

Rutland Herald

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Article published Jan 8, 2011

Overlooking many gains

It is unfortunate that the Rutland Herald ("An end to stagnation," Dec. 29, 2010) dismisses important, bipartisan efforts to create jobs in Vermont; rather the paper continues to call for more spending and higher taxes — especially the property tax, which falls heavily on Vermont's job creators.

Let's start by at least getting the facts straight. The state does not have a tax credit program as alleged in the editorial and hasn't since 2006. VEGI is a cash incentive program that pays companies a small fraction of the new revenues they generate by creating new jobs for Vermonters, and the incentives are only paid after the jobs are created. The Public Assets Institute report that the editorial references completely discredits itself by missing this very basic, but essential point. Companies like Plasan/Vermont Composites in Bennington; Dealer.com in Burlington; Northern Power Systems and SB Electronics in Barre Town; Revision Eyewear and Ask-InTag in Essex; Vermont Transformer in St. Albans; Commonwealth Yogurt in Brattleboro; Swan Valley Cheese in Swanton; and Green Mountain Coffee Roasters in Waterbury all created good jobs for Vermonters using the incentive plans the state offered.

Others like IBM; GE Rutland; Jay Peak; Sugarbush; and Weidmann Electronics in St. Johnsbury were assisted in creating or retaining jobs with training funds, EB-5 investments, VEDA loans or other types of support.

Sitting behind a computer pulling highly selective statistics off the Internet to support a pre-conceived policy position as practiced by the Public Assets Institute is no substitute for talking to the actual employers of Vermonters.

Rather than listening to political advocacy groups, I spent my time as secretary listening to the concerns of actual employers and their employees, often on the shop floor. Their response has been overwhelming; appreciation for the work of the Douglas administration to support a competitive climate for job growth and in specific cases the assistance the governor's team provided to spur new jobs in their businesses.

So, ask the employees at Northern Power or the construction workers at Jay Peak. Ask the newly hired workers at AirBoss Defense in Milton. Talk to the folks at Weidmann or Plasan or Revision or dozens of other companies where Vermonters are working as a result of support from the state. These are the true experts on what works in the Vermont economy and how to grow jobs here. And they will tell you without hesitation of their appreciation for the efforts of the Douglas administration.

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