

VSEA Candidate Survey:

Name: Robert Millar

District: Chittenden 6-7 State Representative District

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

Absolutely. Time and again we have seen that outsourcing state government work to private contractors not only does not save the funds promised, but frequently results in less effective, poorer service for Vermonters. State workers can be assured I would never support efforts to further outsource their jobs to the private sector.

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

I would reach out to the employees themselves to learn the best ways to increase their safety as they do the most important, front line work in the state. Every department is different and needs different safeguards to ensure the wellbeing of our state employees.

3. What is your plan to make the health care system more fair and equitable for working Vermonters?

I strongly support reviving the single-payer, universal healthcare fight. Healthcare should be about people, not profit, and Vermont can and should lead the way in this effort once again. I will also push hard for better access to dental, vision, and mental health services. These tend to be forgotten in many healthcare discussions, but access to these services is vital for all Vermonters to live healthy, productive lives.

4. Will you support collective bargaining and vote against "Right to Work" legislation in any form?

Always. I am proud to stand with my Labor brothers and sisters in fighting for all Vermonters' right to collective bargaining.

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

The role of State employees is to do the real work of state government. State employees are on the front lines of ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of their fellow Vermonters. It would be my role as a Legislator to ensure they have the resources to do their jobs effectively and safely.

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

We must begin by taking a hard look at the many tax loopholes in Vermont that only the richest Vermonters are able to take advantage off. We also must move to a budgeting process that puts the needs of Vermonters first. There is plenty of revenue to be found and I will never vote for a budget that cuts essential services. I've had enough of Montpelier consistently balancing the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable Vermonters.

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

As Senator Sanders' advocates, in the long run I would like to see us get to the point where all public colleges and technical programs would be provided for free, as they are in many other countries. In the shorter term in Vermont, we must at least get back to a place where the state is supporting our colleges and universities at a level where they are not forced to continuously increase the burden on students through tuition increases. However, this effort must also be coupled with an effort to rein in administrative costs at our State Colleges and, in particular, at UVM.

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

First off, we must increase state funding for our state college system, which is woefully inadequate. Then, as with the issue of employee safety mentioned above, I would reach out to the front line staff and teachers to learn the best ways the Legislature can help them to attract and retain students, while also providing consistent, quality education.

9. Do you support a livable wage for Vermonters? If so, what do you think that amount should be?

I strongly support increasing the minimum wage to a livable wage of *at least* 15 dollars an hour. No one who works 40 hours a week should live in poverty in Vermont.

10. Briefly state why the VSEA should endorse you, and describe the type of assistance that you would be seeking from a VSEA endorsement.

I was proud to be endorsed by the VSEA and many other unions in my run for State Representative in 2014 and I hope I can count on your support again. Together, we can work toward building a better, more just Vermont. As an endorsed candidate, I would be most interested in having the opportunity to connect directly with VSEA members in my community and district.