



State to Main

The Voice of Vermont Business



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[Governor Scott Proposes \\$400 Million Relief Plan](#)

The economic recovery and relief package includes \$310 million in immediate relief and is largely funded by the federal CARES Act. Over the last several weeks, the Vermont Chamber has pushed for a relief package to help Vermont businesses through mandatory closures and restricted restart and recovery periods. This economic relief package addresses much of the need highlighted by the Vermont Chamber during advocacy efforts. The proposal requires legislative approval and the Vermont Chamber will continue to work with legislative leaders to encourage immediate action.

[February and March Meals and Rooms Tax Abatement Unlikely](#)

After a coordinated push by the Vermont Chamber, Governor Scott directed the Commissioner of Taxes to exercise his authority to provide relief to Vermont businesses who owed March and April meals and rooms or sales and use tax. The Administration's actions meant that business owners who were unable to meet the original deadlines would not be charged any penalty or interest on these taxes for late submissions. Due to a recently agreed upon budget plan that anticipates future collection of these taxes, it now appears unlikely that the Legislature will approve full abatement.

[Legislature Revisits Single Use Plastics Ban for Lodging and Climate Bill](#)

Legislators continued committee deliberation of bills unrelated to COVID-19 response or economic relief. The Senate Committee on Natural Resources reviewed the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA). The Committee also reviewed a bill that would prohibit

lodging establishments from providing single-use personal care products to guests. With many establishments closed or operating in a limited manner, the possibility of being forced to invest additional funds in retrofitting rooms with multiple-use dispensers is a daunting prospect for lodging operators. The Vermont Chamber will continue to convey to legislators the reality that businesses require immediate action to ensure relief funds are distributed in a timely manner. At this time, businesses have little or no capacity to absorb additional administrative mandates or costs.

[Vermont Chamber Submits Comment on Broadband Plan](#)

After weeks of discussions with public and private stakeholders, the Vermont Chamber submitted public comment to the Department of Public Service (DPS) regarding the Department's recently proposed Emergency Broadband Action Plan (EBAP). If implemented, the EBAP would deliver emergency broadband access to areas with limited or no connectivity. The Vermont Chamber's comments were supportive of the EBAP. The Vermont Chamber believes Vermont is well positioned to be a work-from-home capital and our team will continue working with state officials and the congressional delegation to advocate for the federal funding necessary for realizing this goal.

[DOL Argues Workers' Compensation Bill Unnecessary](#)

During testimony delivered to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, the Director of Vermont's Workers' Compensation and Safety Division explained to legislators that recently proposed changes to workers' compensation eligibility may be unnecessary. The discussed legislation passed in the Senate despite little being known about the impact these changes could have on employer's workers' compensation insurance rates. The Vermont Chamber is communicating with House legislators to advocate for a result that does not place unsustainable additional costs on businesses, many of which continue to struggle financially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Vermont Chamber Assists Tourism Industry with Reopening Questions](#)

The Vermont Chamber is the restaurant and lodging trade association for the state of Vermont and the designated state affiliate of the National Restaurant Association and the American Hotel and Lodging Association. As the statewide voice for Vermont's tourism industry, the Vermont Chamber staff is well-versed on the Work Safe additions to the Be Smart, Stay Safe Order, and has been fielding inquiries and providing clarifying guidance as businesses prepare to reopen. As you prepare to reopen your tourism business and train your employees, please do not hesitate to [contact Amy Spear](#) with questions or concerns.

[Resource Roundup](#)

The Vermont Chamber staff has spent hundreds of hours on COVID-19 Zoom calls, conference calls, and webinars learning so that we can answer your questions in this ever-

changing time. Collectively, we have had thousands of individual communications with members and non-members during the crisis. It is likely we can help you, too. [Contact us](#) with questions and we will get you answers. We have also seen excellent content from our members and Vermont agencies, which we are compiling weekly in our *Resource Roundup*. If you have content to include, send links to news@vtchamber.com. Thank you for your continued support. We are in this together.

[In Case You Missed It](#)

[Restaurants Can Open for Limited Outdoor Dining Beginning Friday](#)

[Final Reading: Stricter Mask Requirements May Come From the Statehouse](#)

[Vt. Lawmakers to Address Scott Stimulus Plan Next Week](#)

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In business since 1912, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce is a private, not-for-profit business organization with 1,500 members employing 45,000 people and representing all sectors of the state's economy. Our mission is to create an economic climate conducive to business growth and the preservation of the Vermont quality of life. Copyright ©2018 The Vermont Chamber of Commerce. All Rights Reserved.

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