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Scott, Sullivan Discuss Education Savings Opportunity

By **Press Release**

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News Release — Gov. Phil Scott
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GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT AND REPRESENTATIVE LINDA JOY SULLIVAN ANSWER CONSTITUENT QUESTIONS IN DORSET TO DISCUSS OPPORTUNITY TO REALIZE UP TO \$26 MILLION IN EDUCATION SAVINGS

Dorset, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott and Representative Linda Joy Sullivan (D-Bennington-Rutland) hosted dozens of Vermonters at a town hall-style meeting Friday in Dorset.

Discussion focused on the Governor's education savings proposal, which would allow the state to realize up to \$26 million in annual education savings available through a transition in school employees' health plans, while investing nearly \$50 million to keep out-of-pocket costs the same.

"The change in school employee health plans presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make Vermont more affordable with up to \$26 million in annual education savings, and we can do it without harming teachers or cutting programs," Gov. Scott told the Dorset residents in attendance. "This opportunity is too important to pass up. We are looking at up to \$26 million in savings each year, and we will not get another bite at this apple."

Representative Sullivan, who was one of 74 House members who voted for the "Beck Amendment," joined Gov. Scott and constituents to discuss this proposal and the opportunities to achieve these savings. The "Beck Amendment" incorporated the Governor's proposal into the property tax yield bill, H.509, but was defeated when Speaker Mitzi Johnson cast a rare vote, creating a tie.

"We have a real opportunity to make Vermont more affordable, something I've heard my constituents call for loudly. You've pleaded for fiscal responsibility and restraint, and we're listening," Rep. Sullivan says.

Governor Scott has said he intends to veto the yield bill and the budget to allow for continued negotiation with lawmakers to ensure these savings are achieved. At a press conference Wednesday, he reiterated that commitment.

"The budget will overpay school districts by \$13 million this fiscal year, and that is why I will veto both the budget and the yield bills when they arrive on my desk. I know we can come to an agreement, and when we do, the budget – and Vermonters – will be better for it," Gov. Scott said.

Learn more about Gov. Scott's education savings proposal at www.governor.vermont.gov.





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