

## Vermont's Tomorrow: State-Wide Candidate Forum on YP Issues Questions

*Candidates who attended and didn't attend the two-part Candidate Forum on YP Issues were sent the questions asked during both forums. Below are the questions and then following that are responses we received from the following candidates:*

- [Pat Winburn- Candidate for Governor](#)
- [Rebecca Holcombe- Candidate for Governor](#)
- [Jim Hogue- Candidate for Lt. Governor](#)
- [Doug Hoffer- Candidate for Auditor of Accounts](#)
- [Chris Brimmer- Candidate for US Congress](#)
- [Miriam Berry- Candidate for US Congress](#)
- [Justin Tuthill- Candidate for US Congress](#)

Questions Provided by the Southern Vermont Young Professionals:

1. According to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, 50% of renters in Vermont are paying 30% or more of their household income on rent with a vacancy rate of 3.4% (2.8% in Windham County). If elected, what is your primary plan to address this issue? (or What role do you see yourself playing to address this issue?)
2. According to Let's Grow Kids, 3 out of 5 of Vermont's youngest children don't have access to the childcare that they need. The US Census Bureau estimates that approximately 71.5% of Vermont children under age 6 have all available parents in the labor force, meaning that they're likely to need some form of child care while a parent is working. This means that approximately 21,225 children under the age of 5 in Vermont are likely to need some form of child care. If elected, what will your primary policy be to increase the access and affordability of childcare? (Or, what role do you see yourself playing in increasing access and affordability of childcare?) What is your primary suggestion on how the State/Federal government can accommodate child care needs in a remote work environment?
3. From 2010 to 2018, Vermont attracted just 8,548 international immigrants, fewer than all but three states. With projections showing a steady population decline in the state, what would be your primary policy you would propose to create a culture of welcoming the diverse newcomers Vermont needs for an economically and culturally robust population? (Or, what role do you see yourself playing in

creating a culture of welcoming the diverse newcomers Vermont needs for an economically and culturally robust population?)

4. Criminal justice and policing reform have been popular discussions over the recent months due to continued demonstrations throughout the state and country. If there was support to reallocate resources dedicated to policing to distribute to more social services platforms, how would you implement that process and what is your primary suggestion on how to reallocate those resources? (Or, what role do you see yourself playing in allocating resources and what is your primary suggestion on how to reallocate resources?)

Questions asked by Attendees of the forum:

5. Some candidates have talked about many investments and ways to spend money to solve some of the challenges that have been brought up today. But they rarely talk specifically about how they will pay for it. With huge revenue shortfalls in state government it is unrealistic to say that it can be done through efficiencies. That is a republican throw away line. What specific ways will you pay for all that you propose?
6. What are candidates doing to counter fascist democide by economic conscription? I want to hear them explain how they will counter economic conscription, enable decolonizing, empower decentralization, and develop direct democracy access? What is their plan on making state lab certified water testing and filtration health code safety requirements at affordable costs for all residents and facility managers to access?
7. I'm wondering if any of the candidates have ideas about how to provide more services to young adults with disabilities once they leave the public education system. Currently, especially in southern VT, the burden often falls onto families to find personal care attendants (PCAs) to care for their children which 1. may be difficult to find and 2. may resemble "babysitting" instead of building functional living skills.
8. There are numerous and diverse functions administered by the Treasurer's Office. Could you comment on some of these functions?
9. There are many public health crises in Vermont: racism, addiction, domestic and sexual violence, lack of affordable housing. Have you given thought on how your

executive team can work to address all of these at once rather than letting an issue fall to the wayside? If so, what's 2 or 3 sentences to sum up how you plan to do that?

10. Anyone interested in championing legislation for massage therapists and other body workers in the state of Vermont? Lack of legislation translates to lack of education... Lack of education translates into several unfortunate scenarios including in adequate sanitation efforts... Which are of course paramount these days!
11. Vermont has a significant amount of children in temporary DCF custody or with foster homes and many vermonters feel that this system is currently not effective. What is your position or how would you address this problem or how you would change the current child protection system.
12. There are towns or sections of towns where broadband, cell phone service (including data service, not just talk and text), and high speed internet are unavailable, but families live in those areas. How do we get all of Vermont connected to broadband and LTE service?

