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**Subject:** FW: VCW VIEW Message: Vermont Workers, Business Owners, Legislators Travel to White House Summit on Working Families

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## **Vermont Workers, Business Owners, Legislators Travel to White House Summit on Working Families**

(Montpelier) – Vermont advocates, workers, business owners and policy leaders will share their successful work in supporting affordable quality childcare, workplace flexibility, and equal pay at the first-ever [White House Summit on Working Families](#) in Washington, D.C., on Monday.

The Summit will be hosted jointly by the Center for American Progress, the Department of Labor, and the White House Council on Women and Girls. President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and Dr. Jill Biden will be in attendance. Plenary sessions will include such topics as hourly workers, young women leaders, talent attraction and retention, caregiving, STEM and nontraditional jobs. The event is designed to provide concrete tools and strategies that participants can use to improve their workplace practices, become more economically secure and to create change in their own communities.

Vermont's White House Summit delegation includes Vermont Commission on Women's Executive Director, Cary Brown. Ms. Brown remarked, "As the first in the U.S. to give employees the right to request flexible working arrangements, Vermont has been a leader in supporting working families. We're excited to be able to share Vermont's progress on a national stage, and to bring new ideas back home to help people combine work and family responsibilities."

"Passing legislation on each of these issues represents a real turning point in the cultural acceptance that when our families succeed, our businesses succeed." said Representative Tom Stevens from Waterbury, who will also attend the Summit in D.C., "Compassionate work policies succeed, and working families in Vermont are benefitting."

Eric Warnstedt, Chef and Owner of Hen of the Wood restaurants will also join the Vermont delegation. Mr. Warnstedt said, "Progress starts with policies that value families at work and help families maintain financial stability. The goal is for elected officials from both parties to continue to work for paid sick days and other programs that help working families. These programs are proven to be good for the economy as a whole and more importantly reflect our values as a society."

Jessica Clavette, an Administrative Associate at Renewable NRG Systems in Hinesburg will be sharing her perspective coming from a single-parent family, "I experienced first-hand just how much working families can struggle with maintaining financial stability while supporting their loved ones. Now, as a recent graduate, I believe there is a need to increase awareness about the struggles that working families experience, especially throughout the millennial generation. What it comes down to is that families form the foundation to this country and we need to support them, protect them and provide them with the resources that will allow them and their children to succeed in life."

Lindsay DesLauriers, Campaign Manager for the 2014 Paid Sick Days Campaign said she was thrilled to be a part of the Vermont delegation to the White House, "to carry the message that a strong economy starts with policies that value working families and support financial stability."

The D.C. Summit falls on the heels of Vermont's lead up event, the Vermont Summit on Working Families, held last week. The event, featuring keynote speaker Madeleine Kunin, was hosted by organizations that support working families and included Family Values at Work, the Vermont Commission on Women, Hunger Free Vermont, Main Street Alliance, Main Street Landing, Vermont Legal Aid, the Vermont Paid Sick Days Coalition, Vermont Works for Women, the Vermont Women's Fund, the Vermont Workers' Center, and Voices for Vermont's Children.

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*The Vermont Commission on Women (VCW) is a non-partisan state agency working to advance rights and opportunities for women and girls. Sixteen volunteer commissioners and representatives from organizations concerned with women's issues guide the VCW's public education, coalition building, and advocacy efforts. VCW offers many services to the public, including a toll-free information and referral service at 800-881-1561 and many publications, [The Legal Rights of Women in Vermont](#). For more information, visit [www.women.vermont.gov](http://www.women.vermont.gov).*