

H.494

* * * Purpose, Definitions, Legend * * *

Sec. A.100 SHORT TITLE

(a) This bill may be referred to as the BIG BILL – Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Act.

Sec. A.101 PURPOSE

(a) The purpose of this act is to provide appropriations for the operations of State government during fiscal year 2024. It is the express intent of the General Assembly that activities of the various agencies, departments, divisions, boards, and commissions be limited to those which can be supported by funds appropriated in this act or other acts passed prior to June 30, 2023. Agency and department heads are directed to implement staffing and service levels at the beginning of fiscal year 2024 to meet this condition unless otherwise directed by specific language in this act or other acts of the General Assembly.

Sec. A.102 APPROPRIATIONS

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that this act serve as the primary source and reference for appropriations for fiscal year 2024.

(b) The sums stated in this act are appropriated for the purposes specified in the following sections of this act. When no time is expressly stated during which any of the appropriations are to continue, the appropriations are single-year appropriations, only for the purpose indicated and shall be paid from funds shown as the source of funds. If in this act there is an error in either addition or subtraction, the totals shall be adjusted accordingly. Apparent errors in referring to section numbers of statutory titles within this act may be disregarded by the Commissioner of Finance and Management.

(c) Unless codified or otherwise specified, all narrative portions of this act apply only to the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2024.

Sec. A.103 DEFINITIONS

(a) As used in this act:

(1) “Encumbrances” means a portion of an appropriation reserved for the subsequent payment of existing purchase orders or contracts. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall make final decisions on the appropriateness of encumbrances.

(2) “Grants” means subsidies, aid, or payments to local governments, to community and quasi-public agencies for providing local services, and to persons who are not wards of the State for services or supplies and means cash or other direct assistance, including pension contributions.

(3) “Operating expenses” means property management; repair and maintenance; rental expenses; insurance; postage; travel; energy and utilities; office and other supplies; equipment, including motor vehicles, highway materials, and construction; expenditures for the purchase of land and construction of new buildings and permanent improvements; and similar items.

(4) “Personal services” means wages and salaries; fringe benefits; per diems; contracted third-party services; and similar items.

Sec. A.104 RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING LAWS

(a) Except as specifically provided, this act shall not be construed in any way to negate or impair the full force and effect of existing laws.

Sec. A.105 OFFSETTING APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In the absence of specific provisions to the contrary in this act, when total appropriations are offset by estimated receipts, the State appropriations shall control, notwithstanding receipts being greater or less than anticipated.

Sec. A.106 FEDERAL FUNDS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, the Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly or the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, may accept federal funds available to the State of Vermont, including block grants in lieu of or in addition to funds designated as federal in this act. The Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly or the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, may allocate all or any portion of such federal funds for any purpose consistent with the purposes for which the basic appropriations in this act have been made.

(b) If, during fiscal year 2024, federal funds available to the State of Vermont and designated as federal in this and other acts of the 2023 session of the Vermont General Assembly are converted into block grants or are abolished under their current title in federal law and reestablished under a new title in federal law, the Governor may continue to accept such federal funds for any purpose consistent with the purposes for which the federal funds were appropriated. The Governor may spend such funds for such purposes for no more than 45 days prior to legislative or Joint Fiscal Committee approval. Notice shall be given to the Joint Fiscal Committee without delay if the Governor intends to use the authority granted by this section, and the Joint Fiscal Committee shall meet in an expedited manner to review the Governor’s request for approval.

Sec. A.107 NEW POSITIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the total number of authorized State positions, both classified and exempt, excluding temporary positions as defined in 3 V.S.A. § 311(a)(11), shall not be increased during fiscal year 2024 except for new positions authorized by the 2023 session. Limited service positions approved pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 5 shall not be subject to this restriction.

Sec. A.108 LEGEND

(a) This act is organized by functions of government. The sections between B.100 and B.9999 contain appropriations of funds for the upcoming budget year. The sections between E.100 and E.9999 contain language that relates to specific appropriations or government functions, or both. The function areas by section numbers are as follows:

B.100–B.199 and E.100–E.199

General Government

B.200–B.299 and E.200–E.299

Protection to Persons and
Property

<u>B.300–B.399 and E.300–E.399</u>	<u>Human Services</u>
<u>B.400–B.499 and E.400–E.499</u>	<u>Labor</u>
<u>B.500–B.599 and E.500–E.599</u>	<u>General Education</u>
<u>B.600–B.699 and E.600–E.699</u>	<u>Higher Education</u>
<u>B.700–B.799 and E.700–E.799</u>	<u>Natural Resources</u>
<u>B.800–B.899 and E.800–E.899</u>	<u>Commerce and Community</u>
	<u>Development</u>
<u>B.900–B.999 and E.900–E.999</u>	<u>Transportation</u>
<u>B.1000–B.1099 and E.1000–E.1099</u>	<u>Debt Service</u>
<u>B.1100–B.1199 and E.1100–E.1199</u>	<u>One-time and other</u>
	<u>appropriation actions</u>

(b) The C sections contain any amendments to the current fiscal year, the D sections contain fund transfers, reversions, and reserve allocations for the upcoming budget year, the F sections contain workforce and economic development policies, and the G sections contain changes to transportation fees.

* * * Fiscal Year 2024 Base Appropriations * * *

* * * Fiscal Year 2024 One-time Appropriations * * *

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$2,300,000 General Fund to create, implement, and oversee a comprehensive statewide language access plan;

(2) \$5,000,000 General Fund for the purpose of supporting the Community Violence Prevention Program established by 18 V.S.A. § 13. Unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into the subsequent fiscal year and remain available for use for this purpose. All or part of this appropriation may be transferred to the Department of Health for this program if necessary;

(3) \$15,000,000 General Fund to be used to offset the cost of denied claims for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement.

(b) Vermont State Colleges. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$3,820,000 General Fund and \$5,180,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds for bridge funding to support ongoing system transformation; and

(2) \$4,000,000 General Fund for the Community College of Vermont to reduce the tuition fee for certificates, degrees, and courses that have a direct nexus to Vermont business and industry needs.

(c) Department of Human Resources. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$725,000 General Fund to fund seven new permanent full-time positions in the Operations division in fiscal year 2024. These position costs shall be funded through the Department of Human Resources – Internal Service Fund beginning in fiscal year 2025;

(2) \$75,000 General Fund to fund one new permanent full-time position in the VTTHR Operations division in fiscal year 2024. This position cost shall be funded via the Department of Human Resources – Internal Service Fund beginning in fiscal year 2025; and

(3) \$1,900,000 General Fund for the implementation of a Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance program available to all State employees in fiscal year 2024. This program cost shall be funded through the Department of Human Resources – Internal Service Fund beginning in fiscal year 2025.

(d) \$200,000 General Fund to the Department of Libraries in fiscal year 2024 to support the FiberConnect project relating to Internet access in public libraries.

(e) Department of Public Safety. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$190,000 General Fund for external carriers (vests) that improve the ergonomics of ballistic personal protective equipment; and

(2) \$500,000 General Fund for hiring incentives, including hiring bonuses, to be paid to all new sworn members and emergency communication dispatchers; recruitment awards to current members for successful recruitment of a new member (criteria dependent); and student loan debt repayment of up to \$10,000 per new hire toward the repayment of preexisting student loan debt.

(f) Military Department. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$10,000 General Fund for a grant to the USS Vermont Support Group, a nonprofit organization supporting military members serving on the USS Vermont (SSN 792) and their families; and

(2) \$10,000 General Fund for a grant to North Country Honor Flight, an organization that sponsors escorted trips for veterans to visit the war memorials on the National Mall, to cover the expenses of 10 Vermont resident attendees.

(g) Criminal Justice Council. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$1,200,000 General Fund for a three-phase accreditation process to include job task analysis, curriculum development and piloting;

(2) \$20,000 General Fund for a records management system to ensure efficient and compliant recordkeeping, including case management tracking, reporting, and compliance monitoring for remote learning; and

(3) \$200,000 General Fund for request for proposals and contracts related to procedure development; off-site course development; records management system transition; developing pathways to certification; and medical personnel.

(h) \$210,000 General Fund to the Office of the Defender General in fiscal year 2024, for the case management system.

(i) Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$110,000 General Fund for electric vehicle charger inspections. Funds shall be used for the purchase of two testing units and related equipment to support the development and implementation of the Commercial Electric Vehicle Fueling Systems regulatory program;

(2) \$1,070,000 General Fund for replacement of the existing Food Safety Inspection Database; and

(3) \$500,000 General Fund for a grant to Salvation Farms to expand access to locally grown food for all Vermonters.

(j) Department of Mental Health. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$105,000 General Fund for expediting competency and sanity evaluations; and

(2) \$9,225,000 General Fund to continue construction of the Southwest Vermont Medical Center (SVMC) Youth Inpatient Facility to increase the number of psychiatric youth inpatient beds in the State.

(k) Green Mountain Care Board. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$620,000 General Fund for costs associated with the implementation of the Vermont Health Care Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) database;

(2) \$120,500 General Fund for the implementation of a new financial database solution; and

(3) \$50,000 General Fund for the development of the statutorily required Health Resources Allocation Plan Tool.

(l) Agency of Human Services Central Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$1,000,000 General Fund to the State Refugee Office for the Employment Assistance Grants program created in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1100, as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec.45. Funds remaining at the end of fiscal year 2025 shall revert to the General Fund;

(2) \$8,834,000 General Fund and \$11,483,302 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a two-year pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program. Funds shall be used to expand the substances covered by the program, include mental health and pediatric screenings, and make strategic investments with community partners;

(3) \$10,000,000 General Fund to continue to address the emergent and exigent circumstances impacting health care providers following the COVID-19 pandemic; and

(4) \$10,534,603 General Fund and \$13,693,231 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for use as Global Commitment matching funds for one-time caseload pressures due to the suspension of Medicaid eligibility redeterminations.

(m) \$366,066 General Fund and \$372,048 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 to the Department of Vermont Health Access in the non-waiver or state-only lines for a two-year pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program and \$15,583,352 Global Commitment Fund #20405 to the Department of Health Access Medicaid program for a two-year pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program.

(n) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$4,595,448 Global Commitment Fund #20405 to the Division of Substance Use Program for a two-year pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program;

(2) \$30,000 General Fund for a housing voucher program administered by the Vermont Association of Recovery Residences and Jenna's Promise to pay for a recovery home residents' first month of rent;

(3) \$1,590,000 General Fund for the Division of Substance Use Program, in conjunction with \$1,410,000 appropriated from the General Fund in Sec. B.313 of this

act representing 30 percent of the fiscal year 2023 forecast for cannabis excise tax, and to be used in a manner consistent with the Substance Misuse Prevention Coalition funding intent as stated in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1100(a)(12)(A)(i):

(4) \$500,000 Tobacco Settlement Fund for Division of Substance Use Programs for tobacco and substance use disorder prevention and cessation activities. The Division shall require that information on the use of the funds appropriated in accordance with this section be provided to the Division by grantees in an agreed-upon time frame, including the specific activities supported by the funds, a description of the number of individuals served, and information on the outcomes achieved by this investment. On or before, January 10, 2024, the Division shall report on these metrics to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, to the House Committee on Human Services, and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare;

(5) \$100,000 General Fund to the Department of Health to support the Regional Emergency Medical Services Coordination study; and

(6) \$100,000 General Fund to the Division of Substance Use Programs for a grant to Jenna's Promise.

(o) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$2,000,000 General Fund to implement the two-year Reach Ahead Pilot Program. Funds shall be used to increase monthly food assistance benefits to Reach Ahead participants, expand the eligibility window for those leaving Reach Up, and provide incentive payments;

(2) \$650,000 General Fund for the 2-1-1 service line. The Department, in consultation with the Agency of Human Service Central Office, shall report on the status of the service and its funding to the Joint Fiscal Committee on or before the Committee's November 2023 meeting;

(3) \$40,000 General Fund to fund the purchase of a driving school vehicle for the Youth Development Program to support foster and former foster youth access to driver's education;

(4) \$18,884,610 General Fund to address the estimated need for the Adverse Weather Conditions policy and General Assistance Emergency Housing hotel and motel expenditures in fiscal year 2024;

(5) \$2,500,000 General Fund to the Housing Opportunity Grant Program to expand and provide wraparound support services for households participating in the General Assistance Emergency Housing program;

(6) \$3,000,000 General Fund for a grant to the Vermont Food Bank to support increased capacity of services to meet persistent food insecurity;

(7) \$375,000 General Fund for a grant to the Parent Child Centers in consultation with the Junior League of Vermont for the statewide distribution of diapers to families in need;

(8) \$50,000 General Fund for a grant to the Vermont Donor Milk Center for statewide activities;

(9) \$130,000 General Fund for a grant to the Snelling Center to restart the Early Childhood Education Leadership Program; and

(10) \$1,000,000 General Fund for a grant to Mentor Vermont. The Department shall identify alternative fund sources for future grants to Mentor Vermont and shall

update the Joint Fiscal Committee on its findings on or before the Committee's November 2023 meeting.

(p) Department of Labor. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$200,000 General Fund to be granted to the State Workforce Development Board for the New American Labor Force Program; and

(2) \$1,000,000 General Fund to provide services under the Work-Based Learning and Training Program established pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 547.

(q) Natural Resources Board. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$1,000,000 General Fund for the digitization of Natural Resources Board documents. Funds shall be used for the continued digitization of permanent, paper-based Act 250 land use permit records currently located at the Natural Resources Board's five district offices; and

(2) \$200,000 General Fund for an Act 250 study contract. Funds shall be used to contract with a consultant to assist with the preparation of a report on updates necessary to the Act 250 program, per 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 41(a).

