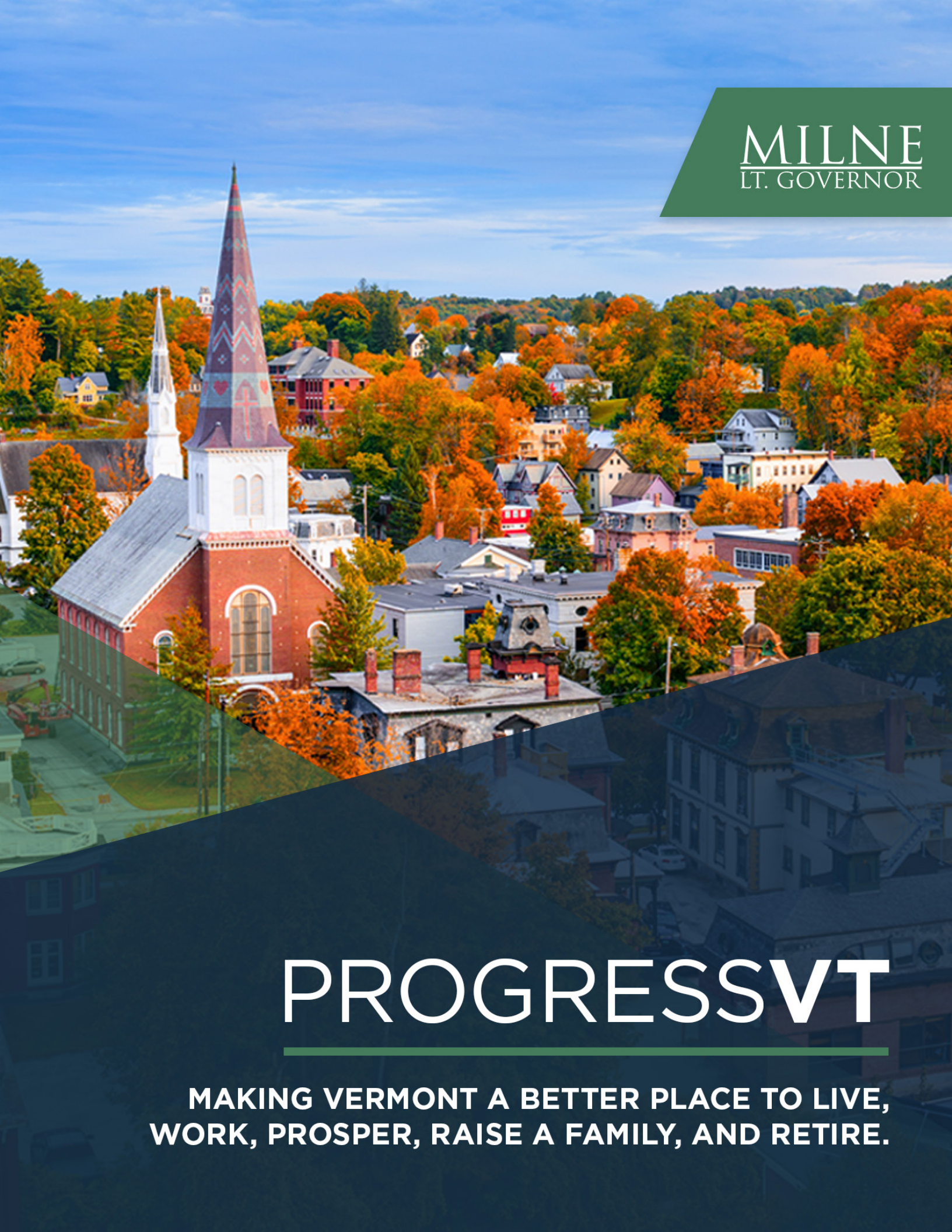




MILNE
LT. GOVERNOR

PROGRESSVT

**MAKING VERMONT A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE,
WORK, PROSPER, RAISE A FAMILY, AND RETIRE.**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 The Path Forward** - A letter from Scott Milne
- 3 Protecting the Truly Needy**
- 6 Revitalizing Rural Vermont**
- 9 Opening Up the Lieutenant Governor's Office**
- 12 Growing Our Workforce**
- 15 Reforming Health Care**
- 18 Expanding Educational Opportunities**
- 21 Sstreamlining State Government**
- 24 Securing Our Environment**
- 27 Valuing Entrepreneurs**
- 30 Tackling Affordability**
- 33 The Bottom Line**



