

1. Work that should only be done by the public sector should be done by the public sector.
2. The single best thing I believe we can do to protect our state employees from harm in the workplace is to continue to marshal whatever resources we can to prevent addiction from taking root, and to help those who become addicted to move off of whatever they're hooked on.
3. My work in health care will continue to focus on some straightforward principles: increase Medicaid reimbursements to mental health, dental, and primary care providers, create meaningful transparency in pricing and exploit differences in prices for procedures to force prices down, protect independent practices, and support a coherent coordinated care delivery program for high risk Vermonters. I have consistently advocated for making sure public sector employees don't get shortchanged if we move to a universal system since you negotiated benefits at the expense of salary.
4. I have always supported collective bargaining, and opposed right to work laws. My support of the collective bargaining process dates back well before serving in the legislature, when I opposed a Burlington city budget as a city councilor because the budget bill included language meant to pressure the union in the court of public opinion, instead of at the bargaining table. I have worked as a union organizer in a past life. As a legislator the relationship with the employees' union is a necessarily complicated one - on the one hand you are legislators' partners in getting the job done for Vermonters, and on the other hand the appropriations desired by the state employees are subject to the actions of the Legislature. I do not agree with any union (or any person for that matter) on every single issue, but on principle I support collective bargaining and have preserved that principle with my votes.
5. State employees are the trusted men and women who perform the duties needed to provide public goods to Vermonters. I think our state workforce does a very good job. My role as a legislator, among other things, is to provide the resources and policies to allow them do their jobs as well as possible. I should add, I feel the same way about workers in the non-profit sector. It bothers me that people who work at places like Howard get paid so little and there is such high turnover.
6. There is no easy answer to this since health care spending is virtually the entirety of our budget problem. And I do not believe the solution is to throw more money at health care for the same services. That said, the last two years, as chair of Finance, and by building a near consensus, we raised nearly \$25M in income taxes from high income Vermonters, and another \$25M from out of state financial firms, enabling us to hold off cuts.
7. I don't have an easy answer for this and look forward to working with the faculty, staff and administrators on any ideas. I have worked with the Treasurer and VSAC from the Finance Committee to support financing tools that are being deployed to lower the borrowing costs for students and their parents.

8. I believe this is an area where the Legislature needs to hear from the faculty and staff to chart a realistic path forward. A declining in-state pool of applicants, and heavy competition for out-of-staters won't make boosting enrollment an easy way out.

9. I have supported the concept of the living wage since my days as a member of the Burlington Livable Wage Campaign in the late 1990s. In 2014 I introduced a bill to move immediately to \$12/hour. On the floor, along with Senators Sirotkin and Galbraith and a handful of others, I voted for the largest possible increases at every opportunity. A move to transition over a couple/few years to \$15/hour is appropriate.

10. The core of my public service is a desire to rebuild the middle class and to ensure that people who work hard not find themselves in poverty. While complex policy issues and competing budget needs make legislating to a 100% approval from any organization or constituent damned hard, my own conscience is my guide and I'm willing to stand on my record. Over the course of eight years I have been a partner of the state's employees.

In my first term, then-Senator Peter Shumlin and I drafted a bill to prohibit the Governor from laying anyone off before the budget was finalized. This played a role in halting RIFs the Governor had in mind. During the Challenge for Change discussion, I confronted Diane Snelling and Susan Bartlett (the champions of challenges) on the Senate floor to tell the Senate how much of the proposed savings would come from people losing their jobs. This put them and others on notice that position cuts were not where the savings were desired, and I believe is in part responsible for the anti-position cut language that emerged in the final days. In addition, my amendment to use rainy day funds to make up for unidentified savings in the challenges bill took a proposal that had few votes and nearly delivered victory.

In my second term, I joined Senator Baruth in proposing to rebuild the state hospital at a larger scale than what the Shumlin Administration was proposing. Despite their opposition, our position wound up prevailing. I also proposed requiring the other non-state facilities in the state to priority hire any state hospital employees who would not be retained at the new state facility. I also helped write the bill that established Fair Share payments for VSEA and the other unions, though it would not pass the Senate and the House until the next year.

In my third term, as the Shumlin Administration advanced its plans for a universal health care program, I consistently advocated for a plan to make sure employees would be compensated for any reduction in the value of their health care benefit if they were folded into a public system. This was a critical issue both for VSEA and NEA members and many legislators took it too lightly.

In my fourth term, my primary emphasis has been to ensure that we fully fund the Pay Act. I do not seek publicity when I do that advocacy, but spent much energy making sure there was no serious consideration in the Senate of not fully funding the Pay Act.

In all of these things, I didn't do them because a VSEA rep handed me a script and I parroted the position. I did them because I believed they were the right things to do.

Anyhow, for eight years I have worked in support of our state employees and while from time to time we've differed, I think my record strongly justifies the support of your members.

Tim Ashe
State Senator
Chittenden County
Chair, Senate Finance Committee