(r) \$200,000 General Fund in fiscal year 2024 to the Agency of Education for the work of the School Construction Task Force.

(s) \$35,000 General Fund to the Vermont Symphony Orchestra to support the celebration of the Symphony's 90th season.

(t) \$1,200,000 General Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to administer and support the activities of the Land Access and Opportunity Board.

(u) \$1,750,000 Tax – Current Use Administration Fund #21594 to the Department of Taxes for the digitization of the Current Use program.

(v) Public Service Department. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$500,000 Regulation/Energy Efficiency Fund #21698 to upgrade and expand the ePSD case management system;

(2) \$400,000 Regulation/Energy Efficiency Fund #21698 to complete the Telecom Plan Update scheduled for June 2024; and

(3) \$300,000 Regulation/Energy Efficiency Fund #21698 to craft policy proposals to reform and streamline electric sector policy.

(w) Agency of Digital Services. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$10,000,000 Technology Modernization Fund #21951 for Network and Security Infrastructure Modernization including planning and design and the replacement of legacy infrastructure, hardware and software, platforms underlying the network and security architecture.

(A) The Agency of Digital Services shall select a vendor through a competitive bid process. The Agency of Digital Services shall consider bids with options to buy or lease equipment. Per 3 V.S.A. § 3303, any project with a total cost of \$1,000,000 or greater shall be subject to an expert independent review. The review shall include an analysis of all options, although the Agency of Digital Services is limited to the bids that it receives. The Agency of Digital Services may also purchase or lease equipment through a separate competitive bid process.

(B) Once a vendor has been selected and an expert independent review completed, the Agency of Digital Services shall issue a verbal or written report to the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee.

(x) \$4,680,000 General Fund to the Judiciary for the Judiciary network replacement project.

(A) Judiciary shall update the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee on the status of this project on or before December 1, 2023.

(y) \$117,000 General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for a grant to the Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission for the 250th celebration.

(z) Vermont Center for Crime Victims' Services. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$25,000 General Fund for a grant for a monument to the survivors of St Joseph's Orphanage; and

(2) \$10,000 General Fund to continue the work of the Intercollegiate Sexual Harm Prevention Council.

(aa) \$450,000 Global Commitment Fund to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living to continue the SASH pilot for another year. \$195,660 General Fund and \$254,340 Federal Funds are appropriated to the Agency of Human Service Global Commitment program for the State and federal shares for this SASH pilot extension.

(bb) \$100,000 General Fund to the Vermont Pension Investment Commission for a study on the assets of the State's pension systems.

(cc) \$750,000 General Fund to the State Treasurer for the initial costs of the Vermont Saves program.

(dd) Secretary of State. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) \$1,000,000 General Fund for a grant to the Vermont Access Network to offset declining cable revenues.

(2) \$100,000 General Fund for grants to municipalities for ranked choice voting.

* * * Workforce Development * * *

Sec. B.1101 WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – FISCAL
YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Education workforce.

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$500,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Education for the purpose of funding the Emerging Pathways Grant Program to encourage and support the development and retention of qualified and effective Vermont educators with the goal of increased program completion rates and increased rates of licensure of underrepresented demographics. These grants are to expand support, mentoring, and professional development to prospective educators seeking licensure through the Agency of Education's emerging pathways, including peer review and apprentice pathways.

(A) Program administration. The Agency shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary for implementation of the grant program. The Agency shall report to General Assembly on the status of the program on or before January 15, 2024.

(B) Eligibility criteria. The Agency shall issue grants to organizations, school districts, or a group of school districts for the development and administration of programs designed to provide prospective educators in emerging pathways with the support necessary for successful entry into the educator workforce. Recruitment, support, and retention of prospective educator candidates shall focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Support provided through the program may include:

(i) support through the Praxis exam process;

(ii) local, educator-led seminars designed around the Vermont licensure portfolio themes;

(iii) local educator mentors;

(iv) support in completing the peer review portfolio and licensing process;

and

(v) continued professional development support within the first year of licensure.

(2) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$2,500,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for the Vermont Teacher Forgivable Loan Incentive Program to provide forgivable loans to students enrolled in an eligible school who meet the eligibility requirements in subsection (A) of this subdivision. The goal of the program is to encourage students to enter into teaching professions, with an emphasis on encouraging Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color, New Americans, and other historically underrepresented communities.

(A) To be eligible for a forgivable loan under the program an individual, whether a resident or nonresident of Vermont, shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

(i) be enrolled in a teaching program at an eligible school;

(ii) maintain good standing at the eligible school at which the individual is enrolled;

(iii) agree to work as a teacher in a Vermont public school for a minimum of one year following licensure for each year of forgivable loan awarded;

(iv) have executed a credit agreement or promissory note that will reduce the individual's forgivable loan benefit, in whole or in part, pursuant to subdivision (B) of this section, if the individual fails to complete the period of service required in this subdivision;

(v) have completed the program's application form, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and, for Vermont residents, the Vermont grant application each academic year of enrollment in accordance with a schedule determined by the Corporation; and

(vi) have provided such other documentation as the Corporation may require.

(B) If an eligible individual fails to serve as a teacher in a Vermont public school for a period that would entitle the individual to the full forgivable loan benefit received by the individual, other than for good cause as determined by the Corporation, then the individual shall receive only partial loan forgiveness for a pro rata portion of the loan pursuant to the terms of the interest-free credit agreement or promissory note signed by the individual at the time of entering the program.

(C) There shall be no deadline to apply for a forgivable loan under this section. Forgivable loans shall be awarded on a rolling basis provided funds are available, and any funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall roll over and shall be available to the

Corporation in the following fiscal year to award additional forgivable loans as set forth in this section.

(D) The Corporation shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary to implement the provisions of this section, including maximum forgivable loan amounts. The Corporation shall not use more than seven percent of the funds appropriated for the program for its costs of administration and may recoup its reasonable costs of collecting the forgivable loans in repayment.

(3) In fiscal year 2024, the sum of \$30,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Education for the purpose of funding the Historically Underrepresented Educator Affinity Groups Grant Program to provide grants for the support of existing and development of new educator affinity groups for historically underrepresented groups. The Agency of Education shall administer the program.

(A) The Agency shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary for the implementation of the program established pursuant to this subdivision.

(b) Youth workforce.

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$2,275,974 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to fund the Vermont Serve, Learn, and Earn Program, which supports workforce development goals through creating meaningful paid service and learning opportunities for young adults, through the Serve, Learn, and Earn Partnership made up of the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, Vermont Audubon, Vermont Works for Women, and Resource VT. The Department shall enter into a grant agreement with the Partnership that specifies the required services and outcomes for the Program.

(c) Higher education.

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$500,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont State Colleges to establish a Bachelor of Science program in restorative justice at Vermont State University.

(2) In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$1,500,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont State Colleges to establish the Certificate in 3-D Technology program.

(3) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$3,800,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont State Colleges to provide Critical Occupations Scholarships for eligible students with a household income of \$75,000 or less enrolled in education programs that lead to a career in an occupation with critical need, including early childhood occupations, clinical mental health counseling, criminal justice occupations, dental hygienists, and all levels of nursing.

(4) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$3,000,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the University of Vermont to provide additional free classes through the Upskill Vermont Scholarship Program for Vermont residents seeking to transition to a new career or to enhance job skills.

(5) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$350,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for a subgrant to Advance Vermont to continue work pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 39 in support of the State's goal articulated in 10 V.S.A. § 546 that 70 percent of working-age Vermonters hold a credential of value by 2025. **On or before December 15, 2023, Advance Vermont**

shall report to the General Assembly regarding outcomes achieved, the use of these State funds, and the other fund sources Advance Vermont has secured for this project.

(d) Healthcare and social services workforce.

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for the Vermont Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Forgivable Loan Incentive Program created in 18 V.S.A. § 39.

(2) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health to provide training for emergency medical services personnel.

(3) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$170,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Human Services to provide one additional year of funding for the classified, three-year limited-service Health Care Workforce Coordinator position created in the Agency of Human Services, Office of Health Care Reform, pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 34(a).

(4) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$3,000,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Mental Health to be distributed to the designated and specialized service agencies equitably based on each agency's proportion of full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff to the total number of FTE staff across all designated and specialized service agencies statewide. Funds shall be administered by each agency for student loan repayment, tuition assistance, or recruitment and retention payments in exchange for an agency-specified service obligation of not less than one year.

(A) The State Auditor shall review the designated and specialized service agencies' utilization of this funding and report to the General Assembly on the outcomes and effectiveness of this program.

(e) Economic development.

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$5,000,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the Vermont Training Program to fulfill Vermont's obligation to procure incentives in accordance with the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors for America (CHIPS) Act.

(2) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,250,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for a grant to the regional development corporations to provide small- and mid-sized businesses with professional and technical assistance.

(3) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$72,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont Council on the Arts to provide a State match for National Endowment for the Arts funding to enable the Council to continue its work boosting the creative economy in Vermont.

(4) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$8,000,000 General Fund is appropriated for Brownfields redevelopment consistent with Sec. F.5 of this act.

(5) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department for Children and Families to augment service support funding in the Reach Up program.

(6) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for awarding new relocating employee incentives pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4.

(f) Agriculture Economic Development

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Working Lands Enterprise grant program.

(2) In fiscal year 2024, \$2,300,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to fund Agriculture Development Grants for meat, produce, and maple processing. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall determine that there are significant interests in establishing certain parameters in the grant program before making an award. Grants should be awarded to farmers, processors, and businesses, which shall not include hydroponic operations. Furthermore, the Secretary shall not allocate more than 25 percent of grant funds toward the maple industry. Of the funds appropriated under this subdivision, an amount not to exceed \$125,000 may be used by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to support the cost of temporary employees to administer the grants.

(3) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$6,900,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to fund Agriculture Development Grants for the Organic Dairy Farm Assistance Program.

(4) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$300,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for a grant to the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund as follows:

(A) \$100,000 to the Independent Retail Grocers Project; and

(B) \$200,000 to the Beef on Dairy Project.

(5) In fiscal year 2024, \$150,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for the establishment by the Farm Viability Program of a pilot program to award a grant for the use of virtual fences, solar powered collars, and solar powered transmitters to control livestock. As used in this section, "livestock" means cattle, horses, sheep, swine, and goats.

(6) In fiscal year 2024, \$415,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to fully fund the Dairy Risk Management Assistance Program for farmers who enroll in calendar year 2023. These funds are in addition to the unexpended funds appropriated under 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 68 to implement the Dairy Risk Management Assistance Program.

(7) In fiscal year 2024, \$150,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Small Farmer Diversification and Transition Program. The Agency staff who support the Working Lands Enterprise Board shall administer the Program and provide small farmers in Vermont with State financial assistance in the form of grants.

(A) Program applicants shall:

(i) be a small farmer and not permitted as a medium farm or large farm at the time of application.

(ii) have a proposed plan for diversification or transition that includes possible markets for the proposed product and probable income; and

(iii) demonstrate to the Agency that there is potential from the proposed diversification or transition to create additional income for the applicant.

(B) Small Farmer Diversification and Transition Program grants shall be used for costs of:

(i) diversifying the farm products produced by the applicant;

- (ii) transitioning the applicant from one form of farming to another;
- (iii) processing of farm products on the farm owned or controlled by the applicant; and
- (iv) development of an accessory on-farm business by the applicant.

Sec. B.1101.1 TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

(a) In fiscal year 2024, \$240,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. These funds, in combination with carryforward funds, are intended to provide fiscal year 2024 funding for the Commission's activities.

* * * Affordable Housing * * *

Sec. B.1102 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT – FISCAL YEAR
2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$10,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Vermont Rental Housing Improvement Program established in 10 V.S.A. § 699.

(b) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$50,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB):

(1) \$10,000,000 to provide support and enhance capacity for emergency shelter and permanent homes for those experiencing homelessness. The intent is to expand Vermont's shelter capacity, provide homes for those experiencing homelessness, and decrease reliance on the General Assistance Emergency Housing hotel and motel program. The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall consult with the Agency of Human Services to ensure new investments in homes and shelters are paired with appropriate support services for residents, including services supported through Medicaid. Funded projects may utilize a range of housing options, including the expansion of shelter capacity, the conversion of hotels to housing, creation of permanent supportive housing, and utilization of manufactured homes on infill sites.

(2) \$40,000,000 to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units, including improvements to manufactured homes and communities, permanent homes for those experiencing homelessness, recovery residences, and housing available to farm workers and refugees. The Board is authorized to utilize up to 10 percent of these resources for innovative approaches to helping communities meet their housing needs.

* * * Climate and Environment * * *

Sec. B.1103 CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT – FISCAL YEAR 2024
ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$700,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources – Central Office for refrigerant management. Funds shall be used for incentives to improve or replace commercial and industrial refrigeration systems with the goal of reducing the use of high global warming potential (GWP) refrigerants.

(b) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$900,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources – Climate Action Office technical analyses, tools, and training. Funds shall be used for investments in ongoing evaluation, implementation support and tracking of the impact of programs, and policy approaches needed to reduce

greenhouse gas emissions and improve landscape-level resilience consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act.

(c) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$2,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Public Service for the School Heating Assistance with Renewables and Efficiency Program (SHARE) to assist Title I eligible schools in repairing or renovating their existing wood chip or pellet heating systems or to install new wood chip or pellet heating systems.