THE PATH FORWARD

Dear fellow Vermonters,

We are living in challenging times. A global health pandemic and economic recession have cast a dark cloud over our state's future. Vermonters who were already struggling with the cost of living have found themselves living on the edge. Working families are having trouble making ends meet. Our challenges are grave.

That's why I'm running for Lieutenant Governor. We need someone who will focus on our state's fundamentals, serve as a partner to Governor Phil Scott, and tackle our challenges head-on. Vermonters need someone who understands their struggles, but who also has the job-creating experience to help us weather the current crisis and emerge stronger and more unified than ever.

I have no doubt that the task will be difficult. But I am up to the challenge. Vermonters deserve someone who will be dedicated to their priorities 24/7, and who understands their concerns, their struggles, and their desire to build a better life for their families.

That's why I've put forth my "ProgressVT" plan. ProgressVT addresses the 10 major issues Vermont is facing with specific proposals and recommendations on how we can make our state a better place to live, work, prosper, raise a family, and retire. It focuses on simplifying and opening up state government, reinvigorating our rural economy, building the best education system in the country, reforming health care, providing a solid safety net for the truly vulnerable, tackling our demographic trends, and preserving our environment.

The Lieutenant Governor's Office traditionally doesn't play a major role in specific policy items. But by building bridges, forging new partnerships, and setting a new tone in Montpelier, I know we can get these things done. With the right energy and focus, anything is possible. And by teaming up with Governor Scott, I know we can help bring prosperity to all Vermonters.

If we all pull together, we can overcome our challenges and invest in a brighter future for ourselves, our children, our grandchildren, and our neighbors. Together, we can forge a path forward.

Thank you for taking the time to read my ProgressVT plan. I hope to earn your vote to be Vermont's next Lieutenant Governor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Milne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Milne



PROTECTING THE TRULY NEEDY

“Now more than ever, state government has an obligation to protect the most vulnerable Vermonters as they struggle with the combined effects of a pandemic and economic crisis. By making childcare more affordable, supporting our seniors, and rethinking our safety net to make it stronger than ever, we can build a solid foundation for the truly needy Vermonters and help them realize prosperity.”

- Scott Milne

Improving Access to Affordable Child Care

Expanding Child Care Ratio Flexibility: Burdensome ratio requirements are a critical constraint on childcare capacity. Indeed, Vermont has incredibly stringent child-to-staff ratios, especially for children older than 18 months. This limits available spots and increases costs for working families. The Agency of Human Services (AHS) should explore increasing ratios for children in the 18 month to 15 year age categories, as well as adjusting group maximums to allow for additional flexibility.

Adjust Child Care Financial Assistance Payments: The Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) has been critical in helping low-income Vermonters and working families access child care. While the Legislature has increased the benefit size in recent years, more focus needs to be given to the program's sliding fee scale and eligibility requirements. AHS should examine adjusting the federal poverty level (FPL) limits to spread out the program in a way that eases the burden on working families as they increase their incomes.

Supporting Our Elderly Vermonters

Fully Repealing the Tax on Social Security Income: In 2018, Vermont took a strong step toward exempting Social Security payments from state income taxes for low-income retirees. However, the income definitions of affordability in the bill don't reflect the reality that many middle-income earners over the age of 65 still struggle with affordability. The tax on Social Security income should be fully repealed to help these seniors and put Vermont in-line with the dozens of other states that don't tax Social Security at all.

Expanding the Income Tax Deduction for Medical Expenses: As part of a tax reform package in 2018, the Legislature inadvertently hiked taxes on those with high medical expenses—especially Vermont seniors. They partially restored a state medical deduction in 2019 in response to a justified outcry by Vermonters. However, this deduction should be expanded by restoring the full deduction.

