



AFT Vermont 2023-24 Legislative Priorities

Improve Healthcare for All Vermonters

Healthcare is a Human Right

Fulfill the mandate of Act 48, which would make publicly financed, universal healthcare a reality in Vermont. Act 48 commits Vermont to providing healthcare as a public good so everyone can get the healthcare they need.

Ensure Reproductive Liberty for All

Pass Article 22, which would amend the Constitution of Vermont to ensure the right to abortion and reproductive liberty for all.

Safe Staffing & Safe Patient Handling

Improve patient care and reduce incidents of injury by banning manual lifting and establishing safe staffing ratios in all of Vermont's hospitals.

Prevent Workplace Violence

Mandate Workplace Violence Prevention Plans for all health facilities, including health professionals in their development.

Require Transparency of Salaries & Benefits for Hospital Executives & Administrators

To better understand and reduce the overall cost of healthcare in Vermont, hospitals should be required to disclose this information (including deferred compensation) as part of their budgets that are approved by the Green Mountain Care Board.

Tax Credit for Healthcare Workers

Ensure nurses and health professionals are able to work and stay in Vermont by instituting a tax credit for all healthcare workers who commit to Vermont.

Improve Vermont's Public Higher Education System

Invest in Public Higher Education

Vermont has not always neglected higher education, but state support has consistently been reduced since 1980 when state appropriations covered 51% of the costs of the VSC. Currently it is much lower, even with the recent Federal investment. We need ongoing, sustainable funding of our institutions of public higher education. The burden of higher education costs has been transferred to Vermont families in the form of increasing tuition, creating generations of adults saddled with overwhelming debt.

Restrict Public Dollars Sent to Out-of-State Colleges & Universities

Compared to the national average, a significantly lower percentage of Vermont students stay in-state to attend college their freshman year. This is because Vermont underfunds our public institutions of higher education and allows need-based grant aid to be used for out-of-state schools.

Free In-State Tuition at Our Public Higher Education Institutions

Guarantee access to public higher education for everyone in our state by expanding free in-state tuition to all of Vermont's public higher education institutions, including UVM.

Increase Higher Education Funding to Address the Shortage of Healthcare, Mental Health & Education Workers

Nursing students in Vermont are being turned away due to nursing faculty shortages. We are

already seeing the negative impacts of the nursing shortage which has led to increased moral distress and physical injuries to the nursing staff. Vermont needs to attract qualified nursing faculty to meet the demand for nursing education.

Staff and Faculty Voice on UVM and VSCS Boards of Trustees

Ensure staff and faculty have a voice at the table by adding representatives as voting members of the Boards of Trustees of UVM and the Vermont State Colleges System.



Invest in Working People

Racial & Social Justice

We pledge to prioritize, organize and take direction from organizations who are working to achieve racial and social justice through legislation at the statehouse and action in our communities.

Improve Workers Compensation for Workers Injured on the Job

(including as a result of workplace violence.) At a minimum, remove the three day waiting period before Workers' Comp kicks in.

Increase Vermont's Minimum Wage

Moving to a \$20/hour minimum wage will contribute to the overall well-being of our families, communities, businesses and state. It will help boost our economy by attracting young

and talented people to the state and by encouraging young families to stay in Vermont.

Protect Our Schools and Communities from Gun Violence

Continue strengthening Vermont's laws requiring firearm background checks and other common sense policies to keep our schools, higher education and healthcare institutions, and communities safe.

Institute a Statewide Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program

A statewide family and medical leave insurance program, paid by employers, would give every Vermont worker paid time off to care for a new child or loved one, or to recover from illness. Family and medical leave insurance would promote economic security for women and families, level the playing field for small business and help address the shortage of regulated child care.

A Green New Deal for Vermont

We believe that climate disaster is real and imminent. Our patients, our students, our families, and our communities will all be impacted negatively, but we can mitigate the damage if we act immediately at the local, state, national and international levels.

Improve Unemployment (UI) Insurance

Make it easier for part-time faculty, and all workers, to be awarded UI.

Prevent Captive Audience Meetings

Connecticut and Oregon have passed laws that ban employers from requiring employees to attend meetings where they express political, religious, or anti-union views.

