



AFT Vermont 2025-26 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.

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.

Ensure Reproductive Liberty for All

Vermont passed the constitutional amendment that enshrines the right to abortion and reproductive liberty for all—now we need to fund these services.

Require Transparency of Salaries & Benefits for Hospital 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 Credits 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. Even with recent increased state funding, we still rank among the lowest in terms of state support for public higher education. 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.

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 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.

Right to Strike for UVM and VTSU

Staff and faculty at VTSU and UVM should have the basic right to strike, like private sector workers and staff in our public schools.





Invest in Working People

Invest in Working People by Taxing the Wealthiest Vermonters

Vermont needs investment in housing, healthcare, pre K-12 education, higher education and a clean and healthy environment. Currently the tax code disproportionately falls on working people. We need to raise money to invest in Vermont from the wealthiest Vermonter.

The Vermont Labor Relations Board (VLRB) Must be Improved

Currently, cases before the VLRB can take years to be heard—denying timely justice for public sector workers in Vermont.

Racial & Social Justice

We believe that the legislature needs to prioritize racial and social justice in policy and practice. The state of Vermont should continue active support for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs to ensure a more welcoming and diverse state workforce.

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.



Increase Vermont's Minimum Wage

Moving to a \$22/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 Public Pre-K-12

Working Vermonters deserve to have a progressively funded (based on wealth and income), accessible and robust public education system.

Green New Deal for Vermont: Make Polluters Pay

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. We encourage the Vermont Legislature to take legal action against corporate polluters contributing to climate disasters to help recoup the cost to our municipalities and 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.

Improve Unemployment (UI) Insurance

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

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.

Ceasefire in Palestine and Divest from War

We encourage the Vermont legislature to call for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine and divest from companies involved in the manufacture, sales, and transportation of weapons and technology used in the ongoing military occupation and genocide.