(d) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$150,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for Wildlife Crop Damage Payments. Funds shall be used for payments to farmers under the provisions of 10 V.S.A. §§ 4829 and 4831.

(e) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$500,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for Parks personnel housing. Funds shall be used to renovate, remediate, and expand on-site housing opportunities, including installation of full hook-ups for RVs; splitting existing staff housing into multiple units; and making critical (health and safety) repairs to the existing housing stock for Vermont State Parks staff in critical locations statewide.

(f) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for Small Communities Outdoor Recreation Grant matching funds. Funds shall be used to support Vermont communities by providing State match funds for federal recreation grants.

(g) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$500,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for emerald ash borer mitigation and low income heating assistance. Funds shall be used to remove high-risk ash trees on Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation lands and provide free firewood to households with low income.

(h) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$2,500,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Environmental Conservation for the Brownfields Reuse and Environmental Liability Limitation Act as codified in 10 V.S.A. § 6641. Funds shall be used for the assessment and cleanup planning for a maximum of 25 brownfields sites.

(i) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$600,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Environmental Conservation for the Emissions Repair Program. Funds shall be used for the Emissions Repair Program established by 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 55, Sec. 25 for fiscal years 2024 through 2026.

(j) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$6,100,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds is appropriated to the Department of Environmental Conservation for the Healthy Homes Initiative. Funds shall be used to make repairs or improvements to drinking water, wastewater, or stormwater systems for Vermonters who have low to moderate income or who live in manufactured housing communities, or both.

(k) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$1,000,000 General Fund is appropriated to the Department of Environmental Conservation for Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) technical assistance. Funds shall be used to support statewide groundwater Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) remediation efforts.

(l) In fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$5,000,000 Environmental Contingency Fund #21275 is appropriated to the Department of Environmental Conservation for statewide Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) groundwater remediation.

* * * Pension Funding * * *

Sec. B.1104 FISCAL YEAR 2024 VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM; SUPPLEMENTAL COST OF LIVING PAYMENT; FISCAL YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATION

(a) In fiscal year 2024, notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, the amount of \$3,000,000 is appropriated to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System from the Education Fund for Calendar Year 2023 supplemental payments made in Sec. E.514.2(b) of this act and associated costs.

(b) In fiscal year 2024, notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, the amount of \$9,100,000 is reserved in the Education Fund to fund future supplemental cost of living payments to qualifying retired members and beneficiaries of the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System or the present value of any changes made to the methodology for calculating the postretirement adjustments allowance set forth in 16 V.S.A. § 1949, or both.

* * * Capital Projects * * *

Sec. B.1105 CAPITAL PROJECTS – FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, \$17,600,000 is appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments for the following projects. This funding is provided by the General Fund transfer in Sec. D.101(a)(1)(E) of this act.

(1) \$9,800,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for the State match to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

(2) \$4,000,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for the Municipal Pollution Control Grants for pollution control projects and planning advances for feasibility studies.

(3) \$3,000,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the maintenance facilities at the Gifford Woods State Park and Groton State Forest; and

(4) \$800,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Fish and Wildlife for infrastructure maintenance and improvements of the Department's buildings, including conservation camps.

(b) In fiscal year 2024, \$21,885,000 is appropriated from the Other Infrastructure and Essential Investments subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments for the following projects:

(1) \$400,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for planning, reuse, and contingency;

(2) \$1,700,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Barre, McFarland State Office Building, roof replacement and brick façade repairs;

(3) \$135,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Burlington, 32 Cherry Street, parking garage repairs;

(4) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Middlesex, Central Services complex, roof replacement;

(5) \$150,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Montpelier, State House expansion, design documents;

(6) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the renovation of the interior HVAC steam lines at 120 State Street;

(7) \$600,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for planning for the boiler replacement at the Northern State Correctional Facility in Newport;

(8) \$750,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for planning for renovations to the administration building, West Cottage, at the Criminal Justice Training Council in Pittsford;

(9) \$600,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the planning and design of the booking expansion at the Northwest State Correctional Facility;

(10) \$1,500,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the planning and design for the replacement of the women's correctional facility and reentry facility;

(11) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the planning and design of the Department for Children and Families' short-term stabilization facility;

(12) \$750,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Washington County Superior Courthouse in Barre;

(13) \$250,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Department of Public Safety for the planning and design of the Special Teams Facility and Storage;

(14) \$250,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Department of Public Safety for the planning and design of the Rutland Field Station;

(15) \$300,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the planning and design of the Vermont Agriculture and Environmental Laboratory Heat Plant;

(16) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services for electric vehicle charging stations at State buildings;

(17) \$6,000,000 is appropriated to the Vermont State Colleges for construction, renovation, and major maintenance at any facility owned or operated in the State by the Vermont State Colleges; infrastructure transformation planning; and the planning, design, and construction of Green Hall and Vail Hall;

(18) \$4,500,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for the Waterbury Dam rehabilitation.

(c) In fiscal year 2024, \$3,000,000 as appropriated in Sec. B.903 – Transportation – program development of this act from the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments is for projects as specified in the State transportation plan.

(d) In fiscal year 2024, to the extent funds are available under 32 V.S.A. § 1001b(b)(3), the following appropriations from the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments shall be made in this order:

(1) \$3,500,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Transportation for the Saint Albans garage replacement project.

(2) \$10,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for a grant to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency to provide capitalization of revolving loan fund for the development of 'missing middle' rental housing.

(3) \$5,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Economic Development for the Rural Industrial Development Grant Program as established in this act.

(4) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Transportation for rail trail grants.

(5) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Mental Health for a grant to Pathways Vermont for the purchase and renovation of a building to serve as a permanent home for the Soteria House program.

(A) Prior to issuing the grant the Commissioner of Mental with the assistance of the Secretary of Human Services and Commissioner of Buildings and General Services, shall review the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the financial analysis of the Pathways Vermont proposal to purchase specified property and operate the Soteria House program.

(B) An accounting of the respective State and Pathways Vermont shares of investment in this property shall be maintained in order to refund to the State an appropriate share of any net proceeds resulting from future divestiture of the property.

(6) \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for a grant to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency for its first generation homebuyer program.

(e)(1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, any contract awarded for a maintenance, construction, or improvement project that receives funding from subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall provide that all construction employees working on the project shall be paid not less than the mean prevailing wage published periodically by the Vermont Department of Labor in its occupational employment and wage survey plus an additional fringe benefit of 42 and one-half percent of wage, as calculated by the current Vermont prevailing wage survey. As used in this subdivision, "fringe benefits" has the same meaning as used in 29 V.S.A. § 161.

(2) The requirements of subdivision (1) of this subsection shall not apply to:

(A) any contract awarded for a maintenance, construction, or improvement project that received an appropriation prior to the effective date of this act if any of the following apply as of the effective date of this act:

(i) the project has been invited or advertised for bid;

(ii) the project is under contract; or

(iii) the funds are obligated; and

(B) contracts awarded for maintenance, construction, or improvement projects that are required by law to comply with the requirements of the federal Davis-Bacon Act.

* * * Fiscal Year 2023 Adjustments, Appropriations, and Amendments * * *
 Sec. C.100 FISCAL YEAR 2023 GENERAL FUND UNALLOCATED
 CARRYFORWARD

(a) After satisfying the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308, and after other reserve requirements have been met, but prior to satisfying the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308c,

the first \$335,200,000 of remaining unreserved and undesignated funds at the close of fiscal year 2023 shall remain in the General Fund and be carried forward to fiscal year 2024.

Sec. C.101 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2022 OUT
OF STATE BEDS CARRYFORWARD FUNDS AND JUSTICE
REINVESTMENT II FUNDING

(a) Notwithstanding 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.335, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 62, and by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.111, \$1,000,000 of the Department of Corrections Out of State Bed General Fund appropriation carried forward from fiscal year 2022 shall be used for the development and implementation of the Offender Management System (OMS) intelligence layer.

Sec. C.102 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.335, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 62, and 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.111 is further amended to read:

Sec. E.335 CORRECTIONS APPROPRIATIONS; UNEXPENDED
FUNDS TRANSFER; JUSTICE REINVESTMENT;
REPORT

* * *

(c) ~~Any funds expended authorized to be used on community-based service programs justice reinvestment programs pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be included in the subsequent year Department of Corrections budget for the same purpose at the same amount~~ may be carried forward over multiple fiscal years until fully expended.

Sec. C.103 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.335 is amended to read:

Sec. E.335 CORRECTIONS APPROPRIATIONS; UNEXPENDED
FUNDS TRANSFER; JUSTICE REINVESTMENT; REPORT

* * *

(c) ~~Any funds expended on community-based service programs pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be included in the subsequent year Department of Corrections budget for the same purpose at the same amount. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. C.104 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
ARPA-SFR PROJECT FUNDS REVERSION

(a) \$1,100,000 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds appropriated to the Department of Environmental Conservation in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. G.501(a)(2) shall revert to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds for reallocation in fiscal year 2024.

Sec. C.105 32 V.S.A. § 1001b is amended to read:

§ 1001b. CASH FUND FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE CASH FUND AND
ESSENTIAL INVESTMENTS

(a) Creation. There is hereby created the Capital Expenditure Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to be administered by the Commissioner of Finance and Management, in consultation with the State Treasurer, ~~for the purpose of using general funds.~~ The Fund shall have the following three subaccounts:

(1) the Capital Infrastructure subaccount, to defray the costs of future capital expenditures that would otherwise be authorized in the capital construction act and paid for using the State's general obligation bonding authority and debt service obligations or paid for as a direct associated cost of a capital project;

(2) the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount, to fund essential investments and infrastructure needs or to create reserves for these expenditures, including transportation-related projects; and

(3) the Supplemental Contingent Revenues subaccount, to capitalize revolving loan funds and other expenditures, as authorized by the General Assembly.

(b) Fund Accounts. ~~The Fund may consist of:~~

(1) Capital Infrastructure Reserve subaccount. The Capital Infrastructure Reserve subaccount may consist of transfers made by the General Assembly up to or equal to four percent of the last completed fiscal year's General Fund appropriations, less the amount necessary to fund the State's general obligation debt service in the year for which the transfer is being made, as determined by the State Treasurer and the Commissioner of Finance and Management.

(2) Other Infrastructure and Essential Investments subaccount. The Other Infrastructure and Essential Investments subaccount may consist of any appropriations or transfers made by the General Assembly; from the General Fund or any other State fund and

~~(2) any interest earned by the Fund.~~

(3) Supplemental Contingent Revenues subaccount. The Supplemental Contingent Revenues subaccount may consist of any contingent transfers made by the General Assembly from the General Fund after satisfying the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308 but prior to satisfying the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308c in any fiscal year and any contingent transfers made by the General Assembly from other State funds.

~~(c) Use of funds. Expenditure shall only be made from the Fund by appropriations by the General Assembly. Plans for use shall be submitted as part of the operating budget adjustment or operating budget process. Monies in the Fund Accounts shall only be used for as follows:~~

~~(1) costs associated with a proposed capital project that occur prior to the construction phase of that project, including feasibility, planning, design, and engineering and architectural costs; Expenditures shall only be made by the General Assembly from the Capital Infrastructure Reserve subaccount for:~~

~~(A) tangible capital investments, as described in section 309 of this title, with an anticipated lifespan of 20 years or more; and~~

~~(B) engineering and architectural costs directly associated with a proposed capital project.~~

~~(2) projects with an anticipated lifespan of 20 years; Expenditures shall only be made by the General Assembly from the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount for:~~

~~(A) any expenditure eligible under subdivision (1) of this subsection (c); and~~

~~(B) any other essential investments and infrastructure needs, including transportation-related projects.~~

~~(3) costs associated with the early redemption of general obligation bonds; and~~

~~(4) other eligible capital projects receiving an appropriation from the General Assembly Expenditures shall only be made by the General Assembly from the Supplemental Contingent Revenues subaccount for:~~

- ~~(A) any expenditure eligible under subdivision (1) of this subsection (c); and
(B) any other purpose, including capitalization of revolving loan funds.~~

~~(d) Fund balance. All balances in the Fund accounts at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward and remain part of the Fund accounts. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 511, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall not anticipate receipts for the Fund accounts and issue warrants thereon.~~

~~(e) Early redemption transfer. If any expenditures are made from the Fund or the General Assembly appropriates general funds to pay for the early redemption of general obligation bonds pursuant to subdivision (c)(3) of this section, then an amount equal to the reduction in debt service required in any fiscal year resulting from that redemption shall be transferred to the Fund Spending authority. Any entity authorized to make expenditures from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount shall have not more than two years from the legislative session in which the act authorizing the expenditure was enacted to encumber the funds. Any remaining unencumbered funds shall remain part of the Fund account.~~

Sec. C.106 32 V.S.A. § 1001 is amended to read:

§ 1001. CAPITAL DEBT AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

* * *

(c) Committee estimate of a prudent amount of net State tax-supported debt; affordability considerations. On or before September 30 of each year, the Committee shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly the Committee's estimate of net State tax-supported debt that prudently may be authorized for the next fiscal year, together with a report explaining the basis for the estimate. The Committee's estimate shall not take into consideration the balance remaining at the end of each fiscal year in the subaccounts of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments, established pursuant to section 1001b of this title. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall not apply to the report to be made under this subsection. In developing its annual estimate, and in preparing its annual report, the Committee shall consider:

* * *

Sec. C.107 RESERVES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT (IJA) MATCH

(a) To the extent available in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the amount of \$25,000,000 is reserved in the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to provide the State match in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 needed for federal funding for transportation related projects under the IJA. These funds shall only be expended if authorized by the General Assembly.