Pat Winburn- Candidate for Governor

1. Affordable housing impacts virtually every part of state government. It's a health issue. It's a corrections issue because we're keeping people in prison who are eligible for release. It's an economic development issue because working families can't afford to move here. And it's a human rights issue because our homeless population is climbing and many cannot exist in shelters.

Just as Governor Scott originally shirked his duty to mandate masks state-wide, he's done the same by allowing municipalities to handle short-term rentals themselves. Companies like AirBnB have certainly had a negative impact on affordable housing and the lack of regulation is obscene.

We need to make major investments in affordable housing and we need to do it soon. Many large, older homes could be converted to rental units, but we need to establish incentives for that. I'm so committed to providing more housing that I'll be appointing an affordable housing advocate to my transition team so that this is

a focus of my Administration. I want every commissioner to keep housing issues on the forefront as we shape policy.

2. Elected officials have failed in investing in a system that works for all Vermonters. Lack of funding has resulted in obscene waitlists for quality programs and an inequitable system that leaves kids behind. During the pandemic, the State has required families to pay 50% of a child's tuition if they want to keep their spots. This is incredibly unfair to lower income families who may have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. We are living in a new reality and as Governor I'll not only expand universal pre-k, but ensure we have a system that can survive the current crisis and the economic downturn that comes with it. It will take money, creativity and a willingness to listen to both families and providers who do the work. Covid-19 has exposed the flaws that already exist in our system - and the brunt is borne disproportionately on women and people of color.

Two highly regarded childcare facilities have already closed during the pandemic - and it's probably just the beginning. I agree with Let's Grow Kids that Covid-19 relief funds should be targeted to address child care as an economic, workforce development issue. How underfunded are some of our centers? Many have been ready to reopen, but cannot due to lack of cleaning supplies. How does that make sense? We need to increase Child Care Financial Assistance Program payment rates immediately to help low income families.

I have been open about my willingness to ask the top 5% of earners in our state to pay their fair share. Millionaires are not moving out of Vermont as the current narrative suggests, particularly not in a pandemic. Let's be bold and shift resources to where they're needed. We're currently negotiating an extension of Vermont's private out-of-state prison contract. Aren't these resources better spent on our kids? As governor, I'm not going to nickel and dime working families - I'm going to give them a seat at the table and make sure they have the resources they need to succeed.

3. Everything that's good about our country can be attributed to diversity - the mixing of cultures and ideas breeds creativity that stimulates economic development. Most of us were immigrants at one point, but I was horrified by some of the discourse around Rutland welcoming Syrian refugees a few years back. The fear mongering and racism displayed was a stain on our state. The fact is, we need immigrants more than they need us - unless we can boost our population, Vermont will struggle as our workforce ages out.

Being a welcoming place entails teaching more than Ethan Allen and European history in schools - there's an entire world we need to embrace. It's about celebrating different cultures, learning new languages and being willing to change. We need to create affordable housing, workforce development opportunities and mutual aid support systems that let newcomers transition as seamlessly as possible. We can have a new Vermont that can be both inclusive and preserve our unique culture. We don't have to choose!

4. We need to reimagine the role of policing in the United States and that means having some difficult conversations. Vermont is not a diverse state and statistics show we are not immune to the systemic racism that exists in police departments and other institutions. Just recently a black man was left to die in one of our correctional facilities due to lack of care.

Making arbitrary cuts to police departments can have unintended consequences, but we should consider whether in some cases social workers, drug counselors or mental health professionals are better to respond to some calls than a uniformed cop. If you imbed some of these positions into departments, you will begin to see the culture change and have better outcomes. Implicit bias trainings should be mandatory for anyone working in law enforcement and we should set up citizen oversight boards to have independent accountability.

