

January 25, 2023

From Representative Scott Beck  
To: Concord, Kirby, and St. Johnsbury

Greetings and Thank You for the continued honor of serving you in Montpelier!

The Legislature is in its fourth week as of today. In the first year of a two-year session most legislators (over 60 are new) and committees are getting their feet on the ground in preparation of work that will impact the lives of Vermonters.

As always, there are lots of important issues that need attention. There isn't room on one page to address all of them. If one isn't mentioned that you are particularly interested in, please contact me to share your perspective.

The Governor has submitted his recommended budget, which includes a tax cut of \$17M and \$3.2M in new revenue if Vermont legalizes sports betting. The budget is where many policy decisions interact with Vermonters. It is important to recognize that Vermont is expecting \$125M less in General Fund revenue next year. This decrease is due to the fading out of pandemic associated revenues.

Climate change and resiliency continue to be an important topic where the economy and the environment intersect. Vermont continues to spend well over \$100M each year to assist Vermonters in reducing or eliminating the carbon fuels that they use for transportation and heating. The federal government is also spending a tremendous amount of money to help people make this shift. I support these initiatives and am also working to find a path to generate all the clean electricity that will be required at a price that Vermonters can afford. I continue to oppose initiatives that would penalize Vermonters not able to shift their energy usage as fast as Montpelier wants.

The Governor has proposed spending an additional \$56M on an annual basis to make childcare more affordable for Vermont parents, without increasing taxes. As I write this the details of this proposal are not available. The RAND corporation has submitted a study to the Legislature that would require an additional \$256M in public spending. This plan would require significant tax increases.

Housing continues to be a significant problem in Vermont. I am supportive of efforts to reduce the costs to construct new housing and renovate housing stock that is currently out of circulation. I am skeptical of efforts that throw money at the problem; my fear is that this will be unsustainable and just make housing more expensive. A number of bills are being drafted on this subject.

Not part of the budget, but very near and dear to people in Concord, Kirby, and St. Johnsbury is Vermont's practice of public tuitioning, school choice, and independent schools. These educational underpinnings in our area are under assault in Montpelier. A group called the Alliance that is composed of VTNEA, VSBA, VSA, and VPA have proposed a slew of offensive ideas, including independent school takeover using eminent domain and ending the practice of public tuition at independent schools. These groups are well financed and positioned in the Statehouse. Pushing back against these ideas and keeping them at bay is a full-time job by itself in Montpelier. I am committed to this work because I fully understand how important this topic is to our children and families.

**The most important job a representative does is listen.** Please do not hesitate to reach out to me to share your ideas. I can be reached at [sbeck@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:sbeck@leg.state.vt.us) or 802.274.0201. I am also available (really prefer) to meet in person. Please reach out!

Respectfully,



Rep. Scott Beck