(b) To the extent available in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the amount of \$14,500,000 is reserved in the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to provide the State match in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 needed for federal funding for water and wastewater related projects

under the IJA. These funds shall only be expended if authorized by the General Assembly.

Sec. C.108 SUPPLEMENTAL CONTINGENT TRANSFERS TO CASH
FUND FOR CAPITAL AND ESSENTIAL INVESTMENTS

(a) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, to the extent any fund specified in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. D.101(b)(2) as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 48 has an unobligated fund balance in fiscal year 2023, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall transfer to the subaccount created under 32 V.S.A. 1001b(b)(3) the respective fiscal year 2023 unobligated special fund balances. The Commissioner shall report the amounts transferred pursuant to this provision to the Joint Fiscal Committee in July 2023.

(b) To the extent available in fiscal year 2023, \$22,500,000 shall be transferred from the General Fund to the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments pursuant to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 1001b(b)(3).

Sec. C.109 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 51a is amended to read:

Sec. 51a. COVID-19-RELATED PAID LEAVE GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Establishment and appropriation.

(1) There is established in the Department of Financial Regulation the COVID-19-Related Paid Leave Grant Program to administer and award grants to employers to reimburse the cost of providing COVID-19-related paid leave to employees as provided in subsection (e) of this section.

(2) The sum of ~~\$15,180,000~~ \$5,000,000 is appropriated from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds to the Department of Financial Regulation for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 for the provision of grants to reimburse employers for the cost of providing COVID-19-related paid leave. ~~Not more than seven percent of the amount appropriated pursuant to this subdivision may be used for expenses related to Program administration and outreach.~~

* * *

(c) Grant program.

* * *

(3)(A) Employers may submit applications for grants during the period beginning on October 1, 2022 and ending on September 30, 2023 and may submit an application not more than once each calendar quarter during that period. Grant applications shall be submitted for paid leave provided during the preceding calendar quarter and, subject to subdivision (B) of this subdivision (3), for calendar quarters in the program period prior to the preceding calendar quarter.

(B) An employer shall be permitted to request grant funds for costs related to COVID-19-related paid leave described in subsection (e) of this section in a calendar quarter prior to the preceding calendar quarter if:

(i) the employer has not already received grant funds in relation to the COVID-19-related leave; and

(ii) the costs of the COVID-19-related leave are eligible for a grant pursuant to the provisions of this section and any applicable federal requirements.

(4) An employer may combine grant funds with funding from other sources but shall not use grant funds from multiple sources for the same instance of paid leave provided to its employees for COVID-19-related reasons. As used in this subdivision, an “instance” means a calendar day in which the employee was absent from work for a COVID-19-related reason.

* * *

(6) Grants shall be awarded to eligible employers on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to available funding.

* * *

(e) Amount of grants.

(1) Employers may, subject to the limitations of subdivision (2) of this subsection, apply for grants to either reimburse the cost of COVID-19-related paid leave provided to employees or to provide funds to be used to pay the cost to retroactively provide paid leave to employees who took unpaid leave for COVID-19 related reasons.

~~(A) For reimbursement of COVID-19 related paid leave that was already provided, the employer may, subject to the limitations of subdivision (2) of this subsection (e), apply for a grant in an amount equal to the number of hours of COVID-19-related paid leave provided to each employee multiplied by the greater of either the minimum wage established pursuant to 21 V.S.A. § 384 or the employee’s regular hourly wage.~~

~~(B) For COVID-19 related paid leave that will be provided retroactively to employees who took unpaid leave for COVID-19 related reasons, the employer may, subject to the limitations of subdivision (2) of this subsection (e), apply for a grant in an amount equal to the number of hours of COVID-19 related paid leave to be provided to each employee multiplied by the greater of either the minimum wage established pursuant to 21 V.S.A. § 384 or the employee’s regular hourly wage.~~

* * *

Sec. C.110 FUNDING OF POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCB) REMEDICATION AND REMOVAL IN SCHOOLS

(a) Education Fund; PCB appropriations. Notwithstanding 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 178, Sec. 2(b):

(1) the funds reserved within the Education Fund for purposes of investigation, remediation, and removal of PCBs from schools are unreserved; and

(2) the unexpended or unobligated amount of the \$2,500,000 transferred by the Emergency Board to the Agency of Education for PCB remediation shall revert to the Education Fund for further allocation.

(b) Agency of Education; PCB remediation and removal reimbursement.

(1) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025(d), \$29,500,000 and the unexpended funds identified under subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be appropriated from the Education Fund to the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2024 for the following purposes:

(A)(i) Grants to schools in the State that are required to conduct remediation or removal of PCB contamination in the school after Agency of Natural Resources testing but have not received a grant from the Agency of Natural Resources for the costs of remediation or removal. The grants shall be in an amount sufficient to pay for 100 percent of the school’s remediation or removal costs, including the costs incurred when

necessary under State or federal law to relocate students to a facility during remediation or removal activities.

(B) Grants to schools in the State that conducted remediation or removal of PCBs in the school after Agency of Natural Resources testing and received a grant for 80 percent of the costs of remediation or removal from the Agency of Natural Resources. The grants under this subdivision (b)(1)(B) shall be in an amount that will reimburse the school for any remediation or removal costs not paid by the Agency of Natural Resources.

(C) A grant to the Burlington School District to reimburse the school district for the actual cost of demolition and removal of PCB contamination at Burlington High School, not to exceed \$16,000,000.

(c) Grant criteria. The Secretary of Education, after consultation with the Vermont School Boards Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, the Vermont School Custodian and Maintenance Association, and other stakeholders, shall develop criteria for priority use of funds and criteria for the costs of remediation and removal of PCB contamination that will be eligible for a grant under subdivisions (b)(1)(A) and (B) of this section.

Sec. C.111 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 172, Sec. 8 is amended to read:

Sec. 8. MUNICIPAL ENERGY REVOLVING FUND; ~~FY 2023~~

APPROPRIATION TRANSFER; REPORT

(a) ~~In FY 2023,~~ Upon receipt of the following federal funds and to the extent permitted by federal law, the following amounts shall be transferred to the Department of Buildings and General Services from the Department of Public Service for the Municipal Energy Revolving Fund, as established in 29 V.S.A. § 168b:

* * *

Sec. C.112 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM;
DISPATCH; INVENTORY; DESIGN

(a) The General Assembly finds that protecting public safety and welfare is an essential function of State government and it is in the public interest to establish a statewide reliable, secure, and interoperable public safety communications system, comprising integrated 911 call-taking and regional dispatch systems, and to ensure that the system is equitably and sustainably financed and universally accessible by all persons throughout the State.

(b) It is not the intent of the General Assembly to establish a public safety communications system that disrupts or in any way jeopardizes the exceptional dispatch services currently in place or the existing 911 system, but rather to support, enhance, strengthen and build upon those efforts and initiatives.

(c) The transition to a public safety communications system as specified in subsection (a) of this section shall be overseen and managed by the Enhanced 911 Board, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Secretary of Digital Services, the Commissioner of Public Service, and relevant State and local public safety and government stakeholders. In addition, the Board is authorized to retain a project manager and one or more additional consultants with relevant expertise in public safety

communications technology, design, and financing to assist with the requirements of this section.

(d) The establishment of a statewide public safety communications system shall occur in essentially three phases that include data collection and analysis, design, and implementation. Certain aspects of each phase may occur simultaneously as deemed appropriate by the Board.

(1) Data collection and analysis. On or before January 15, 2024, the Board shall conduct a complete inventory and assessment of all aspects of dispatch service currently provided in Vermont and, to the extent possible, dispatch service currently provided outside Vermont for response agencies located in Vermont, which shall include:

(A) an inventory of all existing dispatch infrastructure and equipment, including facilities, hardware, software, applications, and land mobile radio systems, referring to and incorporating any existing relevant data collected by a State or municipal entity;

(B) the number of full-time and part-time personnel currently performing dispatch service, taking into account personnel who have other responsibilities in addition to providing dispatch service;

(C) the current total spending on dispatch service in Vermont, taking into account all federal, State, and municipal appropriations and fees;

(D) in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Service and to the extent feasible, identification of the communications dead zones in the State, meaning those areas that lack the infrastructure to support public safety land-mobile-radio communications or cellular voice and data service, or both, and taking into consideration all cell towers that are part of the FirstNet statewide public safety radio access network; cellular mapping efforts conducted by the Department of Public Service; and any existing, relevant mapping data collected by a dispatch center or other entity;

(E) with the assistance of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, a needs assessment to determine where and to what extent there are gaps in dispatch service or significant challenges to the delivery of dispatch service and to identify those municipalities that are likely to be most affected by either the curtailment of dispatch service from the two State-run public safety answering points or from a new financing mechanism for the continuation of such service;

(F) an assessment of the service provided by each dispatch center and identification of particular challenges or vulnerabilities, if any, including with regard to workforce, failover procedures, communications technology, costs, and governance; and

(G) collection and assessment of any other information the Board deems relevant.

(2) Design. On or before January 15, 2024, the Board shall develop findings and recommendations related to draft elements of a preliminary design for a public safety communications system, including identification of an implementation timeline and any additional data and resources needed to develop a final design on or before January 15, 2025. The final design shall include:

(A) technical and operational standards and protocols that ensure an interoperable and resilient system that incorporates computer-aided dispatch systems and land mobile radios;

(B) technology life cycle standards to ensure system and database upgrades are timely, sufficiently financed, and properly managed;

(C) system and database security and cybersecurity standards;

(D) continuity of operations standards and best practices that encompass failover procedures and other system redundancies to ensure the continuous performance of mission-critical operations;

(E) workforce training standards and other staffing best practices that support the retention and well-being of dispatch personnel;

(F) a resource allocation plan that ensures dispatch service is available in all regions of the State, including the establishment of new dispatch centers or expanded capacity and capability of existing dispatch centers, if deemed appropriate by the Board;

(G) a process for annually reviewing the budgets of dispatch centers;

(H) a recommended governance model to ensure effective State and regional oversight, management, and continuous improvement of the system, including identification of staffing or operational needs to support such oversight and management of the system by the Board or by another State agency, if deemed appropriate by the Board;

(I) cost estimates for implementing the system in Vermont, including operational and capital costs;

(J) an overview of sustainable and equitable financing mechanisms, taking into consideration:

(i) existing budgets for regional and local dispatch;

(ii) the population, grand list, and call volume of each municipality;

(iii) existing and potential State funding streams;

(iv) available federal funding opportunities for public safety agencies and emergency communications systems, including equipment, network infrastructure, and services;

(v) financing models adopted in other jurisdictions for public safety communications systems; and

(vi) any other standards or procedures deemed necessary or appropriate by the Board.

(e) On or before January 15, 2024, the Board shall submit the findings and recommendations required by subdivisions (d)(1) and (2) of this section in a written report to the Senate Committees on Government Operations and on Finance and the House Committees on Government Operations and Military Affairs, on Ways and Means, and on Environment and Energy.

Sec. C.113 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1100 is amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 FISCAL YEAR 2023 ONE-TIME GENERAL FUND
APPROPRIATIONS

* * *

(b) \$11,000,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Department of Public Safety~~ Enhanced 911 Board for regional dispatch funding. The funds are subject to the following conditions:

~~(1) \$4,500,000 shall be held in reserve until the report required by Sec. E.209.1 of this act is submitted and further approval to expend the funds is granted by the General Assembly~~ Up to \$2,000,000 shall be available for the retention of technical experts to

assist the Executive Director of the E-911 Board with regional dispatch analysis and planning as required by legislation enacted in 2023.

(2) \$6,500,000 to provide grants to regional dispatch facilities upon approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee subsequent to review of a Regional Dispatch Facility grant plan submitted by the Commissioner of Public Safety. The plan shall include the extent to which federal funding sources may be available for regional dispatch. \$9,000,000 shall be held in reserve until the report required by legislation enacted in 2023 is submitted and further approval to expend the funds is granted by the General Assembly.

(3) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Department of Public Safety seek to draw and deploy the \$9,000,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending to support Vermont's transition to a modernized, regional communications network in a manner that coordinates with and advances the goals of the statewide public safety communications system designed by the E-911 Board. The Commissioner of Public Safety shall consult with the Executive Director of the E-911 Board as the federal parameters for expending the funds become available and as the Commissioner develops a plan to expend such funds. In addition, the Commissioner of Public Safety shall update the Joint Fiscal Committee on planned expenditures.

* * *

Sec. C.114 ORGANIC DAIRY FARM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(a) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall establish an organic dairy farm assistance program consistent with the requirements of this section.

(b) An organic dairy farm is eligible for assistance under this section if:

(1) the farm is currently operating as a dairy farm producing milk, either organic or conventional;

(2) the farm shipped organic milk or processed its own organic milk under the requirements of 6 V.S.A. chapter 151 during calendar year 2022 and provides documentation to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets of the amount of organic milk shipped or processed during calendar year 2022 per hundredweight;

(3) the farm is in good standing with the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; and

(4) the farm submits an application for assistance to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets by a date specified by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

(c) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall award eligible organic dairy farms financial assistance in the form of a grant in the amount of \$5 per hundredweight of organic milk shipped or sold by the organic dairy farm in calendar year 2022. Once the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets determines that applications under this section are administratively complete, the Agency shall process applications for payment in their order of receipt. If all funds appropriated for implementation of this section are awarded by the Agency, no further awards shall be made. If any funds appropriated for implementation of this section remain after all timely applications are processed, the remaining funds shall be transferred to the Working Lands Enterprise Fund not later than December 31, 2023 for distribution by the Working Lands Enterprise Board.

