America to live, work and raise a family. Over the next two years, I will work hard every day to ensure that is a reality for every single Vermonter.