

Thank you for the opportunity to answer these questions to gain the endorsement of the VSEA. I wish I had more time over the holiday weekend to complete additional research and prepare a more thorough reply, however at a minimum, I would like the VSEA's team to know the following:

In 1992-93, I worked for the Vermont Department of Agriculture as a temporary employee. As a farm kid from Wolcott since 1968, working on the "Vermontica" program promoting farm fresh milk was a great early marketing job for me.

A permanent, full-time position became available at the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) in the Waste Management Division of the Department of Environmental Conservation. This is where I spent the majority of my 16 years serving the State of Vermont. I also gained experience in the Air Pollution and Environmental Assistance Divisions before being involuntarily transferred to Building and General Services (BGS).

At BGS, I served in the role as Environmental and Energy Advisory to Commissioner Tom Torti. When Torti became Secretary of ANR, I returned, too. Eventually, along with the rest of my division, we were RIFed. After 16 years of FT state service, I was put in the position of displacing a junior employee. I chose not to exercise my RIF rights. However, within my RIF period, another Temporary position became available in my hometown of Morrisville in the Agency of Human Resources, Economic Development. At the end of my 18-month tenure, I was asked if I would stay on if the position became available. I asked if there were enough positions for all the temporary employees. The answer was No. I said, let the young people who are just getting started in life have the fulltime work and that is how I ended my state career.

During my Full-Time permanent career, I was a member of VSEA. My sister was a founding member of the Copley Nurses bargaining unit.

1. Should the work of State Government be performed by state employees?

Yes.

By definition, the work defined by statute as state services provided to the residents of the State of Vermont and their dependents would be performed by state employees.

2. As an elected official, how would you improve the safety of state employees?

Buildings and General Services are responsible for boots on the ground Safety and Security for State Government. I have often known these state employees. While I know background checks are performed for these individuals, I am not aware of what the criteria is for their employment, nor am I aware of available training. It seems prudent to send them to training at the Vermont State Police Academy for modules on preventative safety as well as baseline credentials.

The administration has a responsibility to provide safe premises for Vermont state employees. It appears that most, if not all state buildings are now secure with screening available. This, however, is not fool proof for front line people.

I am a council member for the Hunger Mountain Coop, and we utilize 18 cameras on premises for various safety and security concerns.

3. What are your plans to make the health care system more fair and equitable for working Vermonters.

I, myself, have never had to go without health care since my family was eligible for Dr. Dynasaur when I was a wee child, as my father was a small, dairy farmer in the late 60s and we were living at or below the poverty line. When I worked at DCF, I learned about more than 20 health care programs that are available to Vermont's most vulnerable populations.

As a farm family, I have learned the importance of diet and exercise for well being. I am encouraging the Hunger Mountain Coop to carry all WIC products so that young families will be introduced to fresh, local produce while shopping for their government subsidized food.

In my young adult life, I had a little known health insurance named Golden Rule. It was affordable and we had basic coverage. When it left Vermont, I was thankful to have a job that included benefits.

I know there are families that have policies with both high deductibles and high premiums. I have heard, though not confirmed, that families are opting out of insurance and paying the penalty instead for not carrying coverage. Neither of these options are desirable. I think it is government's role to regulate the insurance industry for fraud, price fixing and availability.

I am very interested in providing wellness clinics that will teach the value of eating nutritious food supporting local Vermont agriculture, as well as exemplifying the value of exercise for a life of joy and well being. I also believe in the importance of the mind/body connection and want to include that in any plan.

4. What do you see as the role of State employees and how would you support them in that role?

The Vermont statutes define the role of state government.

Hiring managers have an important role in selecting the right candidate for positions. Given adequate preparation in employee selection, hiring agents can provide the opportunity for fulfilling state careers.

When I was a state employee, I knew I wasn't in it for the money. I never made more than \$23/hour with a master's degree. I would hope that state employees would enjoy their positions serving the people of Vermont within the salary ranges advertised, cost of living increases provided.

The Department of Personnel's Career Resource Center has been a great resource for training and job advancement preparation for anyone looking to make a commitment to state employment. I completed the Certified Public Manager's two year course as well as

the ANR Leadership & Management 4 year program during my years of state service which was invaluable training. In addition, life long friendships are created in the fraternity of state service that have enriched my life.

5. What mechanisms would you put in place to avoid budget shortfalls?

One of the greatest gifts my parents gave me, was living within my means. My sisters and I all own our homes, pay property taxes and have incomes sufficient to pay our bills without credit, not buying today and paying tomorrow. It is important to the taxpayers of Vermont and their children to live within our means not burdening the next generation with unsustainable debt.

The only program that I personally have advocated for state dollars for is the Weatherization program. While LIHEAP is invaluable to keeping vulnerable Vermonters warm, long-term investment to decrease dependence on state government for fuel assistance is a more sustainable, carbon pollution reduction approach.

7. What approach would you take to make higher education more affordable for Vermonters?

8. What would you do to ensure the viability of the state college system?

(See answers to both questions below)

In 1988, I received my BS from Johnson State College. I received a quality Business Management degree that provided the knowledge and skills for operating Hardwick Recycling & Salvage with my former spouse and prepare for other life ventures.

The state college system provides quality employment in our small communities as well as local education to our next generation of college graduates. My nephew is currently taking classes at CCV in his senior year at Craftsbury Academy. This opportunity is invaluable to his parents in affording college for two children.

My sisters and I earned scholastic scholarships to our higher education institutes. As low income, Vermonters my parents were also eligible for Pell Grants to assist with our tuition. In addition to carrying full course loads, we had work-study jobs on campus. During our formative high school years, we held jobs to save for college while also learning the savings practice of half our birthday money, for example, being for the here and now and half being set aside for college.

I support Bernie Sander's approach to making college affordable for Vermont students.

9. Do you support a livable wage for Vermonters?

At the Hunger Mountain Coop, we support a livable wage collectively and I support it personally. I do not know how a household would manage with a wage lower than \$15/hour. For that wage, an employer should be able to expect a competent and committed employee that comes to work daily prepared to perform their assigned job. Over this holiday weekend, I spoke with a friend in the banking industry and she said that the market bares out their minimum wage and currently entry level is demanding in excess of \$15/hour.

Thank you, again, for considering an endorsement for my candidacy to the House of Representatives serving the Lamoille-Washington District. Honestly, I do not know what assistance is offered from a VSEA endorsement. I would appreciate and consider all that is available.

Should you have additional questions, please contact me.

Most Sincerely,
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