

Theresa Utton

Subject: FW: Higher Education Funding Testimony

From: Chaucer, Harry Y. []

Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 1:28 PM

To: Theresa Utton

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I have been a teacher and professor in Vermont for over forty years. For the last fourteen years, I have been a professor of education at Castleton State College. My students enter as first-year students and graduate as professional teachers ready to contribute to the education of the next generation of young people. As you can imagine, it is satisfying work.

Yet just yesterday on the NPR show, *On Point*, Harvard social scientist, Robert Putnam spoke about the growing disparity between the advantaged and the disadvantaged in American society. Education has traditionally been America's avenue to prosperity. College has been the boot straps by which so many Americans have pulled themselves up. Failing to adequately fund higher education cuts this avenue for advancement.

Vermont has decreased its support for public higher education since 1980. We rank 49th in regard to state support for higher education. As a result, our students pay one of the highest state tuitions in the country and graduate with more student debt than average.

I urge you not to cut, but to increase state spending for higher education. It is the right thing to do for Vermont's future.

Harry Chaucer
Professor
Castleton State College