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Notes from editor (not for publication):

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

Richards: progressive and pragmatic

####END HED####

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TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

I admire and respect both women running in the Democratic primary for governor. So I've had to look closely to decide who would be more likely to win in the general election and be the more effective governor.

That's why I'll be voting for Aly Richards.

As a guardian ad litem for 20 years, I've worked with more than 250 kids in the Vermont court system who need, and deserve, a safer and more secure home life.

12 I've also written extensively about my friends on the
13 streets of Brattleboro who don't know where their next meal is
14 coming from or where they will sleep that night. (Or if they have
15 the will — and the Medicaid eligibility — to stay on their
16 methadone program.)

17 Vermonters need a governor who has both the ideas and
18 the experience to deal with these crises.

19 We need a governor who is progressive and pragmatic
20 enough to address the challenges we all face in terms of
21 affordability, employment, education, and healthcare.

22 Yes, bold ideas are critical. So is bold action. Aly has a
23 well-deserved reputation for both.

24 Aly is best known for her transformation of Vermont's
25 childcare system. When she started working at Let's Grow Kids,
26 most Vermonters agreed that we needed more and better
27 childcare. Many of us had ideas about how to achieve that. But it
28 just wasn't happening.

29 Aly got it done by assembling a coalition of more than
30 40,000 Vermonters — parents, businesses, educators, and
31 politicians — to get a law passed that has made our state's
32 childcare more affordable and available. The law has become a
33 model for states all over the country.

34 The other thing that impresses me is that she already
35 knows what it takes to be governor. She was appointed to the
36 State Board of Education when she was 15. (Yes, at first, her
37 mother had to drive her to meetings.) In subsequent years, she
38 worked directly with the governor on several projects that
39 addressed education issues — from dual enrollment to free
40 lunches.

41 Yet, oddly, what most impressed me about Aly is that she
42 worked alongside her neighbors to dig out (literally) after the
43 flooding in Montpelier and then became the co-chair of the
44 Commission on Resilience to protect communities from
45 experiencing kind of damage again.

46 That kind of says it all, doesn't it? The ability to take
47 concrete action — on the ground and in government.
48 I urge you to watch the Democratic Candidate Primary
49 Forum [debate](#) between the candidates as broadcast by the Center
50 for Media & Democracy's Town Meeting TV. For me, it made the
51 choice clear.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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