Sec. C.115 2022 Acts and Resolves No.185, Sec. G.600(a)(2), as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, is amended to read:

Sec. G.600 CLIMATE ACTION INVESTMENTS

(a) In fiscal year 2023, \$129,760,000 is appropriated from the American Rescue Plan Act - Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds for climate change mitigation initiatives as follows:

* * *

(2) \$35,000,000 to the Department of Public Service ~~to grant~~ to contract with Efficiency Vermont for the purpose of weatherization incentives to Vermonters with a moderate income. These funds shall be deposited in the Electric Efficiency Fund established under 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(3) and shall be available for ~~use by Efficiency Vermont~~ this purpose through December 31, 2026. Households approved for assistance in this section will also be offered services outlined in subdivision (4) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. C.116 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 3 is amended to read:

Sec. 3. MANUFACTURED HOME IMPROVEMENT AND REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Of the amounts available from federal COVID-19 relief funds, ~~the following amounts are~~ \$4,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the purposes specified:

(1) ~~\$2,500,000.00 for m-~~ Manufactured home community small-scale capital grants, through which the Department may award not more than \$20,000.00 for owners of manufactured housing communities to complete small-scale capital needs to help infill vacant lots with homes, which may include projects such as disposal of abandoned homes, lot grading/preparation, site electrical box issues/upgrades, E911 safety issues, legal fees, transporting homes out of flood zones, individual septic system, and marketing to help make it easier for home-seekers to find vacant lots around the State.

(2) ~~\$750,000.00 for m-~~ Manufactured home repair grants, through which the Department may award funding for minor rehab or accessibility projects, coordinated as possible with existing programs, for between 250 and 400 existing homes where the home is otherwise in good condition or in situations where the owner is unable to replace the home and the repair will keep them housed.

(3) ~~\$750,000.00 for n-~~ New manufactured home foundation grants, through which the Department may award not more than \$15,000.00 per grant for a homeowner to pay for a foundation or HUD-approved slab, site preparation, skirting, tie-downs, and utility connections on vacant lots within manufactured home communities.

* * *

* * * Fiscal Year 2024 Fund Transfers and Reserve Allocations * * *

Sec. D.100 APPROPRIATIONS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

(a) This act contains the following amounts appropriated from special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. Expenditures from these appropriations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of \$560,000 is appropriated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of

\$560,000 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(2) The sum of \$21,462,855 is appropriated from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of \$21,462,855 from the property transfer tax and surcharge established by 32 V.S.A. § 9602a that are deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of \$2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond (10 V.S.A. § 314) shall be offset by the reduction of \$1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and \$1,000,000 from the surcharge established by 32 V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2024 appropriation of \$21,462,855 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the \$1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, it is the intent of the General Assembly that the \$1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board should be restored.

(3) The sum of \$7,545,993 is appropriated from the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund. Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), amounts in excess of \$7,545,993 from the property transfer tax that are deposited into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. The \$7,545,993 shall be allocated for the following:

(A) \$6,211,650 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) \$898,283 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) \$436,060 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. D.100.1 LEGISLATIVE INTENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 PLANNING FUNDS

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that at least \$500,000 of the increased planning funds provided in Sec. D.100 of this act be available for municipal bylaw modernization.

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS, REVERSIONS, AND RESERVES

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the following amounts shall be transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund to:

(A) the Environmental Contingency Fund (21275): \$5,000,000;

(B) the Enhanced 9-1-1 Board Fund (21711): \$2,115,000;

(i) Of the funds transferred to the Enhanced 9-1-1 Board Fund in this subdivision, \$815,000 shall be used to support necessary 9-1-1 system upgrades beginning in fiscal year 2024;

(C) the Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951): \$10,000,000;

(D) the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments (21952):

(i) \$17,600,000 for the Capital Infrastructure subaccount for use on capital projects as authorized in the capital bill and appropriated in this act; and

(ii) \$40,400,000 for the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount for other expenditures and reserves as authorized by the General Assembly.

(E) the Tax Computer System Modernization Fund #21909: \$2,7000,000.

(2) From the Education Fund to:

(A) the Tax Computer System Modernization Fund #21909: \$1,100,000.

(3) From the Clean Water Fund (21932) established by 10 V.S.A. § 1388 to:

(A) the Agricultural Water Quality Special Fund (21933) created under 6 V.S.A. §4803: \$6,684,880; and

(B) the Lake in Crisis Response Program Special Fund (21938) created under 10 V.S.A. § 1315: \$120,000.

(4) From the Transportation Fund to:

(A) the Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvement Fund (21575) established by 24 V.S.A. § 2796 to be used by the Vermont Downtown Development Board for the purposes of the Fund: \$523,966.

(b) Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2024:

(1) The following amounts shall be transferred to the General Fund from the funds indicated:

22005	<u>AHS Central Office Earned Federal Receipts</u>	\$4,641,960
50300	<u>Liquor Control Fund</u>	\$21,200,000
	<u>Sports Wagering Fund</u>	\$1,204,000
	<u>Caledonia Fair</u>	\$5,000
	<u>North Country Hospital Loan Repayment</u>	\$24,047
	<u>Springfield Hospital Promissory Note Repayment</u>	\$121,416

(2) The following estimated amounts, which may be all or a portion of unencumbered fund balances, shall be transferred to the General Fund. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July meeting the final amounts transferred from each fund and certify that such transfers will not impair the agency, office, or department reliant upon each fund from meeting its statutory requirements.

21638	<u>AG-Fees and reimbursement – Court order</u>	\$1,000,000
621000	<u>Unclaimed Property Fund</u>	\$1,743,425

(3) Notwithstanding 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 172, Sec. E. 228, \$60,044,000 of the unencumbered balances in the Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (21075), the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (21085), and the Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (21080) shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2024, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

3400004000	<u>Agency of Human Services – Secretary’s Office – Global Commitment</u>	\$15,103,683
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(d) Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2024 the following estimated General Fund reserves shall be made:

(1) Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 308, an estimated amount of \$1,669,311 shall be unreserved from the General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve.

Sec. D.102 27/53 RESERVE

(a) \$5,350,000 General Fund shall be transferred to the 27/53 reserve in fiscal year 2023. This action is the fiscal year 2024 contribution to the reserve for the 53rd week of Medicaid as required by 32 V.S.A. § 308e and the 27th payroll reserve as required by 32 V.S.A. § 308e.

Sec. D.103 UNRESERVED; INCENTIVE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, \$700,000 in general funds reserved per 2022 Act and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.107.2(b) are unreserved and available for appropriation.

* * * General Government * * *

Sec. E.100 EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 80 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

(A) Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets:

(i) one Consumer Protection Specialist I; and

(ii) two Food Safety Specialist Is;

(B) Criminal Justice Council: two FIP Instructors;

(C) Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living:

(i) five Quality and Program Participant Specialists;

(ii) one Dementia Coordinator; and

(iii) three Public Guardians;

(D) Department of Financial Regulation: two Insurance Examiners;

(E) Department of Human Resources:

(i) one Compensation Analyst;

(ii) one Configuration Analyst II;

(iii) one Employee Support Specialist;

(iv) one FMLI Manager;

(v) one HR Administrator III;

(vi) one HR Administrator IV;

(vii) one HR Manager; and

(viii) one Talent Coordinator;

(F) Department of Liquor and Lottery:

(i) one Financial Analyst; and

(ii) one Sports Betting Director;

(G) Department of Mental Health:

(i) one Crisis Program Director;

(ii) one Mental Health Analyst I;

(iii) one Operations Manager; and

(iv) one Training and Curriculum Development Supervisor; and

(v) one Quality and Program Specialist;

(H) Department of Taxes – State Appraisal and Litigation Assistance Program:

(i) one Property Valuation and Review Program Manager;

(I) Office of the State Treasurer;

- (i) one Program Technician;
- (ii) one Administrative Services Coordinator;
- (iii) one Financial Specialist III;
- (iv) one Financial Manager I;
- (v) one Financial Manager II; and
- (vi) one Program Technician II;
- (J) E911 Board:
 - (i) one Program Technician I;
- (K) Department of Motor Vehicles:
 - (i) three Motor Vehicle Inspectors;
- (L) Office of the Defender General:
 - (i) one Financial Director;
- (M) Agency of Natural Resources:
 - (i) one Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Specialist;
- (N) Agency of Transportation – Highway Division:
 - (i) one Transportation Operations Technician III; and
 - (ii) one Transportation Technician IV-;
- (O) Department for Children and Families – Child Development Division:
 - (i) one Business Applications Support Manager;
 - (ii) two Licensing Field Specialist Is;
 - (iii) one Child Care Business Tech;
 - (iv) two Administrative Services Coordinator IIs;
 - (v) one Program Integrity Investigator;
 - (vi) one Grants and Contracts Manager – Compliance.
 - (vii) one Business Application Support Specialist;
 - (viii) one Process and Policy Administrator;
 - (ix) one Business Project Manager;
 - (x) one Business Services Specialist II;
 - (xi) one Training and Curriculum Development Specialist;
 - (xii) one Communications and Outreach Coordinator;
 - (xiii) one Financial Manager II;
 - (xiv) two Grants and Contracts Mangers; and
 - (xv) one Administrative Services Manager II;
- (P) Department for Children and Families – Parental Leave Program:
 - (i) one Child Benefits Program Administrator;
- (Q) Agency of Human Services – Central Office:
 - (i) three Quality and Program Specialists.
- (2) Permanent exempt positions:
 - (A) Department of Taxes – State Appraisal and Litigation Assistance Program: one Staff Attorney;
 - (B) Agency of Commerce and Community Development – Division for Historic Preservation – Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs: one Executive Director;
 - (C) Human Rights Commission – one Staff Attorney;
 - (D) Office of the Attorney General – one private secretary; and
 - (E) Department of State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs;

- (i) five Deputy State's Attorneys;
- (ii) one Victim Advocate; and
- (iii) two Legal Assistants.

(b) The conversion of 46 limited service positions to classified permanent status is authorized in fiscal year 2024 as follows:

(1) Department of Public Safety, State Police:

(A) one Victim Services Specialist;

(2) Department of Vermont Health Access, Blueprint for Health Unit:

(A) one HCR Integration Manager;

(3) Department of Vermont Health Access, Health Care Reform Unit:

(A) one Administrative Services Manager I;

(B) five DVHA Program Consultants;

(C) one DVHA Quality Control Manager;

(D) one Health Reform Enterprise Director I;

(E) two Medicaid Operations Administrators;

(F) one Project and Operations Director;

(G) one Project and Operations Specialist; and

(H) one Project Director;

(4) Department of Vermont Health Access, Medicaid Policy Fiscal and Support

Unit:

(A) two Audit Liaison/Internal Control positions;

(B) three DVHA Healthcare QC Auditors;

(C) one DVHA Healthcare QC CAP Auditor;

(D) two DVHA Program and Operations Auditors;

(E) one DVHA Program Consultant;

(F) one Health Reform Enterprise Director I; and

(G) one Nurse Auditor;

(5) Department of Vermont Health Access, Payment Reform/Reimbursement Unit:

(A) one Admin HC Payment Reform Analytics position;

(B) three Change Management Practitioners;

(C) one Deputy Director of Payment Reform;

(D) one Director of Operations for ACO Programs;

(E) one Grant Programs Manager;

(F) one Health Care Project Director;

(G) one Payment Reform Special Project Lead; and

(H) one Senior Policy Advisor; and

(6) Agency of Transportation – Aviation Program:

(A) nine Airport Maintenance Workers;

(B) one Airport Operations Specialist.

(c) The establishment of 10 new classified limited service positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 as follows:

(1) Department for Children and Families for the Reach Ahead pilot program:

(A) one Benefits Program Assistant Administrator; and

(B) two Reach Up Case Manager IIs;

(2) Department for Children and Families – Parental Leave Program:

(A) one Process and Policy Administrator; and

- (B) one Process and Performance Analyst;
- (3) Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation:
 - (A) one Communications and Outreach Coordinator;
 - (B) one Climate Forester; and
 - (C) three Forester IIs.
- (d) The establishment of 22 new exempt limited service positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 as follows:
 - (1) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:
 - (A) six Deputy State's Attorneys;
 - (B) six State's Attorney Legal Assistants;
 - (C) six State's Attorney Victim Advocates; and
 - (D) four State's Attorney Secretaries.

Sec. E.107 3 V.S.A. § 473 is amended to read:

* * *

(c)(8) Annually, the Board shall certify an amount to pay the annual actuarially determined employer contribution, as calculated in this subsection, and additional amounts as follows:

(A) in fiscal year 2024, the amount of \$9,000,000.00;

(B) in fiscal year 2025, the amount of \$12,000,000.00; and

(C) in fiscal year 2026 and in any year thereafter when the Fund is calculated to have a funded ratio of less than 90 percent, the amount of \$15,000,000.00.

(d) Contributions of State. As provided by law, the Retirement Board shall certify to the Governor or Governor-Elect a statement of the percentage of the payroll of all members sufficient to pay for all operating expenses of the Vermont State Retirement System and all contributions of the State that will become due and payable during the next biennium. The contributions of the State to pay the annual actuarially determined employer contribution and any additional amounts pursuant to section (c)(8) of this section shall be charged to the departmental appropriation from which members' salaries are paid and shall be included in each departmental budgetary request. Annually, on or before September 15, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall provide to the Joint Fiscal Committee a breakdown of the components of the payroll charge applied to each department's budget for the current and next fiscal year. This report shall itemize the percentages of payroll assessments used to fund:

(1) the actuarially determined employer contribution to the Vermont State Retirement System;

(2) any additional payments made pursuant to section (c)(8) to the Vermont State Retirement System; and

(3) the employer contribution to the State Employees' Postemployment Benefits Trust Fund made pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 479a (e)(3).