Rethinking Vermont's Social Safety Net

Fixing the Benefits Cliff: One of the most significant challenges that vulnerable Vermonters face is the prospect of increasing income leading to a greater decline in benefits. Early on in his administration, Governor Scott took swift action to address this in Vermont's "Reach Up" program. However, the issue is far from resolved. The Legislature should form a task force to examine the benefits cliff issue and make recommendations on how Vermont can and should adjust its social services programs to ease life for struggling families.

Preserving Resources for the Most Vulnerable: In 2019, Vermont paid nearly \$1.6 million in improper unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. Yet so far in 2020, Vermont has recovered less than half of UI overpayments and fraud. Every dollar spent on improper payments and fraud is a dollar that cannot go to the truly needy. This is especially important as more and more Vermonters have entered the UI program during the COVID-19 crisis. Vermont should remove time limits on benefit offsets for UI overpayments and ensure sufficient program integrity measures are being implemented.



“From Derby to Dover, our rural towns and villages make up the backbone of our state. They were once an anchor for tourism and growth, but they have been left behind. It’s long past time we bring prosperity to all four corners of our state by investing in rural broadband, leveraging Vermont’s unique outdoor economy, and supporting our struggling farmers.”

- **Scott Milne**

REVITALIZING RURAL VERMONT

Expanding Access to Rural Broadband

Eliminating the Sales Tax on Network Equipment: Many communications providers ignore Vermont for strategic investments due to our high costs of doing business. Vermont should incentivize investments in broadband and communications infrastructure by eliminating the sales tax on network equipment to encourage providers to build-out and upgrade our communications capacity.

Reprioritizing CDBG Funds: Millions in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are distributed to Vermont towns and organizations every year. However, rarely do these funds support projects that increase communications build-out or broadband expansion, even though federal law permits it. The Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) should place a strong focus on funding projects that seek to increase communications capacity in underserved areas of Vermont when allocating CDBG funds.

Leveraging Our Outdoor Economy

Eliminating Act 250 Jurisdiction for Recreation Trails: Just last year, we heard about the issues with the Victory Hill Sector in the Northeast Kingdom due to Act 250 following a permit ruling. Act 250 was designed to support sustainable development and protect Vermont's natural resources, not stifle our outdoor economy. As Governor Scott's Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) has already put forth, the state should eliminate Act 250 jurisdiction over recreational trails.

Creating An Outdoor-Focused Income Tax Check-Off: In 2017, VOREC proposed adding a check-off box on Vermont's income tax returns to encourage support for outdoor recreation stewardship. Vermont should adopt this simple, common-sense measure as soon as possible.

Protecting Our Farmers

Exempting On-Farm Accessory Businesses from Act 250: Vermonters farmers often operate accessory enterprises on their farms, from camps to tractor rides. The Legislature should remove these on-farm accessory businesses from Act 250 review (as the Agency of Agriculture has proposed) to give our farmers a break from even more red tape.

Protecting the Right to Farm: This year, several legislators introduced measures to amend Vermont's right-to-farm law that includes additional protections against nuisance allegations and lawsuits. These common-sense provisions should be adopted to protect our farmers from unnecessary litigation and expenses.



OPENING UP THE LT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

“The Lieutenant Governor should be a bridge-builder, someone who rises above partisanship to make real change for Vermonters. The Office of Lieutenant Governor must be committed to healing divisions, setting an example for transparency and accountability, and providing service to all Vermonters--regardless of background or political party.”

- **Scott Milne**

OPENING UP THE LT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Putting Partisanship Aside

Weekly Leadership Meetings: As Lieutenant Governor, I will commit to meeting with the leadership of the Democratic, Republican, and Progressive caucuses on a weekly basis. Hosting regular meetings will open up opportunities for discussion and collaboration, and help break down partisan barriers to inaction.

Balanced Committee Assignments: In my capacity as Lieutenant Governor, I will push to ensure that all standing and special committees have balanced representation from members of the minority parties. Unfortunately, that has not always been the case, and a change is long overdue.

