



Vermont Interfaith Action

Transforming People and Communities

November 9th, 2021

Gov. Phil Scott
109 State Street, Pavilion
Montpelier, VT 05609

Dear Governor Scott,

Over the past 20 months, we have shown that as a state we are more than capable of housing those who do not currently have the resources to house themselves. Since federal dollars are still available, we call on you and your Administration to reinstate the General Assistance motel program to include all who are unhoused or may become unhoused, including those who were kicked out of the federally reimbursed program at the end of June 2021.

While we thank you for listening to us and extending the federally funded motel program until the end of the year for those who were originally allowed to remain in motels during the summer, we also acknowledge that to put people on the street in the middle of winter is immoral. We call on you to extend and fully reinstate the motel program until we are able to transition Vermonters to safe, long-term housing. This should include those who are currently housed in motels as well as the 1,000+ who were forced to exit already, as well as all those who may become homeless soon.

We call on you and your Administration to not wait until the legislative session begins but to take bold action now in creating a cohesive and safe longer-term housing plan. This plan must be presented to the public and notice must be given to those experiencing homelessness in a way that clearly explains their options and rights to accessing and retaining housing. It is unconscionable to keep stringing precariously housed Vermonters along, making decisions at the last minute about whether their housing will be extended a few weeks more. The anxiety and fear this produces make these Vermonters' situation worse.

To summarize our position as faith leaders, our message is this:

- **All Vermonters deserve housing.**
- **Putting people out on the street at the start of winter is immoral.**
- **Extending the motel program a month or two at a time creates anxiety in those who face housing insecurity. This is the moment for bold leadership.**

We have seen you demonstrate bold leadership on other issues, Governor Scott, when your forward-thinking could have been politically detrimental. We know you have compassion for Vermonters who are suffering from lack of stable housing. Please act now to assist them.

Sincerely,

We the undersigned

<u>Name</u>	<u>Faith Community</u>
Executive Director, Rev. Debbie Ingram	Vermont Interfaith Action
Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown	Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
Rev. Lynn Bujnak	Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ
Rev. Bath Ann Maier	Christ Church and Church of Good Shepherd
Brother Thomas Berube	Roman Catholic/Society of St. Edmund
Rabbi David Edleson	Temple Siani Synagogue
Rev. Canon Dr. Walter Brownridge	The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
Rev. Joan Javier-Duval	Unitarian Church of Montpelier
Rabbi David Fainsilber	Jewish Community of Greater Stowe
Cheryl Wilfong	Vermont Insight Meditation Center
Rev. Elisa Lucozzi	Guilford Community Church
Rev. Carl Hilton VanOsdall	First Presbyterian Church of Barre
Rev. Ralph W. Howe	First United Methodist Church of Brattleboro
Rev. Kim Marie Glynn	All Souls Interfaith Gathering
Rev. Jonathan Heydenreich	Trinity Lutheran Church
Rev. Paul Sangree	Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ
Rev. Katelyn Macrae	Richmond Congregational Church, UCC
Rev. Jackie Lingelbach	Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ
Catherine Kidder	West Newbury Congregational Church
Rev. Jennie Anderson	St. Barnabas Church
The Very Rev. Greta Getlein	Cathedral Church of St. Paul
The Right Rev. Thomas Ely	retired Bishop of Vermont Episcopal Church
Rev. Sarah Flynn	retired Associate Member Good Shepherd Lutheran
Rev. Sally May	Malletts Bay, UCC
Rev. Peter Plagge	Waterbury Congregational Church, UCC

<u>Name</u>	<u>Faith Community</u>
Rev. Robin Junker	Thetford Hill Church, UCC
Rev. Dr. Scott Couper	Centre Congregational Church, UCC
Rev. Robert Hamm	Newfane Congregational Church
Rev. Dr. Shawn E. Bracebridge	Dummerston Congregational Church, UCC
Ms. Jamie Newer	Newfane Congregational Church, UCC
Rev. Dr. Dave Ransom	Second Congregational UCC, Jeffersonville
Rev. Daniel Wright	United Church of Christ
Rev. Jennifer Mihok	United Church of Underhill
Rev. Kevin Holland Sparrow	Christ Church
Rev. Frederick Neu	Shepherd of the Hills
Rev. Amy Spagna	St. James Episcopal Church
Rev. Mark Preece	St. Martin's Episcopal Church
The Rev. Lisa Ransom	Episcopal Church
The Rev. John R. Spainhour	Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Rev. Dr. Linda Maloney	Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
The Rev. Mary Bidwell	St. Paul's Vergennes
The Very Reverend Diane Nancekivell	Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
The Rev. Alan Kittelson	Episcopal Church
The Rev. Canon Dr. David Hamilton	All Saints Episcopal Church
Rev. Jean MacDonald	Episcopal Church
The Rev. Robert Stuhlmann	Calvary Episcopal Church, Jericho, Underhill
Rev. Sarah Sally Webster	The Cathedral Church of St. Paul
Rev. Canon Susan Ohlidal	Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
The Rev. Diane Root	retired minister
Rev. Elmaire Emerson	Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
The Rev. Mary Taggart	Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
Rev. Janet Brown	Grace Episcopal Church, Sheldon
The Rev. John Morris	Episcopal Church
The Rev. Betty Berlenbach	St. James Episcopal Church, Woodstock and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Springfield
Rev. Mary White	Episcopal Church
Rev. Christine Jones	St. John's Episcopal Church
Rev. Lucy Pellegrini	Deacon St. Paul's Episcopal Church

<u>Name</u>	<u>Faith Community</u>
Rev. Rachel Field	St. Thomas & Grace, Brandon
Rev. Amy Davin	First Congregational Church of Hartland
Rev. Donna Reidt	St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Rev. Sherry Osborn	St. Paul's Episcopal Church
The Rev. Dr. Fredrick Moser	Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
Rabbi Amy Small	Ohavi Zedek Synagogue
Rev. Susan-Lynn Johns	The Universalist Unitarian Congregation of St. Johnsbury
Rev. Patricia Hart	First Unitarian Universalist Society
Rev. L Paul Gratz	Episcopal Church in Vermont
Rev. Barnaby Feder	Unitarian Universalist
The Rev. Ann Hockridge	Third and Lower Waterford Congregational Churches
Rev. Paul Sawyer	First Universalist Society of Hartland
Rev. Marjorie MacNeill	College Street Congregational Church (member)
Rev. Leigh McCaffrey	Barre Congregational Church
The Rev. Mary Lindquist	St. Michael's Episcopal Church
Rabbi Jan Slazman	Ruach haMaqom Synagogue
Venerable Stannard Baker	Cathedral Church of St. Paul
Rabbi Ilene Haigh	Shir Shalom Vermont Woodstock Area Jewish Community
Rev. Rachel Fraumann	Hedding United Methodist Church, Barre
Rev. Elissa Johnk	First Congregational Church of Burlington, UCC
Rev. Joshua Simon	First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
Rev. Gwendolyn Groff	Bethany Mennonite Church
CJ King (seminarian student)	Jamaica Community Church
Rev. Dr. Lise Sparrow	Windham County NAACP Religious Affairs
Rev. Matthew von Behrens	United Church of Christ
Rev. Kerry Cameron	Burlington First United Methodist Church
Rev. Ken White	College Street Congregational Church
Rev. Katherine Arthaud	United Church of Fairfax
The Rev. Earl Kooperkamp	Church of the Good Shepherd
Rev. Jan Hutslar	Unitarian Universalist