5. We've squandered millions of dollars over the years by not taxing and regulating marijuana, despite both Canada and Massachusetts doing so right on our borders. With marijuana now legal, it only makes sense to draw revenue from it. I'd likely devote this money towards both K-12 and higher education. In addition, I support the Green New Deal, which would tax carbon and move money towards weatherization and renewable energy. I'll also work to restructure the tax system so that the top 5% are paying their fair share.
6. It's true that many young people consider a career in the armed forces due to a lack of professional opportunities or to escape poverty. While the governor's office doesn't dictate which wars we enter into or how young people are enlisted, Vermont can ensure our residents who choose to serve do so by choice, not out of necessity. By creating job opportunities and making sure we pass paid family leave and a livable wage, we can break this pattern. My favorite Vermont

politician, Senator George Aiken was a staunch opponent of the Vietnam War. He saw the toll this conflict took on Vermonters and their families.

7. In earlier years, Vermont would take young people with physical and mental disabilities and put them in institutions. In many ways, we never stopped institutionalization - we just shifted folks to other institutions like homeless shelters and prisons before we never properly funded alternatives. Families who have a loved one with disabilities shouldn't go bankrupt trying to afford care. We need to invest in programs that not only ensure people with disabilities are in a safe environment, but an environment that can foster independent living. The "babysitting" description is apt in many cases and that creates a sense of hopelessness.
8. From ensuring our state has a good bond rating to managing the unclaimed property division, the Treasurer's office does have a range of responsibilities. The one function I'd like to highlight is the somewhat new pension program that Vermont businesses can enter into to ensure their employees have a retirement plan they can depend on. Relying on risky defined contribution plans might be fine earlier in your career, but young professionals should be wary of rolling the dice on a defined contribution plan that could leave them struggling in their later years - particularly if social security is cut.
9. If elected, my transition team will be made up of advocates - not political allies. We need to break out of silos and start looking at how these issues intersect and how systemic racism and other forms of discrimination permeates evry institution. I'm not interested in a Mad Libbs puzzle state government, where the names of people in charge change, but it's otherwise business as usual. We need a new Vermont, where creative people can break down barriers. I'll bring those folks on before my first day in office.
10. I'll be a strong advocate for massage therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture and other medical practices that are often held to a different standard. We need to make sure services like these are accessible, affordable and well-regulated. Without knowing the specific legislation being referenced, we certainly need to

make sure both patients and practitioners are educated on proper sanitation practices.

11. While foster homes are usually preferable to group homes, a child who has suffered the instability of losing their family should never be subjected to home where they don't receive love and support. We need to invest in more DCF staff to identify bad actors and help recruit more families who can give children the attention they need. A budget is more than numbers on a spreadsheet - it's a statement on values. Unfortunately, our history of underfunding reflects poorly on our values as a state.
12. The Covid pandemic has given us a glimpse of the possibilities of remote work. Vermont should support workers who contribute to our economy by working from home, whether they are working for an in or out of state company or organization. But, until we ensure that every Vermonter has access to reliable high speed broadband internet, those living in rural parts of the state will be systematically disadvantaged. We need to come up with a concrete plan to close this gap within the next five years and revitalize our rural regions.

Rebecca Holcombe- Candidate for Governor

1. We have good ideas in the state, but we haven't had a governor with strong executive experience and the discipline to get the job done. I look forward to working with the treasurer to put together a strategy to finance a long term strategy for investments in housing. I will:
  - Fully fund the Vermont Housing Conservation Board, consistent with the statute.
  - Expand assistance programs that help income-eligible first-time homebuyers make down payments on their first homes.
  - Support policies related to form code and inclusive housing, to reduce the time to shovel of development, and thus the cost, of family housing
  - Provide the required services, so we are not returning federal housing vouchers to the federal government, as we have done under the Scott administration
  - Systematically collect information on AirBnB in the state-- where they are, how many units each owner has-- so we can evaluate the impact of the short term rental market not only on the availability of affordable housing but on the viability of school districts in some towns.
  - Get the job done on broadband, because the list of communities in which telecommuters can live is too limited.