Fostering Transparency and Accountability

Opening Up the Committee on Committees: One of the main functions of the Lieutenant Governor is to sit on the three-person Committee on Committees, which decides committee assignments for the Senate. However, this Committee has long been charged with a lack of transparency in its deliberations. As Lieutenant Governor, I would direct my Chief of Staff to provide a written report to the press and public after each meeting, detailing what the major deliberations have covered.

Helping Vermonters Navigate State Government: On my official website, I would create a digital “roadmap” to help Vermonters navigate the increasingly-complicated web of state government. My Chief of Staff would be available to assist Vermonters with any questions on where constituents should direct their inquiries within the Executive branch.

Working for You

Budget Restraint: The budget of the Lieutenant Governor's Office has grown by more than 30 percent since the current occupant took office only a handful of years ago. As Lieutenant Governor, I would pledge to limit my office's spending to no greater than the rate of inflation—roughly 2 percent per year. It is vital that state leaders set an example as Vermonters are forced to live within their means in these uncertain and challenging times.

OPENING UP THE LT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Weekly Coffee Hours: When the COVID-19 health crisis is over, I would schedule weekly coffee hours as Lieutenant Governor, continuing the tradition of the office. Ensuring everyday Vermonters have access to the Lieutenant Governor's Office is vitally important to democracy.



GROWING OUR WORKFORCE

“Vermont has long struggled with a demographic crisis that threatens to undermine our economy. We have an obligation to invest in the talent already here, simplify existing workforce programs to make them work more efficiently, and support new families and individuals who decide to make Vermont their home.”

- **Scott Milne**

Investing in Our Existing Talent

Providing a Fresh Start: Vermont's laws on occupational licensing for those with criminal backgrounds are ambiguous at best. We should not discriminate against licensing applicants who have been rehabilitated and whose underlying conviction has no relation to the profession or occupation they are applying to work in. It's time we give these Vermonters a fresh start by adding clarity and specificity to the licensing process, and recognize the ability of individuals to overcome past challenges.

Expanding Apprenticeships: Right now, many young Vermonters have to go through burdensome financial, educational, and experience-related requirements to obtain an occupational license. As an alternative to the existing pathways for licensure, the State should allow individuals who have completed a registered apprenticeship program in their field to qualify for an occupational license, as long as they meet the requirements and pass all background checks.

Streamlining Workforce Development

Consolidating Workforce Programs: There are currently several dozen workforce-related boards, programs, and initiatives with overlapping areas of focus. Instead of spreading out our energies among multiple entities, we should work to unify our efforts and consolidate these organizations and programs.

Re-Thinking the Workforce Development Board: Currently, the Vermont Workforce Development Board has roughly 50 members. That's larger than the entire Vermont Senate. Accomplishing important work through a board is challenging enough, but a board of this size makes it nearly impossible. Vermont's laws should be revised to limit the board's membership to a workable and manageable group that can truly dedicate its focus to Vermont's workforce challenges.

Supporting New Vermonters

Licensing Recognition and Reciprocity: Many new residents struggle with occupational licensing. Some have licenses in their former states that aren't recognized by Vermont, so they have to go through the licensure process all over again. Others worked in industries that weren't licensed by their previous state, but are licensed by the state of Vermont. Vermont should implement universal licensing reciprocity for those with out of state licenses, and licensing recognition for those who have deep experience in an industry that wasn't regulated by their prior state of residence. This will break down major barriers to entering the workforce in our state, help the economic recovery, and make us an attractive state for hardworking professionals. Thankfully, the Legislature is working on this issue—but more needs to be done.

Welcoming New Americans: Over the last few years, the Trump administration has unfortunately rolled back the number of refugees allowed to enter the United States, including Vermont. Governor Scott has wisely written to the federal administration to allow more refugees to resettle in Vermont. As Lieutenant Governor, I would partner with the Governor on these efforts to engage with federal stakeholders and bring new Americans to our great state.



