

Another Milestone for the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion Initiative

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Rutland, VT – In its quest to bring the Declaration of Inclusion to all 247 communities in Vermont, the Initiative has reached another milestone – 125 communities have adopted the declaration. Those communities represent more than 70% of the State’s population and gets the Initiative more than half-way to its overall goal.

The Declaration of Inclusion Initiative is spearheaded by four individuals – Norm Cohen, Bob Harnish, Barbara Noyes Pulling and Al Wakefield – all from the Rutland area. Harnish and Wakefield began the Initiative in 2020 to help bring the benefits of inclusion to the attention of all of Vermont.

“For every community in the State, large or small, our objective is the same,” said Bob Harnish. “To raise awareness of the positive effects of diversity, to tell the world that Vermont welcomes all people, and to build a stronger economy and future for Vermont by attracting people to live, work, and raise families here.”

Because of the disastrous flooding in some parts of the State this summer, the Initiative needed to pivot and wait for many communities to wrap up their emergency response measures.

“Many select boards have been very preoccupied since July,” said Al Wakefield. “When they are ready, we will be here to help them adopt the declaration, put it into practice, or get it on the Town Meeting ballot.”

Besides being adopted by 125 communities, the Declaration of Inclusion also has wide support among organizations across the State. The Vermont Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Vermont Interfaith Action and various local diversity committees are among the supporters of the Declaration of Inclusion Initiative.

For more information about the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion, go to:

<https://vtdeclarationofinclusion.org>

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Attachments

[Towns Adopted Declaration of Inclusion as of Oct 10 2023](#)