- Deal with the cost of healthcare, child care, and higher education, so people have money left to invest in housing.
2. We have models in Vermont of how we can think, in this time of tight budgets, about how we work together to make sure our communities are places families can thrive, and that means starting with childcare. In Vermont, we have also focused on universal subsidies, not universal provision of high quality and affordable care. And our costs have gone up, even as we have lost capacity in this sector. This sector needs real, long term solutions, so it is not in perpetual crisis. I spoke to a parent in one community, where there is now full-time child care in the underused elementary school. Last year, she spent \$185 per week, but this year, she spent only \$50 per week. Imagine what it would do for families if we left \$135 in their pockets every week? As one parent told me, it let her make a down payment on her first house. In addition to these partnerships, I would support paid leave. If parents with paid leave could afford to stay home with their newborns, we could reduce the demand for scarce and expensive infant slots. Second, I would learn from nations and places that have made significant investments in early care and learning and achieved excellent results. Most manage their markets in ways that ensure equity, fair compensation, and adequate supply, while we do not, which is why we pay more and get less, and have providers who struggle. We can set up a dedicated early childhood fund and free revenues by redirecting resources from other functions. The small school of Whiting had only 35 kids two years ago. Last year, Whiting partnered with a private provider, and now the building has over 70 kids, all between the ages of 0-5. The district pays for the overhead, and the provider has money to raise wages, reduce tuition, and pay for professional development. We can make the difference families need, and I look forward to working with you to do it.
  3. The first thing we need to do is vote for Joe Biden for president, so we can set the stage for long overdue and responsible immigration reform and end the torrent of racist language coming out of the white house. I have committed to approaching every policy that comes to me through the lenses of equity and sustainability. If we want the change we need here in Vermont, we need to stop thinking of diversity and inclusion as an add on, and instead, think of it as a core value that we work to support through every sector and aspect of state government. I talked with one of my endorsers, Curtiss Reed, of the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity, about this. He said we have a real opportunity to encourage Black and Brown Vermonters to come here with good schools, good childcare, good and affordable health care, and broadband. I will also make sure the state government looks more like our population as a whole. To keep newcomers in Vermont, we need to learn as a state to be more welcoming and appreciative of diversity. How many times have you heard people talk about who is and who is not a “real Vermonter”? This kind of talk reinforces the feeling that some people are not welcome.

4. I spoke with a friend who does a lot of work related to juvenile justice and criminal justice reform in Vermont. She told me that when she walked into Woodside for the first time, every child she saw there was a child of color. She asked: "How can this be, in a state this white?" And she was right to worry. Racial disparities in Vermont's prison system are among the worst in the nation. But it isn't just people of color, and to be blunt, it isn't just our justice system. People with disabilities and people who live in poverty and people with mental health challenges are all overrepresented in our school discipline data and our prison system. It is hard to look at our data and not worry that we are criminalizing people for being sick, being poor, being disabled and being black, at a price of almost \$70k per year. I believe we need to invest in our communities and the organizations that make them healthy and strong. We need to invest in adequate healthcare, strong employment opportunities, mental health, and education. While I do not believe we are at a place as a society where we can completely eliminate police forces, I do believe we have prioritized policing and incarceration over the social services, from treatment for addiction to adequate and safe housing and liveable wages—that would reduce the need for police services. We need to start planning, in every community, for how we correct this imbalance. We should set as a goal robust investment in our communities and the wellbeing of our people so that expenditures on police forces become increasingly trivial.

Jim Hogue- Candidate for Lt. Governor

5. A state bank along the lines of The Bank of North Dakota, with similar mandates would go a long way toward funding most of the problems that Vermont faces. The bank lends money for infrastructure projects, education, agriculture and small businesses. The interest payments go directly to the state. Please read my article on the subject.

<https://www.publicbankinginstitute.org/2018/10/24/battle-over-banking-vermont-has-a-public-bank/>

6. I am a secessionist: secession first from the federal reserve. They are the sovereigns. The first step to solve the problems mentioned in your question is to become the sovereigns. The Fed has created a web of debt from which it frees itself but not others.

