

## Public Comments Received prior to December 8, 2020

**From:** Simecek, Natalie <nxs02110@csc.vsc.edu>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 5, 2020 10:16 PM  
**To:** higheredcommittee <higheredcommittee@leg.state.vt.us>  
**Subject:** Opinion

Hello, my name is Natalie Simecek. I'm a sophomore at Castleton from Basalt, Colorado.

I think it is a good idea to combine the schools, but I don't think the name should change. Why can't it just become Castleton State University? I get that the other schools don't want to lose their identity, but if Castleton is the largest we should keep the name. I honestly wouldn't want to go if it's called Vermont State University.

It wouldn't make sense when you consider everything they would need to change. Sports scoreboards, jerseys, the bushes at the football field, everyone's t-shirts that we bought as freshmen, countless administrative documents, online search resources when high school students are looking at schools, and so many other things I can't even think of.

Also, consider the recent graduates who have their diploma from Castleton University. It would feel like a waste to me if the school on my diploma didn't even show up on a Google search because of a name change.

Keep the name Castleton.

I hope you take this into consideration. Thanks,  
Natalie Simecek

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**From:** Jarrod Sammis <jarrodsammis@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 7, 2020 5:52 PM  
**To:** higheredcommittee <higheredcommittee@leg.state.vt.us>  
**Subject:** Subject of Castleton University & The Vermont State University Proposal

Good afternoon,

My name is Jarrod Sammis and I am an alumni of Castleton State College (Class of 2013).

It has come to my attention recently that there are proposals in the works to merge Castleton University into a larger network of educational institutions under the banner of Vermont State University. It has also come to my attention that Castleton would forfeit its own university presidency in favor of a singular president, presiding over the entirety of the organization.

As an alumni of Castleton State College, as well as a resident of the town of Castleton, I strongly oppose these measures. To lose 200+ years of having its own identity and leadership, Castleton would further lose its credence as an institution in the region along with surrendering leadership to outside influences who are not familiar with the community, along with removing practical and local leadership.

I also beg to make a similar argument for the other education institutions that would be affected by this decision as well; each community has its own needs, its own workforce, along with individual identities. These identities are a part of the character of Vermont, as each of our regions is unique and contributes to the culture of our state. Individual representation of each institution that is familiar with these local communities and cultures must be preserved - for those not acquainted with them, often begin the process of organizational decay that ultimately leads to the decline and failures of our local educational institutions as well as the economic destruction of all communities that host them.

As the famous Vermonter Ethan Allen was once quoted as saying - "The Gods of the Valley are not the Gods of the Hills."

I urge those who read this to reconsider this decision, as lackluster and non-local centric leadership of these educational institutions can lead to severe long-term local and statewide economic consequences and negatively impact the lives of thousands of hard-working Vermonters.

For those in support of the proposal, I can only state that they should take a drive through Poultney, Vermont first and see with their own eyes the effect of a closure of an educational institution that lost its identity, along with the economic distress it has caused to a community.

Best Regards,

Jarrold E. Sammis  
Castleton State College Alumni, Class of 2013  
Castleton, Vermont

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From: Patrick Tansey <patricktansey1@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 6:19 PM  
To: higheredcommittee <higheredcommittee@leg.state.vt.us>  
Subject: Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont"

Hello,

I'm a Proud Alumni of Castleton University. I'm sending this email in anger over the potential changes that are being proposed to the Vermont State College system, of which Castleton University is the flagship. Castleton's importance to Southern Vermont can't be underestimated. It would be foolish, and wrong, to try to lump Castleton with the other two state colleges under one Chancellor. Castleton serves a different geographical area in Vermont vs the other two hills offering a vast amount of programs that the other two state colleges combined don't.

Castleton is truly an University now with a distinct identity, and a very strong alumni base. If a decision is made to change it's name to Vermont State University lumping it in with the other two colleges you will lose that support. You will also see enrollment go down as students want to be identified with the University they choose to attend. They will have no desire to attend

some generic institution. I strongly oppose any decision that would affect Castleton University in this manner.

Regards,

Patrick Tansey  
Castleton Alumni/Class of 1984