



Vermont State Employees' Association

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December 8, 2011

Jeb Spaulding, Secretary
Agency of Administration
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-0201

Dear Jeb,

It is our understanding that the Administration is in the process of negotiating agreements that would privatize the care of patients at the Vermont State Hospital to one or more independent entities. We have expressed to you our deep concern over the risks posed to our most vulnerable Vermonters and the public by not re-establishing the safety-net that the Vermont State Hospital has provided for so many decades.

It is also concerning to us that the Administration may be in the process of negotiating long term privatization contracts without adhering to the requirements set forth in Title 3, Chapter 14 of the Vermont Statutes. Despite having been asked, the Administration has not informed VSEA of the projected costs of privatizing any of the essential services previously provided by the Vermont State Hospital, nor have we been offered the opportunity to discuss less-costly alternatives to privatizing these vital State services. The State has not provided any analysis to demonstrate that entering into long term contracts with private institutions will ultimately save the taxpayers money, as required under 3 V.S.A. §343.

We understand the State's need, following Tropical Storm Irene, to find immediate housing for the displaced hospital patients. Our members have worked with the Administration under difficult circumstances to relocate and care for the patients throughout the State since the storm struck. In return, it is almost certain that as their duties are privatized, they will lose their jobs. Moreover, patient care will be handed over to private institutions without the experience and training of VSH staff, and without the same level of accountability to the public with respect to how taxpayer dollars are being spent, or public safety.

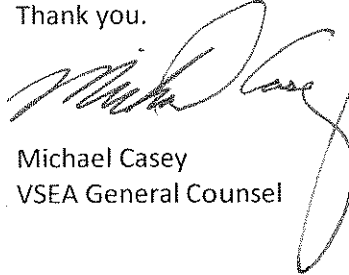
To the extent that the Administration has entered into agreements with private entities, such contracts must comply with the law, and be of short duration to address the immediate need to provide temporary patient care. Until the Legislature has determined the viability of a refurbished or new Vermont State Hospital, no long term contracts should be entered into providing for patient care, and any contracts must comply with 3 V.S.A. §§341, *et seq.*

We look forward to receiving written notice from you in compliance with 3 V.S.A. §343 in the event you are considering entering into any privatization contracts. If the State has already entered into any contracts whereby an entity is providing services the same or similar to those previously provided, in whole or in part, by permanent classified employees of the Vermont State Hospital, please provide me a copy of them. Pursuant to Article 6 of our collective bargaining agreements, and the Public Records Act,

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I am also requesting that you make available for inspection copies of any and all documents, including electronic correspondence (email), since August 28, 2011, that pertain in any manner to entering into agreements with any entity to provide services similar to those previously provided by the Vermont State Hospital.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Casey", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Michael Casey
VSEA General Counsel