

Journal of the House

Wednesday, January 31, 2024

At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Dr. Ken Langer, First Church of Barre, Unitarian Universalist.

Message from the Senate No. 13

A message was received from the Senate by Ms. Gradel, its Assistant Secretary, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has on its part passed Senate bill of the following title:

S. 154. An act relating to the Vermont State Plane Coordinate System.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

Joint Resolution Adopted in Concurrence

J.R.S. 42

By Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 42. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 2, 2024.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, February 2, 2024, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

Was taken up, read, and adopted in concurrence.

Ceremonial Reading

H.C.R. 143

House concurrent resolution designating January 31, 2024 as Mental Health Advocacy Day at the State House

Offered by: Representatives Cina of Burlington, Berbeco of Winooski, Black of Essex, Carpenter of Hyde Park, Cordes of Lincoln, Farlice-Rubio of Barnet, Goldman of Rockingham, and Houghton of Essex Junction

Whereas, without any discrimination, all Vermonters are entitled to receive the highest attainable quality of health care, including mental health care, and

Whereas, 1997 Acts and Resolves No. 25, Sec. 2, codified as 8 V.S.A. § 4089b, established that the treatment of an individual's mental health must be on par with that person's physical health care, and

Whereas, mental health care must be provided in a manner that does not result in any form of stigma, prejudice, violence, social exclusion, segregation, or unnecessary institutionalization, and

Whereas, all mental health treatment practices should respect an individual's autonomy, dignity, personal preferences, and will, and they must not constitute or lead to violations and abuses of human rights or fundamental freedoms, and

Whereas, mental health support and related community services should integrate a human rights perspective in order to avoid harm to any individuals availing themselves of these services, and

Whereas, today, January 31, 2024, individuals are visiting the State House seeking to remind the General Assembly of the fundamental importance of providing Vermonters with mental health care that equals in every respect the quality of care provided to individuals with any other health conditions, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates January 31, 2024 as Mental Health Advocacy Day at the State House, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the mental health advocacy organizations present today in the State House.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, January 26, 2024 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**Committee Relieved of Consideration and
Bill Committed to Other Committee**

H. 590

Rep. Marcotte of Coventry moved that the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development be relieved of House bill, entitled

An act relating to insurance protections and leave from employment for living donors

And that the bill be committed to the Committee on Health Care, which was agreed to.

**Committee Relieved of Consideration and
Bill Committed to Other Committee**

H. 816

Rep. Wood of Waterbury moved that the Committee on Human Services be relieved of House bill, entitled

An act relating to mental health screenings in school-age youth

And that the bill be committed to the Committee on Health Care, which was agreed to.

**Amendment Offered and Withdrawn;
Third Reading; Bill Passed**

H. 363

House bill, entitled

An act relating to prohibiting discrimination based on certain hair types and styles

Was taken up and, pending third reading of the bill, **Reps. Donahue of Northfield, McGill of Bridport, and Small of Winooski** moved that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. § 4502 is amended to read:

§ 4502. PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

* * *

(m) As used in this section, the terms race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability include traits that are associated with or perceived to be associated with that particular characteristic, including hair types, hair textures, hairstyles, wigs, headwraps, and other head coverings.

Sec. 2. 9 V.S.A. § 4503 is amended to read:

§ 4503. UNFAIR HOUSING PRACTICES

* * *

(e) As used in this section, the terms race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, religious creed, color, national origin, and disability include traits that are associated with or perceived to be associated

with that particular characteristic, including hair types, hair textures, hairstyles, wigs, headwraps, and other head coverings.

Sec. 3. 21 V.S.A. § 495d is amended to read:

§ 495d. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(17) The terms race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, place of birth, age, physical or mental condition, and disability include traits that are associated with or perceived to be associated with that particular characteristic, including hair type, hair texture, hairstyles, wigs, headwraps, and other head coverings.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

Thereupon, **Rep. Small of Winooski** asked and was granted leave of the House to withdraw the amendment.

Thereafter, the bill was read a third time.