Sec. E.107.1 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT;
PENSION PLUS APPROPRIATION DIRECTIVE

(a) In fiscal year 2024, funds appropriated to the Department of Finance and Management/Agency of Administration in Sec. B.104.1 of this act to fund additional payments to the Vermont State Retirement System made pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 473 (c)(8) may be directly deposited in the Vermont State Employees Retirement System fund. In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, funds appropriated for this purpose shall be distributed to departments and agencies up to the amount determined necessary by the Commissioner of Finance and Management to fund additional payments to the Vermont State Retirement System made pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 473 (c)(8). Prior to distribution, the Commissioner shall require departments and agencies to demonstrate insufficient appropriation capacity to absorb the cost of the payroll charge assessed to fund the additional payments made pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 473(c)(8). Any undistributed portion of this appropriation shall be reverted to the General Fund in fiscal year 2025. The Commissioner shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its September 2023 meeting on the status of this appropriation.

Sec. E.108 3 V.S.A. § 479 is amended to read:

§ 479. GROUP INSURANCE

(a)(1) As provided under section 631 of this title, a member who is insured by the respective group insurance plans immediately preceding the member's effective date of retirement shall be entitled to continuation of group insurance as follows:

~~(i)(A)(i)~~ coverage in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees who are not eligible for Medicare; or

~~(B)(ii)~~ for a Group F and Group G plan member first included in the membership of the system on or after July 1, 2008, coverage in the group medical benefit plan offered by the State of Vermont for active State employees who are not eligible for Medicare and pursuant to the following, provided:

~~(i)(I)~~ a member who has completed five years and less than 10 years of creditable service at the member's retirement shall pay the full cost of the premium;

~~(ii)(II)~~ a member who has completed 10 years and less than 15 years of creditable service at the member's retirement shall pay 60 percent of the cost of the premium;

~~(iii)(III)~~ a member who has completed 15 years and less than 20 years of creditable service at ~~his or her~~ the member's retirement shall pay 40 percent of the cost of the premium;

~~(iv)(IV)~~ a member who has completed 20 years or more of creditable service at ~~his or her~~ the member's retirement shall pay 20 percent of the cost of the premium; and

~~(2)(B)~~ members who have completed 20 years of creditable service at their effective date of retirement shall be entitled to the continuation of life insurance in the amount of \$10,000.00.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (1)(A)(i) or (ii) of this subsection to the contrary, a member may be offered health coverage other than coverage in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees who are not eligible for Medicare if the following conditions are met:

(A) the alternative health coverage is substantially equivalent to the coverage offered through the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees who are not eligible for Medicare; and

(B) the alternative health coverage is mutually agreeable to:

(i) the State;

(ii) the Vermont State Employees' Association;

(iii) the Vermont Troopers' Association; and

(iv) the Vermont Retired State Employees' Association.

(b) As of July 1, 2007, members of the Group C plan who separate from service prior to being eligible for retirement benefits under this chapter, who have at least 20 years of creditable service, and who participated in the group medical benefit plan at the time of separation from service shall have a one-time option at the time retirement benefits commence to participate in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees who are not eligible for Medicare or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section. Premiums for the plan shall be prorated between the retired member and the Retirement System pursuant to section 631 of this title.

(c) Premiums for coverage of retired members of the Group C plan and their dependents in the group medical benefit plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be prorated on the same basis as is provided for active employees by the current collective bargaining agreement for the nonmanagement unit. The amounts designated as the State's share of premium for the medical benefit plan and the total premium for group life insurance provided under subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be paid by the Fund as an operating expense in accordance with subsection 473(d) of this title.

(d) After January 1, 2007, the State Treasurer may offer and administer a dental benefit plan for retired members, beneficiaries, eligible dependents, and eligible retirees of special affiliated groups and the dependents of members of those groups who are eligible for coverage in the State Employee Group Medical Benefit Plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section. The Plan shall be separate and apart from any dental benefit plan offered to Vermont State employees. The original plan of benefits, and any changes thereto, shall be determined by the State Treasurer with due consideration of recommendations from the Retired Employees' Committee on Insurance established in section 636 of this title.

* * *

(3) Dependent eligibility shall be determined in the manner applied to determinations for coverage in the State Employee Medical Benefit Plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section.

(4) [Repealed.]

(e) As of January 1, 2007, and thereafter, upon retirement, members entitled to prorated group medical benefit plan premium payments from the Retirement System under the terms of this section shall have a one-time option to reduce the percentage of premium payments from the Retirement System during the member's life, with the provision that the Fund shall continue making an equal percentage of premium payments after the member's death for the life of the dependent beneficiary nominated by the member under section 468 of this title, should such dependent beneficiary survive the

member. The Retirement Board, after consultation with its actuary, shall establish reduced premium payment percentages that are as cost neutral to the Fund as possible.

(f) [Repealed.]

(g) A member of the Group F or Group G plan who is first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who separates from service prior to being eligible for retirement benefits under this chapter, who has at least 20 years of creditable service, and who participated in the group medical benefit plan at the time of separation from service shall have a one-time option at the time retirement benefits commence to reinstate the same level of coverage, in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees who are not eligible for Medicare or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, that existed at the date of separation from service. Premiums for the plan shall be prorated between the retired member and the Retirement System pursuant to subsection 479(a) of this title.

* * *

Sec. E.108.1 3 V.S.A. § 925 is amended to read:

§ 925. MEDIATION; FACT FINDING

* * *

(i)(1) In the case of the Vermont State Colleges or the University of Vermont, if the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations to the parties or within a time frame mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit as a single package its last best offer on all disputed issues to the Board. Each party's last best offer shall be filed with the Board under seal and shall be unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board. The Board shall hold one or more hearings. Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment.

(2) In the case of the State of Vermont or the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, if the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations to the parties or within a time frame mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit as a single package its last best offer on all disputed issues to the Board, or upon the request of either party, to an arbitrator mutually agreed upon by the parties. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the American Arbitration Association shall appoint a neutral third party to act as arbitrator. Each party's last best offer shall be filed with the Board or the arbitrator under seal and shall be unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board or the arbitrator. A party's last best offer shall not include a proposal to provide alternative health coverage to retired State employees that has not been agreed to pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 479(a)(2) of this title. The Board or the arbitrator shall hold one or more hearings. Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board or the arbitrator shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment.

* * *

Sec. E.108.2 3 V.S.A. § 1018 is amended to read:

§ 1018. MEDIATION; FACT-FINDING; LAST BEST OFFER

* * *

(i)(1) If the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations or within a period of time mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit to the Board or, upon the request of either party, to an arbitrator mutually agreed upon by the parties its last best offer on all disputed issues as a single package. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the American Arbitration Association shall appoint a neutral third party to act as arbitrator.

(2) Each party's last best offer shall be:

(A) filed with the Board or the arbitrator under seal;

(B) certified to the Board or the arbitrator by the fact finder; and

(C) unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board or the arbitrator.

(3) A party's last best offer shall not include a proposal to provide alternative health coverage to retired employees that has not been agreed to pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 479(a)(2) of this title.

(4) The Board or the arbitrator shall hold one or more hearings and consider the recommendations of the fact finder.

~~(4)~~(5)(A) Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board or the arbitrator shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment, and shall determine its cost.

* * *

~~(5)~~(6) The Board or the arbitrator shall not issue an order under this subsection that is in conflict with any law or rule or that relates to an issue that is not bargainable.

~~(6)~~(7) The decision of the Board or the arbitrator shall be final and binding on the parties.

Sec. E.111.1 32 V.S.A. § 3209 is added as to read:

§ 3209. TAX COMPUTER SYSTEM MODERNIZATION FUND

(a) The Tax Computer System Modernization Fund #21909, as established in the State Treasury per 2007 Acts and Resolves No. 65, Sec. 282 as amended, is a special fund to support information technology improvements and initiatives of the Department of Taxes. Balances in the Fund shall be administered by the Department of Taxes and used exclusively for the purposes prescribed in subsection (c) of this section. Balances in the Fund at the end of each fiscal year shall be carried forward and remain part of the Fund. Interest earned by the Fund shall be deposited into the Fund.

(b) The Fund shall receive annual transfers from the General Fund and the Education Fund in amounts not to exceed 0.21 percent of total revenue collected in the prior fiscal year by the Department of Taxes. The fund may receive other receipts as directed or authorized by the General Assembly.

(c) The Fund shall be used for the development, implementation, enhancement, and maintenance of information technology systems and services for the administration of taxes and programs administered by the Department. This shall include requests for proposal, business requirements, analysis, implementation of new tax types,

enhancements to existing systems, and payments due to vendors of information technology systems and services.

(d) The Commissioner of Taxes shall submit an annual report on the receipts, expenditures, and balances in the Tax Computer System Modernization Fund to the Joint Fiscal Committee each year at or prior to the Committee's November meeting each year.

Sec. E.111.b TAX COMPUTER SYSTEM MODERNIZATION FUND TRANSFER

(a) Any remaining funds on June 30, 2023 in the Tax Computer System Modernization Fund established by 2007 Acts and Resolves No. 65, Sec. 282, and amended from time to time, shall be deposited into the fund established by 32 V.S.A. § 3209.

Sec. E.111.2 24 V.S.A. § 138(c) is amended to read:

(c) Any tax imposed under the authority of this section shall be collected and administered by the Department of Taxes, in accordance with State law governing such State tax or taxes; provided, however, that a sales tax imposed under this section shall be collected on each sale that is subject to the Vermont sales tax using a destination basis for taxation. Except with respect to taxes collected on the sale of aviation jet fuel, a per-return fee of \$5.96 shall be assessed ~~to compensate the Department for the costs of administration and collection,~~ 70 percent of which shall be borne by the municipality, and 30 percent of which shall be borne by the State to be paid from the PILOT Special Fund. Notwithstanding any provision of law or municipal charter to the contrary, revenue from the fee shall be used to compensate the Department for the costs of administering and collecting the local option tax and of administering the State appraisal and litigation program established in 32 V.S.A. § 5413. The fee shall be subject to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 605.

Sec. E.124 2018 (Sp. Sess.) Acts and Resolves No. 9, Sec. 8 is amended to read:

Sec. 8. REPEAL

~~On June 30, 2024:~~

~~(1) Sec. 3 of this act (creating the Executive Director of Racial Equity and Racial Equity Advisory Panel in 3 V.S.A. chapter 68) is repealed and the Executive Director position and Panel shall cease to exist; and~~

~~(2) Sec. 4 of this act (authorization for the Executive Director of Racial Equity position) is repealed. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. E.124.1 COUNCIL ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS; INTENT

(a) It is the intent of the Vermont General Assembly to support the work of the Governor's Council on Housing and Homelessness, focusing on strategies for affordability and solving homelessness. The Council is encouraged to review and inventory the affordable housing that has been developed since January 2020, including the various public and private financing sources that have been utilized. Based on this review and analysis of the need for affordable housing construction, the Council is asked to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly. The Council is also encouraged to review and inventory available housing assistance programs and

funding levels. Based on this review and analysis of the need for housing assistance for vulnerable and low income Vermonters, the Council is asked to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly, including the potential to maximize supported housing programs within the State's Medicaid Global Commitment program.

Sec. E.124.2 PREVENTION PROGRAMS; REPORT

(a) The Chief Prevention Officer shall, in collaboration with the Department of Health, review and report to the General Assembly on all existing prevention programs in the State. The report shall include an assessment of the level of funding and funding sources of these programs as well as a needs assessment. The Chief Prevention Officer shall submit a written report to the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2023.

Sec. E.125 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 126, Sec. 2 is amended to read:

Sec. 2. REPORT ON ACCESS TO CIVIL JUSTICE REMEDIES AND LAW ENFORCEMENT QUALIFIED IMMUNITY IN VERMONT

(a) On or before November 15, ~~2022~~ 2023, the Office of Legislative Counsel shall submit a written legal analysis to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, the House Committee on Judiciary, and the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee concerning the impact of the doctrine of qualified immunity on access to civil justice remedies in the State of Vermont and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. In particular, the analysis shall identify:

* * *

Sec. E.125.1 REVIEW OF WORKFORCE INCENTIVES, LOANS, AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

(a) On or before January 15, 2024, the Office of Legislative Counsel and the Joint Fiscal Office, in collaboration with the Agency of Human Services, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Health, the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), and the Office of Primary Care and Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program at the University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine shall issue a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations including:

(1) a complete inventory of existing State programs that provide workforce incentives in the form of scholarships, forgivable loans or loan repayment grants for a specified service obligation or other incentives with the objective of increasing the number of practitioners in health care and other social service occupations in Vermont;

(2) a summary of the amount and sources of funds for each program, both base and one-time, and any anticipated carryforward of unobligated balances at the close of fiscal year 2023;

(3) recommendations for streamlining or restructuring the existing programs with the goal of consolidating administration and making the programs easily accessible to potential students and existing or potential staff. There should be consideration of the level of program specificity that should be included in statute or remain within the authority of the administering entities. The report shall include the authorizing statute for each program and necessary statutory amendments to accomplish the recommendations.