“As a result of COVID-19, health care is at the front of many Vermonters’ minds. Working families have long struggled with affordability and access. They feel as if they’re stuck without affordable options and choices, and face major uncertainty. But there are real, common-sense solutions to increase access to affordable health care, from Southern Vermont to the Northeast Kingdom.”

- **Scott Milne**

Increasing Affordability and Accessibility

End Surprise Medical Bills: A bipartisan group of legislators has put forth a bill to limit surprise medical bills in Vermont. In this time of great health uncertainty, Vermonters are worried about their out-of-pocket exposure. This legislation should be enacted as soon as possible, and further limits should be placed on the ability of creditors and debt collectors to ruin Vermonters credit from these surprise bills.

Implementing the All-Payer Model: Governor Scott's implementation of the All-Payer Model is working. Indeed, Vermont is the only All-Payer state to show significant cost savings by the federal government. We should continue to follow the Governor's lead and implement this program that focuses on quality of care rather than fee-for-service.

Promoting Choice and Competition

Enacting Price Transparency: When it comes to health care, where you shop matters. Different providers and facilities often charge Vermonters' different prices for the same services. Maine has implemented a "Right to Shop" in health care, where providers display real prices ahead of time and give consumers the ability to shop for more affordable options (and share in the cost savings). Vermont should follow Maine's lead and give Vermonters transparency in health care.

Expanding Telehealth: As part of Vermont's response to the COVID-19 crisis, we expanded telehealth arrangements and allowed medical professionals from certain other states to practice in Vermont. These protections should be made permanent and expanded, so that a Vermonter's location isn't a limiting factor in determining their access to health care. Individuals in Barton should have just as much of a right to access medical care as those in Burlington. Expanding telehealth to allow out-of-state medical professionals to offer telehealth services in Vermont is an important step towards helping those in underserved areas, individuals with chronic conditions who require frequent medical consultations, and those without adequate access to transportation.

Strengthening Our Provider Network

Repealing Certificate of Need Laws: Certificate of Need (CON) laws impose barriers to new providers or existing providers who want to expand their practice. Vermont has some of the most burdensome CON laws in the nation, including a moratorium on home health agencies. Independent estimates suggest Vermonters would have greater access to facilities, better health care outcomes, and save nearly \$300 million each year by repealing CON laws. We've suspended many CON laws during the pandemic; there's no reason why we shouldn't build on this and eliminate these burdensome laws once and for all, like more than a dozen other states already have.

Supporting Direct Primary Care Arrangements: Direct Primary Care (DPC) allows patients and doctors to establish arrangements directly, cutting out the middleman of insurance. Vermont is one of only a handful of states that hasn't codified DPC arrangements, potentially limiting options for consumers and providers alike. We should follow the lead of a majority of other states and enact a DPC framework.



EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

“Our state’s future lies with the bright young minds in our education system today. We need to rethink the way we expand educational opportunities by encouraging innovation in the classroom, making strategic investments in higher education, and revising our education funding system to offer real property tax relief without compromising quality.”

- **Scott Milne**

EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Rewarding Innovation

Establishing Innovation and Modernization Grants: In 2017, Governor Scott proposed a set of grants designed to innovate the Vermont K-12 school system. Unfortunately, these grants were not funded by the Legislature. To fully modernize our education system, we should establish grants in the Education Fund for innovative new teaching methods and modernization that rewards making efficient use of resources.

Encouraging Smart Use of Facilities: One of the main goals of Vermont's recent efforts toward administrative consolidation was to achieve cost savings through finding efficiencies in overhead and excess capacity. Given Vermont's population decline, we have an excess of physical capacity in many schools throughout the state. The Agency of Education (AOE) should work to form collaborative partnerships to find alternative uses for space when K-12 learning isn't taking place, such as sharing the space for child care, co-working, senior events, and other community functions.

Investing in Higher Education

Recurring Investments in Post K-12 Education: Our higher education system is chronically underfunded, especially compared to other states. The Legislature should not only work to provide a much needed boost to the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) in FY21, but should also grow the state's appropriations to the VSC, UVM, and the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) by inflation annually, so that these important investments keep growing over time.

