



## Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

Mailing Address  
103 S. Main St.  
Waterbury, VT 05671-0206

*Temporarily Located at 322 Industrial Lane Berlin VT*

Phone 802-828-1310  
Toll Free 888-317-2006  
FAX 802-828-1321  
[vtddc@state.vt.us](mailto:vtddc@state.vt.us)  
[www.ddc.vermont.gov](http://www.ddc.vermont.gov)

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August 12, 2014

Dear Representative Health and Committee members,

I write to urge you to reconsider the process by which you are deliberating yesterday's proposed cuts to the FY '15 Vermont State budget. Announcing a public hearing on a matter of such importance with scarcely 24 hours' notice is inconsistent with the transparency and thoughtful debate that is the hallmark of the Vermont legislature.

As an advocate, I had many occasions during the last session to watch legislators hard at work debating critical public policy questions -- most significant among them, the careful balance between adopting a "quick fix" and investing in long term, stable programs with a demonstrated history of solid return in both human and financial terms. The recently proposed rescissions fall into the first category. The Governor has proposed a slew of stop gap measures that will keep the budget balanced through the year. In the Human Services arena, however, these cuts threaten to further erode already precarious systems of care that support some of Vermont's most vulnerable citizens.

The Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council feels strongly that the Joint Fiscal Committee owes Vermont citizens -- and your colleagues in the House and Senate -- a respectful period of time to make our case for supporting the budget adopted by the full legislature.

Thank you for your consideration and public service,

*Kirsten Murphy*

Kirsten Murphy  
Policy Director and Planner

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