Pending the question, Shall the bill pass?, **Rep. Chase of Chester** demanded the Yeas and Nays, which demand was sustained by the Constitutional number. The Clerk proceeded to call the roll and the question, Shall the bill pass?, was decided in the affirmative. Yeas, 132. Nays, 5.

Those who voted in the affirmative are:

Andrews of Westford	Dolan of Essex Junction	Morgan of Milton
Andriano of Orwell	Dolan of Waitsfield	Morris of Springfield
Anthony of Barre City	Donahue of Northfield	Morrissey of Bennington
Arrison of Weathersfield	Durfee of Shaftsbury	Mrowicki of Putney *
Arsenault of Williston	Elder of Starksboro	Mulvaney-Stanak of
Austin of Colchester	Emmons of Springfield	Burlington
Bartholomew of Hartland	Farlice-Rubio of Barnet	Notte of Rutland City
Bartley of Fairfax	Galfetti of Barre Town	Noyes of Wolcott
Beck of St. Johnsbury	Garofano of Essex	Nugent of South Burlington
Berbeco of Winooski	Goldman of Rockingham	O'Brien of Tunbridge
Birong of Vergennes	Graning of Jericho	Ode of Burlington
Black of Essex	Hango of Berkshire	Oliver of Sheldon
Bluemle of Burlington	Harrison of Chittenden	Page of Newport City
Bongartz of Manchester	Headrick of Burlington	Pajala of Londonderry
Bos-Lun of Westminster	Holcombe of Norwich	Parsons of Newbury
Boyden of Cambridge	Hooper of Burlington	Patt of Worcester
Brady of Williston	Houghton of Essex Junction	Pouech of Hinesburg
Branagan of Georgia	Howard of Rutland City	Priestley of Bradford
Brennan of Colchester	James of Manchester	Rachelson of Burlington

Brown of Richmond	Jerome of Brandon	Rice of Dorset
Brownell of Pownal	Kornheiser of Brattleboro	Roberts of Halifax *
Brumsted of Shelburne	Krasnow of South	Sammis of Castleton
Burditt of West Rutland	Burlington *	Satcowitz of Randolph
Burke of Brattleboro	Labor of Morgan	Scheu of Middlebury
Burrows of West Windsor	LaBounty of Lyndon	Shaw of Pittsford
Buss of Woodstock	Lalley of Shelburne	Sheldon of Middlebury
Campbell of St. Johnsbury	LaLonde of South	Sibilia of Dover
Canfield of Fair Haven	Burlington	Sims of Craftsbury
Carpenter of Hyde Park	LaMont of Morristown *	Small of Winooski
Carroll of Bennington	Lanpher of Vergennes	Squirrell of Underhill
Casey of Montpelier	Laroche of Franklin	Stebbins of Burlington
Chapin of East Montpelier	Leavitt of Grand Isle	Stone of Burlington *
Chase of Chester	Lipsky of Stowe	Taylor of Milton
Chase of Colchester	Logan of Burlington	Taylor of Colchester
Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs	Long of Newfane	Templeman of Brownington
Christie of Hartford	Maguire of Rutland City	Toleno of Brattleboro
Cina of Burlington	Marcotte of Coventry	Toof of St. Albans Town
Clifford of Rutland City	Masland of Thetford	Torre of Moretown
Coffey of Guilford	McCann of Montpelier	Troiano of Stannard
Cole of Hartford	McCarthy of St. Albans City	Waters Evans of Charlotte
Conlon of Cornwall	McCoy of Poultney	White of Bethel
Corcoran of Bennington	McFaun of Barre Town	Whitman of Bennington
Cordes of Lincoln	McGill of Bridport	Williams of Barre City
Demrow of Corinth	Mihaly of Calais	Williams of Granby
Dodge of Essex	Minier of South Burlington	Wood of Waterbury

Those who voted in the negative are:

Demar of Enosburgh	Peterson of Clarendon	Wilson of Lyndon
Higley of Lowell	Smith of Derby	