Overhauling the Education Fund: For far too long, the prevailing wisdom in Montpelier is that the Education Fund should only be used for K-12 purposes. But the continuum of learning doesn't start in kindergarten and end in high school. We should move higher education expenses into the Education Fund to fully recognize they are an educational expense like any other, and possibly increase revenue resources to the Education Fund in return. This will deflate future arguments of "robbing the Education Fund" to pay for higher education.

EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Rethinking Education Funding

Changing the Funding Formula: Vermont's current funding formula is broken, and that is one of the reasons Vermonters struggle with ever-rising property taxes. The Legislature needs to revamp this formula—which hasn't substantively changed in nearly two decades—to provide real property tax relief. A strong approach would be to adopt the plan put forth by Representative Scott Beck (St. Johnsbury) where districts would be given a base spending and tax amount. Tax rate increases would be applied to spending above the base figure, while low-spending districts would be rewarded with lower rates. This would reward districts for spending prudently, instead of punishing them.

Cutting Down on Property Tax Adjustments: Right now, so-called Property Tax Adjustments (PTAs) account for roughly \$170 million in the Education Fund. \$170 million in a subsidy program that exists to fund education doesn't make sense. Indeed, these PTAs have the effect of insulating voters from the full effects of their spending decisions. If we simply applied an asset-test to income sensitivity--one of the largest PTAs--we could provide between \$5 and \$7 million in property tax relief to Vermonters annually. We should take a hard look at cutting back on PTAs and returning the savings to Vermonters in the form of property tax relief.



“Vermont state government has become a bloated model of antiquated 20th century institutions. Under Governor Scott, we’ve achieved enormous progress through common-sense steps, like the unification of IT services under one roof. But there are more efficiencies we can act on and more ways to improve accountability and transparency. It may require us to think outside the box and look at new solutions, but Vermonters deserve nothing less than an open, honest, and efficient state government.”

- Scott Milne

STREAMLINING STATE GOVERNMENT

Acting on Efficiencies

Merging ACCD and DOL: When Governor Scott first came into office, he outlined several government modernization priorities that dealt with streamlining existing agencies and departments. One of these was merging the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) with the Department of Labor (DOL) into an Agency of Economic Opportunity. This common-sense merger would connect two state entities that have similar policy focuses and interests, as well as improve coordination on workforce development efforts. The Legislature should codify this executive order.

Combining Public Safety Functions Under One Roof: Another streamlining idea that has achieved traction has been to build an Agency of Public Safety that houses all law enforcement personnel and functions under one roof. This would improve accountability, align similar priorities, and simplify training. The Legislature should seriously consider this idea.

Improving Honesty and Transparency

Strengthening Ethics Laws: Vermont has among the weakest ethics laws in the country. The Legislature should re-look at the current structure of the Ethics Commission, and bolster other ethics laws. For example, there is a law requiring candidates for Governor to release their tax returns, but no teeth to implement that law, which has been demonstrated previously. Bolstering our ethics laws should be a top priority.

Pushing Back on the Attorney General's Office: Holding our statewide elected officials accountable is critical. Recently, the Vermont Attorney General's Office has made questionable decisions relating to government transparency and accountability. For example, the Attorney General has issued an opinion that requires Vermonters who want to take a picture of a public record to pay a fee—even if it costs the agency nothing. The Attorney General has also dropped the ball on adequately investigating racial justice issues, notably with the case of former State Representative Kiah Morris of Bennington. The Legislature should step up where the Attorney General has stood down, and consider reining in the Attorney General's authority, establishing an independent office for oversight of the Attorney General, or leveraging the power of the purse.

STREAMLINING STATE GOVERNMENT

Rebuilding a 21st Century Structure

Focusing on Downstream Governments: Vermont has long concentrated power in the hands of municipal and state officials, with little oversight at the county level. Indeed, unelected regional planning commissions and supervisory unions constitute the closest thing to real county governance—aside from certain law enforcement functions. We should reevaluate this approach, and determine whether building-up functions at the county or regional level would be a more efficient manner of distributing resources, determining policy, and coordinating efforts compared to a statewide, one-size fits all approach.