Sec. E.127 FISCAL YEAR 2024 FEE REPORT; NATURAL RESOURCES
AND HUMAN SERVICES; NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD;
VETERANS' HOME

(a) Fiscal Year 2024 Fee Information. The Secretary of Natural Resources, the Secretary of Human Services, the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Board, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Vermont Veterans' Home shall, in collaboration with the Joint Fiscal Office, prepare a comprehensive fee report for the Agency of Natural Resources, the Agency of Human Services, the Natural Resources Board, and the Vermont Veterans' Home, respectively, for each fee in existence on July 1, 2023. Each fee report shall contain the following information:

- (1) the statutory authorization and termination date, if any;
- (2) the current rate or amount and date the fee was last set or adjusted by the General Assembly or Joint Fiscal Committee;
- (3) the Fund into which the fee revenues are deposited;
- (4) the revenues derived from each fee in the previous five fiscal years;
- (5) the number of instances that each fee was paid in the two most recent fiscal years;
- (6) a projection for fee revenues in the current fiscal year and the next fiscal year;
- (7) a description of the service or product provided or the regulatory function performed;
- (8) the relationship between the revenue raised and the cost of the service, product, or regulatory function supported by the fee;
- (9) the amount of the fee if it would have been adjusted by inflation since the fee was last set;
- (10) for any fees deposited in a special fund, the percent of the special fund that the fee represents;
- (11) whether any comparable fees exist in other jurisdictions;
- (11) any policies that might affect the viability of the fee amount; and
- (12) any other relevant considerations for setting the fee amount.

(b) Reports.

(1) On or before October 15, 2023, the Secretary of Natural Resources, the Secretary of Human Services, the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Board, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Vermont Veterans' Home shall each submit a written draft report of the fiscal year 2024 fee information described in subsection (a) of this section to the Joint Fiscal Office for review and feedback. The Secretary of Natural Resources, the Secretary of Human Services, the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Board, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Vermont Veterans' Home shall each work with the Joint Fiscal Office to respond to feedback prior to submission of the final report described in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) On or before December 15, 2023, the Secretary of Natural Resources, the Secretary of Human Services, the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Board, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Vermont Veterans' Home shall each submit a written final report of the fiscal year 2024 fee information described in subsection (a) of this section to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Finance.

(3) If any of the information on any fee that is requested in this section cannot be provided, the Secretary of Natural Resources, the Secretary of Human Services, the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Board, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Vermont Veterans' Home shall include in both the draft and final reports described in this subsection (b) a written explanation for why the information is not available.

(c) Fee Report Moratorium. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 605, in fiscal year 2024, the Governor shall not be required to submit the consolidated Executive Branch fee report and request to the General Assembly.

Sec. E.128 OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS; NEW POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of two new permanent exempt Capitol Police Officer positions in the Office of the Sergeant at Arms are authorized in fiscal year 2024.

Sec. E.128.1 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.126(a) is amended to read:

Sec. E.126a LEGISLATIVE – HUMAN RESOURCES ASSOCIATE POSITION

(a) One ~~limited-service~~ permanent exempt position, Human Resources Associate Generalist, is authorized for establishment in fiscal year 2022.

Sec. E.128.2 FARMERS' NIGHT CONCERT SERIES; APPROPRIATION

(a) The Office of the Sergeant at Arms is authorized to use not more than \$10,000 from resources available within the General Assembly's budget to provide honoraria to speakers and performing groups who are invited to participate in the 2024 Farmers' Night Concert Series and who are not otherwise sponsored or compensated for their participation.

Sec. E.131 STATE TREASURER'S OFFICE – VCBB ESCROW ACCOUNT

(a) In fiscal year 2024, pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 10, the Treasurer is authorized to use up to \$20,000,000 of the State's average cash balance to establish an escrow account for the exclusive benefit of the Vermont Community Broadband Board and for the sole purpose of securing federal funding under the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program.

(b) On or before January 15, 2024, the Vermont Community Broadband Board shall submit a recommendation to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with a recommendation for legislative action to create a long-term funding plan for the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program.

Sec. E. 131.1 TREASURER CLIMATE INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING COORDINATION

(a) The Treasurer may use funds appropriated in fiscal year 2024 to coordinate the State's climate infrastructure financing efforts. Use of funds can include administrative costs and third party consultation. The Treasurer will collaborate with, among others, the Vermont Climate Council, the Agency of Natural Resources – Climate Action Office, the Public Service Department, Vermont members of the Coalition for Green Capital, and the three financial instrumentalities of the State to create a framework for effective

collaboration among Vermont organizations, agencies, and the financial instrumentalities of the State to maximize the amount of federal Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds the State may receive and effectively coordinate the deployment of these and other greenhouse gas reduction funds. The Treasurer shall submit recommendations to the General Assembly regarding legislation for Vermont's climate infrastructure financing on or before January 15, 2024.

Sec. E.131.2 SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AID TASK FORCE; REPORT

(a) Creation. The School Construction Aid Task Force is created to examine, evaluate, and report on issues relating to school construction aid.

(b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

(1) two current members of the House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) two current members of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the State Treasurer or designee, who shall serve as co-chair;

(4) the Secretary of Education or designee, who shall serve as co-chair;

(5) the Executive Director of the Vermont National Education Association or designee;

(6) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals' Association or designee;

(7) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or designee;

(8) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association or designee;

(9) the Executive Director of the Municipal Bond Bank or designee;

(10) the President of the Vermont School Custodians and Maintenance Association or designee;

(11) a person with expertise in historic preservation, appointed by the Governor;

(12) a person with expertise in the construction industry specializing in school facilities projects, appointed by the Governor;

(13) a member of the American Industrial Hygiene Association, appointed by the Governor; and

(14) a person with expertise in school energy efficiency and energy performance contracting, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

(c) Powers and duties. The Task Force shall review the results of the statewide school facilities inventory and conditions assessment and the school construction funding report required by 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 72 and study the following issues relating to school construction aid:

(1) the needs, both programmatic and health and safety, of statewide school construction projects;

(2) funding options for a statewide school construction program, including any incentive plans;

(3) a governance structure for the oversight and management of a school construction aid program;

(4) the appropriate state action level for response to polychlorinated biphenyl contamination in a school; and

(5) criteria for prioritizing school construction funding.

(d) Assistance.

(1) The Task Force shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Education, the Department of Health, and the Office of the State Treasurer.

(2) The Office of the State Treasurer is authorized to contract for services for the Task Force for technical assistance from a school construction expert and any administrative, technical, financial, or legal assistance required by the Task Force.

(e) Report. On or before January 15, 2024, the Task Force shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Corrections and Institutions, on Education, and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Education, on Finance, and on Institutions with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action, including a recommendation on how the State should expend the funding in the Education Fund reserved for future school construction.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The State Treasurer shall call the first meeting of the Task Force to occur on or before July 15, 2023.

(2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

(3) The Task Force shall cease to exist on July 1, 2024.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Task Force serving in the member's capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than 10 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Task Force shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than 10 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Office of the State Treasurer.

Sec. E.133 VERMONT RETIREMENT SYSTEMS AND VERMONT
PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; SOURCE OF
FUNDS

(a) Of the \$2,990,679 appropriated in Sec. B.133 of this act, \$2,018,947 constitutes the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and \$971,732 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System.

Sec. E.134 VERMONT RETIREMENT SYSTEMS AND VERMONT
PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING
BUDGET

(a) Of the \$1,721,823 appropriated in Sec. B.134 of this act, \$1,361,777 constitutes the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and \$360,046 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission.

Sec. E.139 GRAND LIST LITIGATION ASSISTANCE

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec B.139 of this act, \$9,000 shall be transferred to the Attorney General and \$70,000 shall be transferred to the Department of Taxes, Division of Property Valuation and Review and reserved and used with any remaining funds from the amount previously transferred for final payment of expenses incurred by the Department or towns in defense of grand list appeals regarding the reappraisals of hydroelectric plants and other expenses incurred to undertake utility property appraisals in the State of Vermont.

Sec. E.142 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

(a) The appropriation in Sec. B.142 of this act is for State payments in lieu of property taxes under 32 V.S.A. chapter 123, subchapter 4. The payments shall be calculated in addition to and without regard to the appropriations for PILOT for Montpelier and for correctional facilities elsewhere in this act. Payments in lieu of taxes under this section shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the payments under this section shall be adjusted so that the total payments made under Secs. E.142, E.143, and E.144 of this act do not exceed 100 percent of the assessed value of State buildings as defined by 32 V.S.A. § 3701(2).

Sec. E.143 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES – MONTPELIER

(a) Payments in lieu of taxes under Sec. B.143 of this act shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.144 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES – CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

(a) Payments in lieu of taxes under Sec. B.144 of this act shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

* * * Protection * * *

Sec. E.200 ATTORNEY GENERAL

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud and Residential Abuse Unit, is authorized to retain, subject to appropriation, one-half of the State share of any recoveries from Medicaid fraud settlements, excluding interest, that exceed the State share of restitution to the Medicaid Program. All such designated additional recoveries retained shall be used to finance Medicaid Fraud and Residential Abuse Unit activities.

(b) Of the revenue available to the Attorney General under 9 V.S.A. § 2458(b)(4), \$1,545,393 is appropriated in Sec. B.200 of this act.

Sec. E.204 JUDICIARY; NEW POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of seven new permanent exempt positions at the Judiciary are authorized in fiscal year 2024: five Judicial Assistants, one Superior Judge, and one Law Clerk.

(b) The Superior Judge position created pursuant to this section:

(1) shall be for a six-year term of office commencing on April 1, 2023, irrespective of the date when the initial appointment is made; and

(2) shall be subject to the judicial retention process under Chapter II, Sec. 34 of the Vermont Constitution.

Sec. E.204.1. 13 V.S.A. § 7282 is amended to read:

§ 7282. SURCHARGE

(a) In addition to any penalty or fine imposed by the court or ~~Judicial Bureau~~ for a criminal offense or any civil penalty imposed by the Judicial Bureau for a traffic violation, including any violation of a fish and wildlife statute or regulation, violation of a motor vehicle statute, or violation of any local ordinance relating to the operation of a motor vehicle, except violations relating to seat belts and child restraints and ordinances relating to parking violations, the clerk of the court or Judicial Bureau shall levy an additional surcharge of:

* * *

(8)(A) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2006, but before July 1, 2008, \$26.00, of which \$18.75 shall be deposited in the Victims Compensation Special Fund.

(B) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2008, but before July 1, 2009, \$36.00, of which \$28.75 shall be deposited in the Victims' Compensation Special Fund.

(C) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2009, but before July 1, 2013, \$41, of which ~~\$23.75~~ \$27.50 shall be deposited in the Victims Compensation Special Fund created by section 5359 of this title, and of which ~~\$10.00~~ \$13.50 shall be deposited in the Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund created by section 5360 of this title.

(D) For any offense or violation committed after June 30, 2013, \$47.00, of which ~~\$29.75~~ \$33.50 shall be deposited in the Victims Compensation Special Fund created by section 5359 of this title, and of which ~~\$10.00~~ \$13.50 shall be deposited in the Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund created by section 5360 of this title.

* * *

(c) ~~SIU~~ SIU surcharge. In addition to any penalty or fine imposed by the court or Judicial Bureau for a criminal offense committed after July 1, 2009, the clerk of the court or Judicial Bureau shall levy an additional surcharge of \$100.00 to be deposited in the General Fund, in support of the Specialized Investigative Unit Grants Board created in 24 V.S.A. § 1940(c), and used to pay for the costs of Specialized Investigative Units.

Sec. E.208 PUBLIC SAFETY – ADMINISTRATION

(a) The Commissioner of Public Safety is authorized to enter into a performance-based contract with the Essex County Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement service activities agreed upon by both the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Essex County Sheriff.

Sec. E.209 PUBLIC SAFETY – STATE POLICE

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209 of this act, \$35,000 shall be available to the Southern Vermont Wilderness Search and Rescue Team, which comprises State Police, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, county sheriffs, and local law enforcement personnel in Bennington, Windham, and Windsor Counties, for snowmobile enforcement.

(b) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209 of this act, \$405,000 is allocated for grants in support of the Drug Task Force. Of this amount, \$190,000 shall be used by the Vermont Drug Task Force to fund three town Task Force officers. These town Task Force officers shall be dedicated to enforcement efforts with respect to both regulated drugs as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4201(29) and the diversion of legal prescription drugs. Any unobligated funds may be allocated by the Commissioner to the Drug Task Force or carried forward.

Sec. E.212 PUBLIC SAFETY – FIRE SAFETY

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.212 of this act, \$55,000 shall be granted to the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force to design dry hydrants.

Sec. E.215 MILITARY – ADMINISTRATION

(a) The amount of \$1,319,834 shall be disbursed to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for the National Guard Tuition Benefit Program established in 16 V.S.A. § 2857.

Sec. E.219 MILITARY – VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.219 of this act, \$1,000 shall be used for continuation of the Vermont Medal Program, \$4,800 shall be used for the expenses of the Governor’s Veterans’ Advisory Council, \$7,500 shall be used for the Veterans’ Day parade, and \$10,000 shall be granted to the American Legion for the Boys’ State and Girls’ State programs.

Sec. E.223 9 V.S.A. § 2730 is amended to read:

§ 2730. LICENSING FOR OPERATION OF WEIGHING AND MEASURING DEVICES

(a) As used in this section:

* * *

(14) “Electric vehicle supply equipment” and “electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public” have the same meanings as in 30 V.S.A. § 201.

* * *

(f)(1) The Secretary shall charge, per unit, the following annual license fees:

(A) Retail motor fuel dispenser meter: \$25.00.