8. The treasurer tries to match expenses with income. Expenses include the payment of interest on the debt that the state created by borrowing from Wall Street. I don't know what the amount of the yearly VT debt to Wall Street is today, but several years ago it was \$72,000,000.00 as I recall. It would help if the truth about Covid 19 were known. Then we could open up the state for business. With

so many businesses out of business, the current protocol has done far too much damage to our economy and our health.

Doug Hoffer- Candidate for Auditor of Accounts

You can also find his answers here:

1. Affordable housing is unquestionably one of the most important issues we face. Not only does investment address a critical need, but it creates jobs and produces a 100-year asset. It is a cost-effective economic development tool and (unlike many other ED tools) the return on investment (ROI) can easily be measured. And it is essential to efforts to attract new residents.

In my view, we need to vastly increase investments in affordable housing. One option utilized in other states is public pension funds. Vermont has \$4.5 billion in assets with almost none invested in Vermont. I looked into this some years ago for then-Treasurer Spaulding and produced a report about options and what some other states were doing at that time. This is a complicated and challenging issue and the Treasurer has worked on it, but I think more can be done.

Another potential source are economic development programs for which we have little reliable data on ROI. I addressed this issue in a 2018 report (see the two-page transmittal letter). It is reasonable to ask whether some of those resources could be better spent on affordable housing, perhaps devoted to debt service for housing bonds.

In any case, simply building new housing deemed “affordable” is not a long-term solution. Once the initial buyer sells at market rate, she takes the equity with her and the house will not be affordable to the next low- or moderate-income family. This is why the land trust model is so important. By keeping some of the equity in the property, it makes the house perpetually affordable. For those interested in the subject, I strongly recommend reading this exceptional review of the history of the land trust model as administered by the Champlain Housing Trust. It addresses both Community Benefits (preserving affordability, retaining community wealth, and enhancing residential stability) and Individual Benefits (expanding homeownership, creating individual wealth and enabling residential mobility).

2. There is no question of the pressing need for more slots, better wages and training for providers, and more investment. This is not a recent problem, however. I conducted the research for a report on the subject almost 20 years ago.

As for solutions, these are tough times and we are not likely to get more from the Federal government any time soon and the State budget will be stressed for some time. Therefore, we need to consider alternative approaches. Allow me to speculate.

According to the latest Fringe Benefit Study by the VT Dept. of Labor (p. 14), only 7.2% of firms reported offering childcare benefits. This is noteworthy because the labor market does not work without childcare, so while all employers benefit from the childcare system over time, only 7% contribute directly. It is true that businesses support state programs through taxes, but families pay twice (i.e., direct payments to childcare providers, along with contributions through their taxes).

One could argue that childcare is so important to businesses, workers and families that we could justify treating it similarly to unemployment insurance and workers' compensation. That is, we could consider a mandatory statewide program to raise additional revenue and move toward full coverage and greater affordability.

For example, a ten cent per hour fee for all wage earners would generate over \$60 million per year. This would go a long way to filling the gap. And while no one likes mandates, \$0.10/hour is not large enough to be a burden on employers (\$4/week) or create cross-border labor market problems. Finally, like affordable housing, a comprehensive and long-term solution to the childcare problem would be a very important enticement to families considering a move to Vermont.

3. I will address the issue of attracting new residents regardless of their origin.

In my view, the most important things the State can do involve education, housing, childcare and broadband. Along with quality of life (which is already very high and well known). These are the most important factors for families considering relocation.

For decades Vermonters have been struggling with how much to spend on education and how best to raise the money. This is understandable, but I wish we spent as much time on the quality of education. Imagine the response if all three major parties agreed on a long-term plan to make Vermont's public schools the best in the nation; and not by a little, but by a lot. Given what else we have to offer, people would line up at the border.

Note that I am not a fan of programs that pay people to move here. We looked into the first of them and issued a critical report.

Although it is rarely discussed, two key factors that influence migration decisions are the number of job openings and the wages paid. Vermont's small size makes it challenging for those seeking to move to (or remain in) Vermont. To get a sense of the challenge, see the table on the last page of this report. It shows clearly 1) how few annual openings there are for selected occupations and 2) the dramatic difference in wages between Vermont and the two nearest large metro areas.