Those members absent with leave of the House and not voting are:

Dickinson of St. Albans Town	Hooper of Randolph	Stevens of Waterbury
Goslant of Northfield	Hyman of South Burlington	Surprenant of Barnard
Graham of Williamstown	Mattos of Milton	Walker of Swanton
Gregoire of Fairfield	Nicoll of Ludlow	
	Pearl of Danville	

Rep. Krasnow of South Burlington explained her vote as follows:

“Madam Speaker:

I support H.363 because this legislation signifies a pivotal step toward equality and justice in our society. No one should face prejudice or bias based on their hair texture or style. H.363 dismantles the stereotypes and systemic discrimination that have persisted for far too long. It advocates for inclusivity,

recognizing that diversity in appearance should be celebrated, not penalized. By passing H.363 we affirmed our commitment to creating a society that values each individual for who they are, embracing our diverse backgrounds. We stand united against discrimination and ensure that every person has the right to express their identity authentically, without fear of repercussions. We send a powerful message that the beauty of diversity extends to the strands of our hair. It is a call for fairness, understanding, and respect for every individual's right to wear their crown with pride. This is a beacon of progress, moving toward a future where no one is judged or treated unfairly based on the texture or style of their hair. This is not just a matter of legislation; it is a declaration of our commitment to a more just and inclusive society for all."

Rep. LaMont of Morristown explained her vote as follows:

"Madam Speaker:

I want to thank the body for their support and, more importantly, learning and understanding the importance of this important legislation. This is about so much more than hair discrimination. It is about setting the standard that we embrace and welcome all people to show up as their whole authentic selves to participate in and live a life that is most in alignment with their cultural beliefs and identity. Vermont has been the pioneer for many issues, campaigns, movements, and coups. I am so honored to be a part of this body and I hope we become state number 24."

Rep. Mrowicki of Putney explained his vote as follows:

"Madam Speaker:

I vote yes for Angela Laurence, a constituent who asked for this bill to be introduced. Her journey began in Kenya, then to the US, and after time in the U.S. Army, she became a mother. And as a mother she asked for this bill to protect her children."

Rep. Roberts of Halifax explained his vote as follows:

"Madam Speaker:

I dedicate my vote on H.363 to the memory and legacy of Malcolm X."

Rep. Stone of Burlington explained her vote as follows:

"Madam Speaker:

What is a crown? If we want to speak literally, it's the circular pattern of hair follicles atop our heads. However, that word holds so much more. It's a symbol of strength, empowerment, self-love, and belonging. I think most of us could agree that we all need a lot more of that good stuff in this world. As a biracial woman who grew up in a blended family full of different languages,

religions, and pertinent to this bill—hair types, I know the importance of what this bill brings to light. My father’s coils, my sister's tightly wound type 4A curls, my brother’s wavy locks, and my lioness mane. I know that our hair is more than just follicles. It holds stories. Stories of family, stories of love, and stories of resilience. However, I also know that for some, hair can hold biases, fear of the other, and a basis for race-based discrimination. I also recognize that race-based hair discrimination disproportionately impacts Black women, including their opportunities for employment and professional advancement. This is unacceptable and that is why I am happy to join the movement to make hair discrimination, specifically race-based hair discrimination, illegal here in our brave little State.”

**Favorable Reports; Second Reading; Third Reading Ordered;
Rules Suspended, All Remaining Stages of Passage; Third Reading;
Bill Passed in Concurrence; Rules Suspended, Messaged to the Senate
Forthwith and Delivered to the Governor Forthwith**

S. 160

Rep. Anthony of Barre City, for the Committee on Ways and Means, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to State education property taxes and flood-related damage
Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

Rep. Mihaly of Calais, for the Committee on Appropriations, reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, and third reading ordered.

On motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the rules were suspended and the bill placed on all remaining stages of passage. The bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence.

Thereupon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the Senate forthwith and delivered to the Governor forthwith.

Adjournment

At three o'clock and fifty-nine minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at three o'clock in the afternoon.