

No. R-136. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Vermont Supported Employment Program for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities on winning the 2017 Innovative Policy Award on Employment, Work, and Vocational Education.

(H.C.R.106)

Offered by: Representatives Wood of Waterbury, Gamache of Swanton, Haas of Rochester, Keefe of Manchester, McFaun of Barre Town, Mrowicki of Putney, Noyes of Wolcott, Pugh of South Burlington, Rosenquist of Georgia, and Troiano of Stannard

Whereas, in 1983, the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL), in partnership with other State offices, the University of Vermont, and community providers established the Vermont Supported Employment Program (VSEP) as an initiative to move persons with developmental disabilities from segregated and sheltered employment paying substandard wages into more standard employment and competitive wages, and

Whereas, VSEP currently provides 1,260 Vermonters with developmental disabilities employment in a regular work environment, and

Whereas, based on a formula of VSEP-sponsored programs per 100 persons of a state's population, Vermont has achieved a 48 percent employment rate, the highest in the nation and well above the national average of 35 percent, and

Whereas, in 2015, VSEP wages totaled \$5,101,938.00, facilitating a corresponding reduction in Supplemental Security Income payments of \$1,699,763.00, and

Whereas, in 2002, Vermont closed its last sheltered workshop, and

Whereas, the Zero Project is an international organization with a mission to eliminate all barriers for persons with disabilities, and the World Future Council promotes a society where universal rights are respected, and

Whereas, the two organizations presented DAIL and its VSEP partners the 2017 Innovative Policy Award on Employment, Work, and Vocational Education in recognition of VSEP's superb leadership in supported employment for persons with developmental disabilities, and

Whereas, the Vermont Chapter of the Association of People Supporting Employment First and the University of Vermont (UVM) funded a delegation consisting of Bryan Dague (UVM), Elizabeth Sightler (Champlain Community Services), and Lisa Culbertson (Upper Valley Services) to attend the Zero Project Conference at the United Nations in Vienna, Austria where the award was presented on February 23, 2017, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Vermont Supported Employment Program for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities on being presented the 2017 Innovative Policy Award on Employment, Work, and Vocational Education, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living and the VSEP partnering organizations.