

Dear VSEA legislative committee:

I'm writing to explain why you do not have a questionnaire from me. I was away last week for a few offline days of R & R after another intense session. I read your email an hour before the questions were due, and received the paper copy two days after your deadline. The questions you asked were good ones. To be thoughtfully answered, they deserve more than the brief time I had, and given the many family and non-legislative work responsibilities of our citizen legislature they deserved more than two days. In eight campaigns and many (MANY!) questionnaires, I don't remember needing to watch for and complete one even before candidate petitions are due. Fair process is very important to me, and I hope you were able, somehow, to reach out to all candidates who submitted petitions Thursday afternoon, when both your questionnaire and petitions were due.

While the VSEA has not approved of everything I've done as Chair of Appropriations, I believe you have cause to celebrate the 30 or so net jobs my committee created this year in the budget, the mandate to reduce exempt positions, putting in place a plan to stabilize retirement funds more quickly, and most of all the roughly \$24 million pay act increase we passed in line with VSEA's last best offer, particularly given that the Governor's recommended budget had nothing close to that amount.

Thank you for your service to Vermonters.  
Mitzi Johnson