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## **VBSR Celebrates Signing of Paid Leave Law -Business organization supported bill at the Vermont State House-**

**Burlington, VT** – A new Vermont law extending paid time off benefits to tens of thousands of workers is good for the state’s economy and will result in a healthier and more stable workforce, according to Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR), a statewide business association with more than 760 members.

Governor Peter Shumlin signed H.187, an act relating to the absence from work for health care and safety, into law Wednesday morning. VBSR and the organization’s business members spent four years advocating for the bill at the Vermont State House.

“For years, far too many hard-working Vermonters faced the prospect of going to work sick or going without a paycheck because they had no paid days off from work,” said Daniel Barlow, the public policy manager with VBSR. “This new law provides stability to families that are struggling by allowing workers to earn paid time off to care for themselves or a sick family member.”

“This will help contain illnesses, reduce workplace errors, decrease stress for employees, and continue Vermont’s legacy of being a leader in workplace employment law,” explained Angela Earle Gray, the director of human resources at Chroma Technology in Bellows Falls. “We are particularly appreciative that the bill was crafted with employers needs in mind. It is easy to administer and a high percentage of Vermont businesses will not have to make any changes to their policies due to its enactment.”

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“The passage of paid leave legislation proves that Vermonters are serious about creating livable wages,” said Jennifer Kimmich, the co-founder and owner of the Alchemist Brewery in Waterbury. “Paid sick time is a huge step in the right direction as we work together to tackle poverty.”

The new law recognizes that many Vermont businesses are already offering this benefit to employees by allowing for paid time off policies such as personal days, vacations, and combined time off packages, to substitute for paid sick days.

“Businesses that offer paid time off to employees will tell you that this investment pays off,” Barlow added. “Their employees are healthier, more productive, and more loyal because they know they won’t miss a paycheck if they get sick.”

VBSR and their members are thankful for the support of Governor Shumlin, House Speaker Shap Smith, and Senate President Pro Tem John Campbell on this important legislation. In the Vermont House, Representative Helen Head, Representative Tristan Toleno, Representative Tom Stevens, Representative Sarah Copeland-Hanzas, and Representative Jill Krowinski were important advocates for this bill. Additionally, Senator Philip Baruth and Senator Kevin Mullin were instrumental in building support for the bill in that chamber.

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*Founded in 1990, VBSR is a statewide, non-profit business association with a mission to advance a business ethic that values economic, social, and environmental bottom lines. Through education, public influence, and workplace quality, VBSR strives to help 760+ members set a high standard for protecting the natural, human, and economic environments of the state's residents, while remaining profitable. Learn more or join the cause at [www.vbsr.org](http://www.vbsr.org).*