Reining-in Bureaucratic Boards: The board-model of governance is a relic of the 20th century that plagues Vermont state government. While the Governor's establishment of a Sunset Advisory Commission to recommend the retiring of certain boards and commissions is an excellent start, there are certain areas where more urgent action is needed. What boards there are have limited functions, leaving the administrative duties to secretaries and agency personnel.



“From Lake Champlain to Calvin Coolidge State Park, Vermont’s natural environment offers unique and unparalleled beauty. It’s our responsibility to preserve these environmental gems, reduce our carbon footprint, and invest in 21st century energy solutions to build a better state that recognizes our environment and our economy are intrinsically linked.”

- **Scott Milne**

SECURING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Incentivizing Renewable Energy

Sales Tax Holiday for Energy Efficiency: In his first year in office, Governor Scott proposed a sales tax holiday for electric vehicles (EVs) and energy efficient products and equipment. Unfortunately, this proposal was not funded by the Legislature. This incentive will encourage Vermonters to upgrade more efficient vehicles and appliances. We should move forward with this common-sense idea.

Fixing the SHEI Mistake: The Sheldon-Highgate Export Interface (SHEI) is a archetypal example of poor planning. Regulators approved massive renewable energy buildout in a low-demand area, without the transmission capacity to transfer it to regions with greater energy demand. Legislators should modify Vermont's energy citing law to adequately vet transmission load sufficiency as part of the Certificate of Public Good (CPG) process. This will align our renewable energy goals with our ability to transmit clean energy.

Cleaning Up Our Waterways

Tackling Combined Sewer Overflows: Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) occur when aging wastewater systems release untreated wastewater into waterways, often due to strain from weather events. Currently, millions of gallons of waste are poured into Vermont waterways by municipalities each year. The primary culprits are the outdated infrastructure of just over a dozen treatment systems. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) should accelerate and increase its enforcement efforts relating to CSOs to encourage municipalities to upgrade their ageing infrastructure as soon as possible.

Modifying State Incentive Programs: Vermont lawmakers have previously proposed amendments to the Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI) program to prioritize businesses focused on the reduction of water pollution and the goals of the Vermont Clean Water Act. Unfortunately, this legislation has not successfully passed in previous sessions, and it should be reintroduced and passed as soon as possible.

Leading by Example

Expanding the State EV Fleet: Recent legislation set the goal of 75 percent of new additions to the state vehicle fleet being hybrid or full EVs. However, as technology changes, we should set more aggressive targets. The Legislature should require 85 percent of new additions to the state's vehicle fleet to be hybrid or full EVs by 2026.



VALUING ENTREPRENEURS

“Today’s young entrepreneurs will bring us technological innovations that have the power to change the world. Vermont has an opportunity to welcome these entrepreneurs and invest in their talent by enacting common-sense incentives, cutting red tape, and rewarding innovative solutions that will build the foundation for a stronger state.”

- **Scott Milne**

Breaking Down Barriers and Recognizing Entrepreneurial Changes

Reforming Act 250: Act 250 has strayed from its goal of sustainable development and environmental protection. The process has become too easily hijacked by opponents of development for non-environmental reasons, such as market competitors concerned about the impact of a project on their bottom line. We should implement common-sense reforms to the Act 250 process, including: exempting designated state centers from Act 250 review as proposed by the Governor, allowing other state permits to satisfy certain Act 250 criteria automatically, allocating greater resources to the Environmental Court to speed up the appeals process, and creating a higher standard of proof for market competitors appealing projects.

Codifying Social Entrepreneurship: The definition of entrepreneurship has changed from the focus of a singular bottom-line to multiple bottom lines that focus on people and plant along with profit. These are reflected in the rise in social businesses, B-corporations, and other mission-based businesses. We should codify and fully recognize these innovative entrepreneurial ventures in state law, and add them to our state economic incentive programs as well.