4. My only direct experience with this issue is a report we did on the total costs of public safety in Vermont. While I share your concerns about finding the right balance between prevention and enforcement, I will limit my brief comments to a broader perspective.

Remarkably, our report found that in aggregate Vermont spent \$574 million for public safety in 2017 (state, county & local). The current system evolved piecemeal over time rather than from a systemic or holistic plan. There are multiple players, which likely include administrative redundancies.

I asked a few key legislators if, given a blank slate, they would design the system as it is today, and they all laughed. The point is that there may be opportunities for significant savings from an overhaul of the entire system. If we could maintain or improve performance (safety) with fewer resources, the savings could be directed to social services. What is required is the political will to challenge entrenched interests and think long-term.

5. I addressed this in my memo. I recommended two funding options for affordable housing, including 1) redirecting money from economic development programs whose ROI cannot be determined and using it pay debt service on housing bonds; and 2) utilizing resources from the State's pension funds. I also

mused about a potential funding source for expanded and enhanced childcare services. In reference to public safety, I referred to a report we issued regarding the amount of money spent in Vermont by state and local government and suggested that a strategic redesign of the entire system is likely to produce savings that could be devoted to other purposes such as prevention.

6. I will speak briefly to empowerment and democracy. The State Auditor is not a policymaker and does not manage programs. But for citizens to engage effectively in the process, they need good information. We have addressed this issue with reports about transparency and accessibility of information about the operations of state government and a report about impediments to accessing documents from the Public Utility Commission.

In addition, citizens should be empowered in the marketplace. For example, we issued a report on the lack of health care price transparency and the failure of regulators to require greater transparency from providers and insurers. A subsequent report looked at the modest progress in response to legislation put forward by State Senator Tim Ashe (Sections 20 and 21).

8. I will defer to Beth Pearce on this. I will note, however, that I serve with Beth on the Capital Debt Affordability Advisory Committee, which recommends to the legislature how much the State should borrow every two years for capital projects. Beth is an able leader of this effort, but I disagree about the methodology used to evaluate possible funding levels. See this memo from November 2018.

9. As noted above, I (we) don't manage programs, but we have conducted audits addressing a couple of these issues.

Child Abuse (Child Protection Registry):

<https://auditor.vermont.gov/sites/auditor/files/documents/AOE%20CPR%20Report%20-%20Final%20v.2.pdf>

<https://auditor.vermont.gov/sites/auditor/files/documents/AHS%20CPR%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>

Sex Offender Registry:

<https://auditor.vermont.gov/sites/auditor/files/files/reports/performance-audits/SO-R-audit-report-7.16.2014.pdf>

12. The State has been promising solutions to this problem for a generation. In my view, successive administrations missed the mark by relying almost exclusively on the private sector. In my view, we would have been better to treat the fiber backbone of such a system as public infrastructure and lease access to all providers.

In the alternative, there are broadband providers who argue for a private sector approach that they have demonstrated can work with ECFiber. There is no excuse for not having solved the problem by now.

Chris Brimmer- Candidate for US Congress

1. Housing represents one of the worst of Vermont's market failures. The blame is often placed on regulation, Act 250, local opposition, but my experience in the town I work for as a planner and economic development specialist is that small housing projects don't "pencil out". This points to either deep subsidies either in the form of actual government finance or tax credits or possibly both. I think an important consideration is that because of the peculiarities that at once make Vermont the place it is and make it too small a scale to attract big finance, Vermont needs to look at a state bank along the lines of what North Dakota is doing. As a US House member I would support initiatives that make it easier for rural states to establish state banks and would support housing block grants at a far higher level of funding to allow rural states the ability to apply locally scaled solutions and experiment with innovative building techniques.
2. This country claims to be pro-family and then does almost nothing to support them. We already have a child services infrastructure in place with the public school system. Education has already been extended downward with the addition of pre-k programs, I would strongly support extending this downward even further with the addition of a daycare program provided to children who are toilet trained and then broaden the system by adding after school programs and hours for grade through middle school kids. Expanded parental leave and universal broadband would help parents with young children stay home for the first 2-3 years. Daycare needs to become a public service just like education.
3. On the Federal level we must fix the immigration system and once again become the welcoming "World Nation" that we at least pretended to be. I think that immigrants willing to live for at least the seven years in the places in the US with declining populations should be allowed fast track naturalization and an easier

process to bring immediate family over. Of course what we really need to get over is the fact that these people will not be largely European, Vermonters will need to adjust to a wider variety of cultural exposure.

