



# Commerce Connection

*Business Is Good*

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March 2018



*This edition of the Vermont Chamber's monthly newsletter is sponsored by:*

## FirstLight

A leading provider of high speed data, internet, data center, cloud and voice services to enterprise and carrier customers in VT, NY, NH, MA and ME over the [company's](#) own fiber optic network.

## Business Expo - Booth Deadline March 30

Don't miss your chance to exhibit at the Vermont Chamber Business Expo, the largest B2B networking trade show and business conference this spring. This year's event will feature more networking, more education, more content and more food. The deadline to [reserve a booth space](#) and be included in the program guide is March 30. Almost 70% of the booth space is already reserved; we anticipate selling out, so don't delay.

On Thursday, May 24, the Vermont Chamber Business Expo returns to the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel Burlington (formerly known as the Sheraton) for one full day



of business-focused seminars, 150 exhibitors showcasing the latest in business services and products to grow your business, and a not-to-be-missed statewide networking after party. Check out the current exhibitors and [book your booth now](#).

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Le Project 251 is an initiative in collaboration with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce designed to help Vermont businesses reach out and communicate effectively with the

French Québec market. There are 8.2 million French speaking people just north of the Vermont border and Le Project 251 will help you grab that French **Québécois** marketplace. The purpose of the initiative is to generate a quantifiable increase in business from the French Quebec market for participants in the program. The Le Project 251 team of French Québec lead generation, online marketing, graphic design and content management experts can make a difference.

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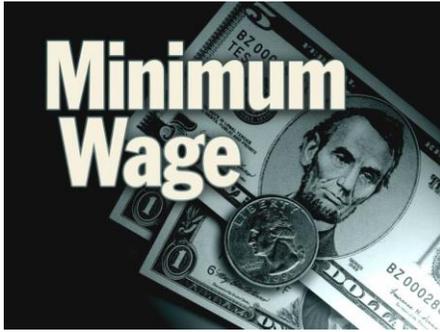


### **Efforts to Close the Workforce Gap Include a Focus on the Mature Worker**

The House of Representatives approved an effort to develop recommendations for a

coordinated program of care to support older Vermonters. The Vermont Chamber testified encouraging them to think of this population as an economic opportunity. We shared the [Vermont Futures Project](#) data that identifies an 11,000-person workforce supply gap and suggested that the mature worker could be one source for narrowing this gap. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over the last quarter century the median age in Vermont has increased twice as much as the U.S. and our largest age cohort is the baby boomers. By 2020, more than one of every four Vermonters will be over the age of 65. However, this population is living longer and is more active, giving this cohort 20-30 additional years of life, providing a large, experienced talent pool for employers. The 50+ demographic will continue to have significant economic contribution resulting in greater job creation, contributions to the tax base, and increased prosperity. The House-passed bill included language submitted by the Vermont Chamber suggesting the work group review ways to encourage and educate older Vermonters to continue in the workforce and ways to educate employers about the value of the older Vermonter talent cohort and the benefits of maintaining a multi-generational workforce.

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## Minimum Wage Discussions Continue After Town Meeting Week

The House General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee will soon be taking up the one of the top Democratic priorities this session: increasing the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. [This bill](#) passed the Senate nearly three weeks ago on a 20-10 vote. It proposes to reach \$15 per hour by

2024, keeping the tip wage at 50% of that amount.

The Vermont Chamber is concerned about this minimum wage proposal, especially for our small employers. A 30% increase in wages over six years is a significant increase to absorb when the economy is only performing at about 2%. We are working to make the bill easier for small businesses to accommodate these mandated wage increases.

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### ServSafe® Certification Class + Exam

ServSafe® is a food and beverage safety training and certificate program administered by the National Restaurant Association.



Who should attend: Managers, Cooks, Chefs, Waitstaff, Bartenders, Supervisors, Owners, Culinary Teachers, Dietary Aides, Caterers and anyone who prepares, handles, or serves food to the public. [Registration information](#) is available for April, May and June classes.

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# Attract more visitors to your business with our Vermont Tourism Marketing Program



<b>3.3 million</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>1.7 million</b>
Vermont Welcome Center visitors	eGuide pageviews and 84% are unique pageviews!	printed vacation guides distributed through various channels	subscribers reached via monthly VDTM email campaign	visitors to VermontVacations.com

For details contact: Marc Plouffe at [mplouffe@vtchamber.com](mailto:mplouffe@vtchamber.com) or 802.229.2294  
Megan Bullard at [mbullard@vtchamber.com](mailto:mbullard@vtchamber.com) or 802.262.2114



## Tourism In Vermont

Listen to Ronda Berns, VP of Tourism at the Vermont Chamber of Commerce talk about how tourism can be the seed that grows the Vermont economy.

## Welcome New Chamber Members

- [Maple Harvest Specialties](#)
- [Rain or Shine Tent Company and Events Co.](#)
- [DH Advertising](#)
- [Vermont Timeshares](#)
- [Vermont Aerospace Industries, LLC](#)
- [Clearent LLC](#)
- [Office Systems of Vermont](#)
- [Eternity](#)
- [The Common Man Restaurant](#)
- [TRI - Transaction Resources Inc.](#)
- [BSI](#)

# **BURLINGTON FURNITURE**

## Member Spotlight

Burlington Furniture is an independent, locally owned and operated Showroom/Design Center, allowing them to bring in unique products that you will not find at other stores. They are passionate about helping you find the most current and exciting contemporary home furnishings in the marketplace. Visit to see why they are the preferred choice for furniture, lighting and interior design services. To learn more about Burlington Furniture, click [here](#).

Vermont Chamber member since 2017.

To learn more about how you can be our featured member of the month, contact [Beverly Gittelson](#) or [Amy Chamberlin](#). It's just one of the numerous benefits of being a member of the [Vermont Chamber of Commerce](#).

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## #LetsGrowVT

[Casella Reports Increase in Revenues for FY17](#)

[CCV Welcomes New Dean of Administration](#)

[GW Plastics Expands In-House Tooling Capabilities](#)

[Connors Promoted to Chief Technology Officer at LMS](#)

[Sarah Ashworth Returns to VPR as News Director](#)

[Lacroix Joins Coldwell Banker Hickok & Boardman Realty](#)

[VTrans and ACCD Award Grants to Danville, Enosburgh and Hyde Park](#)

This section features news about growing Vermont companies. Add [news@vtchamber.com](mailto:news@vtchamber.com) to your distribution list.

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## Business Resources:

[Food Donation In Vermont](#) - Feed People, not Landfills.

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## Save the Date:

[35th Annual Vermont Tourism Summit](#)

[Vermont Brewers Festival at Killington March 24, 2018](#)

[2018 Worksite Wellness Awards & Conference](#)

## [The 52nd Official Vermont Maple Festival](#)

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Want great exposure for your business? Sponsoring the statewide Chamber newsletter is an affordable and effective way to reach your target customers. Email [Megan Bullard](#) for pricing and more information.

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