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Subject: Vermont's Congressional Delegation And Governor Shumlin Announce \$1.2 million In Federal Aid To Vermont's Northern Border Communities.

Importance: High

NEWS from
Senator Patrick Leahy | Senator Bernie Sanders
Congressman Peter Welch | Governor Peter
Shumlin

**Vermont's Congressional Delegation And Governor Shumlin
Announce \$1.2 million In Federal Aid To Vermont's Northern Border
Communities.**

(WEDNESDAY, Sept. 2, 2015) – As part of a continuing effort to bolster economic development in Northern Vermont, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Congressman Peter Welch (D-Vt.) and Governor Peter Shumlin (D-Vt.) were joined by Northern Border Regional Commission Chair Mark Scarano in announcing more than \$1.2 million in federal grants on Wednesday. Cultural and recreational initiatives, along with a business park expansion and Vermont's forest products industry were all winners of the awards.

In a joint statement, Leahy, Sanders, Welch and Shumlin said: “While the economic strengths of Vermont's northern border communities are distinct, they share a common need for investment in infrastructure. Collectively they will increase travel and tourism, nurture our growing forest products sector and show companies that Vermont is open for business.”

The NBRC was established by Congress in the 2008 Farm Bill and was recently reauthorized in the 2014 Farm Bill. The program provides funding for development in economically distressed northern border counties in Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and New York. Leahy, as the senior-most member of the Senate's Agriculture and Appropriations Committees, played a pivotal role in renewing the Commission in the 2014 Farm Bill and dramatically increasing its funding. Representative Welch led a parallel reauthorization and funding effort in the House.

“Thanks to the strong advocacy of Vermont's Congressional Delegation, these important funds will be available for improvements that will support private sector investments in Vermont's northern counties,” said Scarano who noted that Vermont provided a large number of competitive grant applications this year.

Of the slate of approved grants, the Fairbanks Museum was selected for a \$250,000 grant to purchase and renovate nearby buildings for additional collections and other exhibits that will attract visitors to downtown St. Johnsbury.

The Commission approved a \$200,000 grant for the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation that will construct recreation-based infrastructure improvements to Willoughby State Forest.

The Vermont Sustainable Job Fund will receive \$153,000 to develop a new initiative: the Forest Products Value Chain Investment Strategy. The program is designed to assist the forest products industry in Vermont's northern six counties by providing business technical assistance, marketing expertise and support workforce development projects.

The Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation's application was approved for \$246,000 and will partially fund improvements to the Corporation's industrial park expansion. The current park is fully occupied and the FCIDC will use the newly available spaces to complement its aggressive Canadian business recruitment efforts.

The Village of Enosburg Falls will utilize \$121,000 to convert a blighted brownfield site at the Village's gateway into an attractive public space for enhanced recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation was awarded \$250,000 for wastewater infrastructure improvements at the state owned Northeast Kingdom International Airport in Newport. These funds follow on an \$8.8 million Federal Aviation Administration Grant the delegation helped secure a year ago to make major improvements at the airport, including extending the runway an additional 1000 feet.

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