

—Slug:.....COMM-0874.opin.letter.a00\_mrowicki  
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—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers  
—Format.....Opinions - Letters to the Editor - Special  
—Dateline.....Putney  
—Article Number:.....43884

**Notes from editor (not for publication):**

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

Richards: She has what it takes to be governor

####END HED####

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TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

Aly Richards, has the ideas, temperament, and track record of accomplishment to be our next governor, and I ask voters to join me in voting for her.

I've worked with Aly over the last decade to help make real the systemic changes to our early childhood/childcare system, clearly showed me she has the skill set for the job.

Other states — and cities — are recognizing the importance of childcare in economic and workforce

12 development and, of course, in child development. The  
13 difference is they are only talking about such transformative  
14 systems change. Vermont has done it.

15         And Aly was essential in making this happen, by  
16 knowing effective organizing, knowing how to work with the  
17 Legislature, and knowing how to persist.

18         She organized the thousands of early educators, parents,  
19 community leaders, and business leaders to staff, to make the  
20 case for, and to fund the efforts of the statewide organization Let's  
21 Grow Kids.

22         To date, 1,700 new childcare slots have been created,  
23 and 4,000 more children are being served. Her work has made  
24 childcare more affordable with increased subsidies and by paying  
25 teachers more so they wouldn't leave because they could make  
26 more working at a fast-food place.

27         This kind of change doesn't just happen with intellectual  
28 theories or academic constructs. Anyone can have good ideas.  
29 The proof is making it real.

30         She's applied the skills and sweat equity that starts and  
31 sustains such projects. She's had the toughness to keep pushing  
32 back against opposition, including Gov. Phil Scott's initial veto of  
33 the bill. She's brought her empathy and experience as a parent (of  
34 twins) to this important issue.

35         All of this convinces me Aly has the experience, track  
36 record and hands-on skill set to move Vermont forward.

37         I've watched over the past three election cycles as  
38 Vermont Democrats have nominated progressive candidates for  
39 governor: David Zuckerman, Brenda Siegel, and Esther  
40 Charlestin. None crossed the 40% mark in vote totals, while  
41 Scott scooped up the independent and moderate votes to garner  
42 more than 60% of the vote.

43         Any winning strategy needs those voters. Aly's brand of  
44 pragmatic optimism can bring back those voters to vote  
45 Democratic.

46           It's a time when our education and healthcare system are  
47 crying out for change, a time when our environment is being  
48 ignored by the current president and that lack of action is  
49 mirrored by our own governor. It's a time when affordability  
50 efforts are added to a long list of vetoes by a governor who seems  
51 to govern by the edict of "veni, vidi, veto."

52           We need the kind of leadership Aly Richards can bring to  
53 Vermont: To say yes to affordability, yes to real change, and, yes  
54 to a Vermont that works for all of us.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

55           The writer represents the Windham-4 district (Putney and  
56 Dummerston) in the state House of Representatives.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

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LINKS:

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VIDEO:

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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