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**[Increasing Workforce Participation Is the #1 Issue](#)**

The House Commerce Committee reviewed H.703, a proposal to create a workforce development provider portal to enable providers, educators, training program administrators, and others to exchange information about services. For the past four years, the Vermont Chamber has led the effort to increase workforce participation since members have identified the lack of people to fill open jobs as their number one issue. Chamber member, Pomerleau Real Estate, produced an [infographic](#) that summarizes this work.



**[Committee Advances Act 250 Bill](#)**

After a long and tedious reform effort, changes to Act 250 advanced this week. The House Natural Resources Committee passed their Act 250 bill by a 6-3-2 vote. In this version, legislators chose to include several of the joint recommendations, including provisions that add greater consistency to the permitting process and also sections that better enable development in zones that hold municipal designations. Unfortunately, the Committee also chose to lower the elevation threshold that trigger Act 250 (from 2,500 feet to 2000 feet), which the Vermont Chamber opposes. The legislation now moves to the Senate, where the Vermont Chamber will continue to engage legislators to ensure that recommendations from the business community are reflected in final Act 250 legislation.

### [Tourism Marketing Effort Advances](#)

The House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development reviewed and marked up H.705 to be inclusive of Governor Scott's \$1 million investment announced for tourism, economic development, and outdoor recreation marketing. The additional \$500,000 for Vermont destination marketing is a part of this \$1 million package. Individuals and businesses can join the Vermont Chamber in urging the Legislature to invest in Vermont tourism [by signing the petition](#) to show support of the increased investment.

### [House Committee Hears Tax Recommendations](#)

Christopher Sullivan, attorney with Rath, Young, and Pignatelli, P.C, briefed the House Ways and Means Committee on some aspects of Vermont's current tax structures as the Committee considers potential changes. Sullivan also highlighted reforms that could help increase the state's competitiveness. The Committee was receptive to Sullivan's testimony, which provided an informative overview of the unique corporate tax structure that exists in Vermont. The Vermont Chamber believes in a consistent and predictable fiscal policy that does not increase the tax burden on businesses or their customers.

### [Minimum Wage Bill Vetoed](#)

Governor Scott vetoed S.23, the minimum wage increase bill that would have cost businesses \$121 million in additional payroll allocation. In his veto message, Governor Scott expressed his concern about the potential detrimental economic impacts of additional minimum wage increases on businesses in rural communities. The Senate overrode the Governor's veto by a 24-6 vote. House leadership will face a far greater challenge corralling the same two-thirds vote count, which is necessary to override the Governor's veto. The Vermont Chamber has repeatedly testified on the negative impacts of minimum wage increases beyond those already in statute, including by highlighting that small businesses in rural areas will face out sized difficulties in adjusting to any new wage mandates.

### [In Case You Missed It](#)

**Legislation:** [Two Years After DUI, Sen. Ingram Wants to Tighten Legal Limit](#)

**Federal Funding:** [Welch Bill Would Boost Federal Funding for Vermont Trails](#)

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