Implementing Common-Sense Incentives

Creating an Angel Investor Tax Credit: Not long ago, a bipartisan group of lawmakers proposed adding an Angel Investor Tax Credit to Vermont law. This would encourage successful venture capitalists looking to invest in and support Vermont-based startups. Vermont should enact this tax credit at 50 percent of the value of the investment (with reasonable caps) to foster innovation and promote Vermont-based businesses.

Restoring the Film Production Tax Credit: In 2011, Vermont repealed the film tax credit, benefiting our neighboring states with more lucrative incentive programs. Both our neighbors to the north and to the south—Canada and Massachusetts—have film production incentives and are drawing talent to their regions for filming. We should restore this tax credit and encourage movie and TV producers to choose our beautiful state for their filming location.

Rewarding Innovation

Bolstering the R&D Tax Credit: In 2014, Vermont reduced the value of its Research and Development (R&D) tax credit. This discouraged Vermont businesses from investing in innovation and technological advances. We should restore the full value of the R&D tax credit to at least 30 percent of the value of the federal R&D tax credit, if not more.

Establishing Enterprise Zones: In 2016, members of the Vermont Legislature sought to establish Enterprise Zones to encourage economic growth and entrepreneurship in underserved areas. Unfortunately, this concept did not make it in the final version of the bill. We should revisit this idea, and establish enterprise zones that receive priority approval for state incentive programs and funding, as well as expedited permit review or exemptions.



TACKLING AFFORDABILITY

“Vermonters were struggling with an affordability crisis long before COVID-19. But there’s no doubt it has made the situation even more dire. Vermonters desperately need real tax relief and access to truly affordable housing, as well as a state government that lives within its means—not beyond them—as Vermonters already do every single day.”

- **Scott Milne**

Budgeting Within Our Means

Following the Growth Rate Calculation: When Governor Scott took office, his administration formulated the Growth Rate Calculation (GRC), a measure of state spending based on a multi-year rolling average of wage growth. The Governor has consistently limited state spending growth within the GRC. We should continue to budget within our means—just like Vermonters do every day—and abide by the GRC. However, we should also begin applying it to high-level agencies and departments in addition to the entire budget, to ensure that fiscal discipline is spread throughout state government.

Providing Real Tax Relief

Eliminating Taxation of Military Retirement Income: It is long past time for Vermont to join the overwhelming majority of states by eliminating the tax on military retirement income, as the Governor has proposed in several budgets. Our military members deserve to retire here with dignity, not struggle with an unaffordable economic climate long after they have served our nation. We should adopt this common-sense tax relief measure as soon as possible.

Expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC): The EITC is a proven tool to help working families and increase affordability without imposing harmful mandates on Vermont small businesses. We should increase the state EITC from 36 percent of the federal credit to 40 percent in order to provide further tax relief.

Encouraging Affordable Housing

Strengthening Priority Housing Projects: Priority Housing Projects (PHPs) have become a powerful tool to increase the supply of affordable housing in Vermont by exempting targeted projects from Act 250 review. However, some of the PHP requirements in state law are tedious and difficult for developers to achieve. The Legislature should reduce housing unit caps to make projects more economical and add greater flexibility for the percent buildings required to be mixed income housing. Together, these changes will encourage the creation of more affordable housing units.

Expanding the Down Payment Assistance Program: The Down Payment Assistance Program has helped hundreds of first-time homebuyers in Vermont afford their down payments. The value of credits to the program should be increased by an additional \$50,000 annually to support home ownership, and the program's scheduled sunset should be repealed.



THE BOTTOM LINE

As Vermont's Lieutenant Governor, I will work tirelessly to ensure that state government has your back and isn't at your throat. By focusing on the fundamentals, reaching across the aisle, and building a more resilient state government, we can spread prosperity across our great state.

It starts with treating others with decency and respect, and restoring the sense of community that is the fabric of Vermont. Vermonters are honest, frugal, hardworking people. We need to leverage our shared values and commitment to a better future for our state to achieve real change.

Let's roll up our sleeves, and work together to overcome our challenges and put Vermont on a solid path forward.