

VT. GOVERNOR ZUCKERMAN NEWSLETTER

May 1, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATE

Dear Friends,

The coronavirus pandemic has touched all corners of our state, disrupting every aspect of our daily lives. Vermonters have risen to this challenge, adjusted personal habits, transitioned their lives to implement physical distancing and together we have overcome the first hurdle and successfully flattened the curve. I thank you and all Vermonters for your dedication to this process.

Vermont will be receiving \$1.25 billion in federal funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to cover costs incurred as a result of the pandemic **and** to support our state's economic recovery. **We would like to hear your ideas of creative ways to utilize some of this fund.**

I sent a letter to the Governor with some ideas I have heard in the last week from business leaders, economists, educators and farmers. You can read the letter [here](#), and read my ideas below:

- Extend or upgrade internet service to unserved and underserved areas of Vermont to facilitate distance learning. COVID-19 has created the need for virtual learning across the state. Both teachers and students need connectivity to ensure Vermonters continue learning now and in the future.
- Invest in e-learning opportunities for educators and or additional staff to be prepared to address the returning student population's mental health, stress, grief and trauma needs.
- Create a Statewide food delivery program to serve our most vulnerable citizens. Design an integrated program that links restaurants, farmers, and hungry/vulnerable Vermonters.
- Implement a program that addresses the unique challenges being faced by workers and owners of hard-hit restaurants and the broader hospitality industry. Such a program could include small grants to restaurants and other businesses and the provision of paid sick and family leave to workers.
- Invest in rental assistance for those unable to cover their housing costs and find permanent solutions to house our homeless in ways that will allow proper social distancing and prevent the spread of COVID-19 or other contagious diseases.
- Provide students and educators with the technology, computers, I-pads and training, necessary to participate in distance learning while schools are closed.

FACEBOOK LIVE UPDATES

Join us for regular updates on what the State is doing to help Vermonters during the COVID-19 pandemic at these Facebook Live Events. Go to: www.facebook.com/VTLtGov/ to tune in.

Sat., May 2, 10:30 AM
Tues., May 5, 10:30 AM
Thurs., May 7, 10:30 AM
Sat., May 9, 10:30 AM

Sat., May 2, 5 PM: Speaking at Virtual Capital City Grange Lecture Series

Mon., May 4, 12 PM: Speaking virtually with Rice Honors Contemporary History students

Wed., May 6, 3 PM: Speaking with NVU Sustainable Food Systems Virtual Class

Tues., May 19, 3 PM: Speaking with 4-H [QuaranTeen Time](#) Youth Voices Matter

If you find this newsletter helpful, please feel free to forward it on and let people know they can sign up to receive future newsletters and updates at www.lt.gov.vermont.gov

Vermont's workers, businesses (of all sizes), non-profit organizations and families are suffering the economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. They also are a great resource in identifying community and regional projects to utilize relief funds in a way that will address current expenses and get money back into our local economy. **Please let us know your creative ideas for how Vermont should utilize these funds.**

Sixteen-year-old Sophia sent us these beautiful thoughts I want to leave you with:

I think this is a time where we all need to tune into our higher selves and ask the question:

“What is it that we truly want in our lives?”

And the answer for most of us, I hope, is peace, safety, and health.

This virus has shown us that it does not matter what your age, gender, race, religion, financial, or social status is.

My wish is for the citizens of Vermont and the rest of the world to have easier, more sustainable, access to supplies such as compost, seeds, tools, and to find a way to share the land.

Now is the time when we must learn to feed ourselves and those in need, such as the homeless, unemployed, elderly, and those who suffer from mental and or physical illnesses.

We must change. We must find connection: in ourselves, with each other, and with the Earth.

COVID-19 is a wake-up call.

Are we awake enough to hear it?

Because Vermont has done the right thing, we are now able to slowly reopen our economy. But we need to be careful. We still must keep physical distance, wear masks and watch out for the vulnerable.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel Zuber". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light-colored rectangular background.