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Michael J. Hogan, Commissioner

July 5, 2011

Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst
Joint Fiscal Committee
Vermont Statehouse
Montpelier, VT 05620
Re: JFO #2448

The Joint Fiscal Committee has requested updates on the status of this project at their January, 2011 and July, 2011 meetings. These updates should include information on revenues and expenses of the project, number of participants, adjustments to the course fee, and uses of any net revenues.

Background:

In 2010, the Education Division of the Vermont Department of Liquor Control (DLC) submitted a grant request to the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association's Education Task Force in the amount of \$10,000 to create a new mode of training for cashiers who sell either alcohol or tobacco in Vermont. At the outset of the grant process, we endeavored to not use state funds in its creation and to make this a "stand-alone" product that would be revenue neutral going forward. We have succeeded in both aspects.

This grant helped create online training that is now available 24/7 to anyone wishing to become certified, as required by 7 VSA 239. The contents were created and are now monitored and maintained by employees in the DLC's Education Division, who make certain the contents remain current and cover all required benchmarks and regulatory topics. The hosting is under contract with Burlington-based Global Classroom. They charge a fee for their services and the remaining funds are then forwarded to Liquor Control to defray our costs. Each student is required to successfully complete a final exam at the end of the course and results are sent to us for documentation. The student receives a certificate and the information is entered into our database. The \$25 per student fee of covers all costs.

The \$10,000 from NABCA for the eLearning class covered: the online course creation software (Articulate and Camtasia), the contract with Global Classroom, as well as notification (mailings) to license holders of the learning program.

As stated above, the department maintains total control over the course contents, monitors all participants and receives reports from Global Classroom regarding the student information and demographics. There is no way to know how many cashiers will avail themselves of this eLearning product in the coming years; but, there were several requests for some kind of online training from the industry prior to our grant request. Since we began offering the program on December 1, 2010, we have seen students taking the classes at all hours of the day and night, as well as days of the week; we even had one student complete the course on Christmas Day. We know this since the program is set to immediately send



Liquor Control Board:

Stephanie M. O'Brien, Chair; John P. Cassarino, Member; Walter E. Freed, Member

an email to the three Liquor Control Educators upon each student's completion of the final exam.

In fulfillment of its "future plans" reported to the JFO in January, the DLC Education Division has created four similar web-based courses that are set to launch this summer (2011):

1. 1st class (bar/restaurant servers) at \$25.00 per person
2. Bookstore/Art Gallery servers (just passed this legislative session) at \$10.00 per person
3. Manufacturers at \$10.00 per person
4. Solicitors (those who sell for either a wholesaler or a manufacturer) at \$10.00 per person

And, a training program for tobacco sellers has already been implemented at a minimal cost of \$10 to the student. Since the software had already been purchased, the cost to add these new courses was/is minimal. As the need arises, additional classes will be created and added to the on-line curriculum.

Revenue, Expenses, Number of Participants:

As of July 1st 2011, 174 people have taken the online courses – 12 took the tobacco only training and the remaining 164 took the 2nd class (store) course. This is up 154 participants, or 770%, from the 20 participants reported in January.

The total collected for the combined trainings was \$4,170 - \$120 for the tobacco only class and \$4,050 for the 2nd class licensee course. Of this amount, 20% or \$834 was paid to Global Classroom for hosting the site, with the remainder of \$3,336 remitted to DLC.

Total start-up costs for the program remain the same at:

- \$3500 for the two-year contract with Global Classroom for hosting the site
- \$6500 for software, equipment and mailings to create and announce the new program

Summary:

These courses are still relatively new, having just started seven months ago, and already we are seeing the number of online participants grow exponentially. We expect these numbers to increase as the selection of courses increases and news of the online training options spreads. These web-based applications are especially useful for those who need last minute training to be certified and for those businesses that can not afford to have staff gone for the better part of a day. The Department of Liquor Control is extremely pleased with the quality of these online training courses and the subsequent participation in them. DLC plans to continue to expand these programs in order to meet the needs of our modern day, computer-oriented clientele.

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Vermont Department of Liquor Control