4. Some police departments are already experimenting with adding social workers, mental health workers and addiction specialists to their staffing with excellent results and substantial cost savings. We will never be able to completely dismantle police departments but by shifting the burden of societal pathologies away from policing and into the clinical professions we can begin to build smaller, smarter, better trained and better paid police departments oriented more toward being peace officers and away from the warrior cop model that has caused police culture to become so toxic in this country.
5. Reduce military spending; remove the cap on income subject to social security and medicare taxes, further I believe all income no matter it's source should be treated the same and taxed at the same rates; stop subsidies to profitable corporations. That is a start but on a more philosophical level, would you rather pay a government agency X dollars for health care or a private sector company X dollars, plus a mark up, plus hidden fees, plus denial of services, the private sector approach costs us access and increased costs and for what? Ideological purity?
6. I believe that the federal government should be enabling unions to organize, should facilitate worker owned firms and cooperatives. No product imported into the United States should be produced by slave labor of any kind and coercive labor practices in the US should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I support attempts to overturn Citizens United and eliminate corporate personhood and want a system of public finance to replace the legal bribery that is now American election finance. As for the last item I'm not sure what the issues are or how a US House member can help but I am more than willing to be educated on the issue.
7. This should be part of a universal healthcare system.
8. I'm a Federal candidate and so this is not something I have studied sufficiently to have an informed opinion about, but I am an advocate for Vermont State Bank.

9. I'm a Federal candidate, so I'll try to keep this short: racism, I believe we need to look at the models of denazification and truth and reconciliation that other countries have gone through and would press for a program to apply this nationwide; addiction needs to be dealt with as a public health issue and should be a part of any universal health program; domestic and sexual violence to me is a reflection of the social and economic violence inherent in our society, it is a social pathology that needs to be treated as the public health threat that it is. I discussed affordable housing earlier.
10. Not a federal issue, at least not yet.
11. Not a federal issue other than funding which needs to be increased.
12. Another of Vermont's market failures, it is the Rural Electrification of the 21st Century and federal money should be invested in the infrastructure.

Miriam Berry- Candidate for US Congress

Statement: In this election cycle, it is vital for conservatives to have a choice and a voice in Congress. When it comes to Vermont's race for her one Representative to Congress, we need a strong candidate who can unseat Representative Peter Welch.

As a full-time nurse, I have unique insight for representing Vermont in Congress. Due to the full-time nature of my nursing position, however, I will not be participating in interviews or debates. Throughout my campaign, I have not solicited financial support. I believe that there is also another conservative candidate who very well represents my values. She has the time, resources and experience to defeat Mr. Welch.

I appreciate the many cards and emails from fellow Vermont citizens. Sharing our views, even when we disagree, is part of what makes our nation great and strong. I will continue to respond to them. Thank you!

- Miriam Berry RN is a candidate for Vermont's at-large Representative to Congress.

Justin Tuthill- Candidate for US Congress

Email Statement: I am quite interested in learning more about your group and your concerns and I hope to see some materials about the results of this meeting and

what actions your group takes. I definitely see a need to keep our youth in-state and can definitely stand 100% with your group's mission as this is an issue I have regularly voiced concern with for decades. Particularly as I myself am someone within your defined age group who -works across the river in NH, has worked elsewhere (Poland) and has had to look for gainful employment in other states. Unfortunately at this time I do not believe I would be able to attend, I understand your last call has since passed so my reaching out may mean little, I am afraid I was traveling for family reasons.