* * *

(E) Each distinct plug-in connection point of electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public: \$25.00.

Sec. E.232 30 V.S.A. § 3085 is added to read:

§ 3085. CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

(a) A district may apply to the Secretary of State for a certificate of good standing.

(b) A certificate of good standing shall include:

(1) the official name of the district;

(2) that the district is duly formed pursuant to this chapter;

(3) the date of the district’s formation;

(3) that the fee required by this section has been paid; and

(4) that a plan of dissolution for the district has not been approved pursuant to section 3083 of this chapter.

(c) Subject to any qualification stated in the certificate, a certificate of good standing issued by the Secretary of State may be:

(1) relied upon as conclusive evidence that the district is in existence and is authorized to deliver communications services and operate a communications plant pursuant to this chapter; and

(2) taken as prima facie evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

(d) A district that applies for a certificate of good standing under this section shall pay to the Secretary of State a nonrefundable application fee of \$25.00.

* * * Human Services * * *

Sec. E.300 FUNDING FOR THE OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE
ADVOCATE; VERMONT LEGAL AID

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.300 of this act:

(1) \$1,847,406 shall be used for the contract with the Office of the Health Care Advocate;

(2) \$1,717,994 for Vermont Legal Aid services, including the Poverty Law Project and mental health services; and

(3) \$650,000 is for the purposes of maintaining current Vermont Legal Aid program capacity and addressing increased requests for services, including eviction prevention and protection from foreclosure and consumer debt.

Sec. E.300.1 DESIGNATED AND SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES;
INCREASE

(a) In fiscal year 2024, the Agency of Human Services shall increase funding to the designated and specialized service agencies in the following manner:

(1) A three percent base increase.

(2) The remaining fund increase shall be used to provide payment equity across the provider agencies. These funds shall be distributed as determined by the Agency of Human Service in the annual agreements or appropriate valuation model allocations for providers. The Agency shall report to the General Assembly in the fiscal year 2023 budget adjustment process on the status of these payment changes and shall recommend the reallocation of funding across budget line items if necessary.

Sec. E.300.2 BLUEPRINT FOR HEALTH HUB AND SPOKE PROGRAM;
PILOT; FUND SOURCES

(a) The Agency of Human Services, in collaboration with the Departments of Vermont Health Access and of Health, shall identify alternative fund sources, including sales tax revenue from tobacco, cannabis, and liquor, for ongoing funding of the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program and shall update the Joint Fiscal Committee on its findings on or before November 15, 2023.

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE – GLOBAL COMMITMENT

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall use the funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act for payment of the actuarially certified premium required under the

intergovernmental agreement between the Agency of Human Services and the managed care entity, the Department of Vermont Health Access, as provided for in the Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 demonstration (Global Commitment) approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of \$25,231,644 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds under Global Commitment as follows:

(1) \$21,957,400 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with \$28,542,600 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of \$50,500,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund created in 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) \$3,093,521 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to \$4,034,170 is transferred from the AHS Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301, Secretary's Office – Global Commitment, of this act.

Sec. E.301.1 GLOBAL COMMITMENT APPROPRIATIONS; TRANSFER; REPORT

(a) To facilitate the end-of-year closeout for fiscal year 2024, the Secretary of Human Services, with approval from the Secretary of Administration, may make transfers among the appropriations authorized for Medicaid and Medicaid-waiver program expenses, including Global Commitment appropriations outside the Agency of Human Services. At least three business days prior to any transfer, the Agency of Human Services shall submit to the Joint Fiscal Office a proposal of transfers to be made pursuant to this section. A final report on all transfers made under this section shall be made to the Joint Fiscal Committee for review at the Committee's September 2024 meeting. The purpose of this section is to provide the Agency with limited authority to modify the appropriations to comply with the terms and conditions of the Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 demonstration approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

Sec. E.301.2 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 72a, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.105 is further amended to read:

* * *

(f) The Global Commitment Fund appropriated in subsection (e) of this section may be obligated in fiscal year 2023 and fiscal year 2024 for the purposes of bringing HCBS plan spending authority forward into fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025, respectively. The funds appropriated in subsections (b), (c), and (e) of this section may be transferred on a net-neutral basis in fiscal year 2023 and fiscal year 2024 in the same manner as the Global Commitment appropriations in Sec. E.301 of H.740 of 2022 2022 Acts and

Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.301. The Agency shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee in September 2023 and September 2024, respectively, on transfers of appropriations made and final amounts expended by each department in fiscal year 2023 and fiscal year 2024, respectively, and any obligated funds carried forward to be expended in fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025, respectively.

Sec. E.306 VERMONT HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGE RULES

(a) The Agency of Human Services may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to conform Vermont's rules regarding health care eligibility and enrollment and the operation of the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange to State and federal law and guidance. The Agency may use the emergency rules process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844 prior to June 30, 2024, but only if new State or federal law or guidance requires Vermont to amend or adopt its rules in a time frame that cannot be accomplished under the traditional rulemaking process. An emergency rule adopted under these exigent circumstances shall be deemed to meet the standard for the adoption of emergency rules required pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844(a).

Sec. E.306.1 2013 Acts and Resolves No. 73, Sec. 60(10), as amended by 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 73, Sec. 14, 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 187, Sec. 5, 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 71, Sec. 21, and 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 73, Sec. 14, is further amended to read:

(10) Secs. 48–51 (health claims tax) shall take effect on July 1, 2013 and Sec. 52 (Health IT-Fund; sunset) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2023~~ 2025.

Sec. E.306.2 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 6, Sec. 105, as amended by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 71, Sec. 19 and 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 75, is further amended to read:

Sec. 105. EFFECTIVE DATES

* * *

(b) Sec. 73 (further amending 32 V.S.A. § 10402) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2023~~ 2025.

* * *

Sec. E.307 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.334.1 is amended to read:

Sec. E.334.1 LONG-TERM CARE – PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE
INCREASE

(a) The amount of the State supplement for Medicaid beneficiaries who reside in a nursing home and receive Supplemental Security Income shall increase by 10 percent to the degree practicable effective January 1, 2023 but not later than January 1, 2024.

(b) The amount of the personal needs allowance for all Medicaid beneficiaries who reside in a nursing home shall increase by 10 percent to the degree practicable effective January 1, 2023 but not later than January 1, 2024.

Sec. E.307.1 33 V.S.A. § 1992 is amended to read:

§ 1992. MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR ADULT DENTAL SERVICES

(a) Vermont Medicaid shall provide coverage for medically necessary dental services provided by a dentist, dental therapist, or dental hygienist working within the scope of the provider's license as follows:

* * *

(2)(A) Diagnostic, restorative, and endodontic procedures, to a maximum of ~~\$1,000.00~~ \$1,500.00 per calendar year, provided that the Department of Vermont Health Access may ~~approve~~ adjust the maximum pursuant to the process outlined in subdivision (B) of this subdivision (2) and may approve expenditures in excess of that amount when exceptional medical circumstances so require.

(B) The Department may set the maximum for coverage of diagnostic, restorative, and endodontic procedures in excess of the amount set forth in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2) for a calendar year based on the Department's annual assessment of available funds, provided that the Department submit a report to the House Committee on Health Care, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, or to the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, each time the Department adjusts the maximum.

* * *

Sec. E.312 HEALTH – PUBLIC HEALTH

(a) AIDS/HIV funding:

(1) In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of \$475,000 in AIDS Medication Rebates special funds to Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations for client-based support services. The Department of Health AIDS Program shall meet at least quarterly with the Community Advisory Group (CAG) with current information and data relating to service initiatives. The funds shall be allocated according to an RFP process.

(2) In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of \$295,000 to the following organizations:

(A) Vermont CARES – \$140,000;

(B) AIDS Project of Southern Vermont – \$100,000; and

(C) HIV/HCV Resource Center – \$55,000.

(3) Ryan White Title II funds for AIDS services and the Vermont Medication Assistance Program (VMAP) shall be distributed in accordance with federal guidelines. The federal guidelines shall not apply to programs or services funded solely by State general funds.

(A) The Secretary of Human Services shall immediately notify the Joint Fiscal Committee if at any time there are insufficient funds in VMAP to assist all eligible individuals. The Secretary shall work in collaboration with persons living with HIV/AIDS to develop a plan to continue access to VMAP medications until such time as the General Assembly can act.

(B) The Secretary of Human Services shall work in collaboration with the VMAP Advisory Committee, which shall be composed of not less than 50 percent of members who are living with HIV/AIDS. If a modification to the program's eligibility requirements or benefit coverage is considered, the Committee shall make recommendations regarding the program's formulary of approved medication, related laboratory testing, nutritional supplements, and eligibility for the program.

(4) In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of \$100,000 in General Funds to Vermont AIDS service organizations and other Vermont HIV/AIDS prevention providers for community-based HIV prevention programs and services. These funds shall be used for HIV/AIDS prevention purposes, including syringe exchange programs; improving the availability of confidential and anonymous HIV testing; prevention work with at-risk groups such as women, intravenous drug users, and people of color; and anti-stigma campaigns. Not more than 15 percent of the funds may be used for the administration of such services by the recipients of these funds. The method by which these prevention funds are distributed shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Department of Health and the Vermont AIDS service organizations and other Vermont HIV/AIDS prevention providers.

(5) In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of \$300,000 in General Funds to Vermont AIDS service organizations and other Vermont HIV/AIDS prevention providers for syringe exchange programs. The method by which these prevention funds are distributed shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Department of Health, the Vermont AIDS service organizations, and other Vermont HIV/AIDS prevention providers. The performance period for these grants shall be State fiscal year 2024. Grant reporting shall include outcomes and results.

(6) In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall not reduce any grants to Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations or syringe service programs from funds appropriated for AIDS/HIV services to levels below those in fiscal year 2023 without receiving prior approval from the Joint Fiscal Committee.

Sec. E.312.1 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH: EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COORDINATION; REPORT

(a) The Commissioner of Health shall provide a report to the General Assembly on or before January 15, 2024, on Emergency Medical Services in Vermont.

(b) The Commissioner shall design and conduct a stakeholder engagement process that ensures input and representation from all types of emergency medical service providers serving Vermonters, as well as hospital and health systems, public safety, and municipal government.

(c) The report shall identify issues and provide recommendations for legislative consideration that will sustain and improve the provision of emergency medical services for Vermonters. This may include:

- (1) issues related to costs of service and existing funding models;
- (2) issues related to coordination across agencies; and
- (3) issues related to EMS District structure and authority, including consideration of recommendations on the number and configuration of EMS Districts and their powers, duties, and authority.

Sec. E.312.2 18 V.S.A. § 13 is added to read:

§ 13. COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

(a) There is established the Community Violence Prevention Program to be administered by the Department of Health in consultation and collaboration with the Chief Prevention Officer, the Department of Public Safety, the Director of Violence Prevention, and the Executive Director of Racial Equity. The Program shall work with communities to implement innovative, evidence-based, and evidence-informed programs addressing causes of youth and community violence. Grants awarded pursuant to this section shall be at the discretion of the Commissioner of Health and shall build on and complement existing programs addressing the causes of youth and community violence.

(b)(1) A Vermont municipality or nonprofit organization may submit an application for a Community Violence Prevention Program grant to the Commissioner of Health. Grants awarded under this section shall be for the purpose of funding innovative, evidence-based, or evidence-informed approaches to reducing violence and associated community harm.

(2) The Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and the Executive Director of Racial Equity, shall develop and publish guidelines for the award of Community Violence Prevention grants. The guidelines shall include a focus on increasing community capacity to implement approaches for human services, public health, and public safety collaboration to address root causes of community violence through data-driven projects.

(c) The Community Violence Prevention Program shall collect data to monitor youth and community violence and its related risk and protective factors and to evaluate the impact of prevention efforts and shall use the data to plan and implement programs. The Program shall use monitoring and evaluation data to track the impact of interventions.

Sec. E.312.3 COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM;
FUNDING

(a) Grants awarded from State funds to the Community Violence Prevention Program established by 18 V.S.A. § 13 shall be dependent upon the amount of the appropriation.

(b) The Department of Health is authorized to seek and accept grant funding for the purpose of supporting the Community Violence Prevention Program to supplement State appropriations.

(c) If funding is available for the Community Violence Prevention Program from federal grants or legal settlements related to drug use or criminal activity:

(1) such federal or settlement funds shall be utilized ahead of General Funds if allowed.

Sec. E.313 HEALTH; SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAMS

(a) In fiscal year 2024, the Department of Health shall provide additional grants from the Global Commitment fund in the amount of \$1,850,000 to Vermont's 12 recovery centers. The methods by which these funds are distributed shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Department and the recipients. The performance period of these grants shall be State fiscal year 2024. Recipients shall report outcomes to the Department.

(b) The Department of Health shall review and analyze the capital and operating model for recovery residences. This shall include the portion of capital investment for

these facilities that is privately and publicly financed, a description of the existing operating models of these facilities, existence and content of sustainability plans, the current operating margins net of rental income generated and the array of existing other operating funding available to the facilities, and the annual amounts of depreciation claimed by investors related to these facilities. The Department shall report to the General Assembly on this analysis and any related recommendations.

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE HOUSING: ADVERSE WEATHER
CONDITIONS

(a) The Commissioner for Children and Families may, by policy, provide temporary housing for a limited duration in adverse weather conditions when appropriate shelter space is not available.

Sec. E.323 33 V.S.A. § 1001 is amended to read:

§ 1001. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) ~~“Able to work” means to be free of any physical, emotional, or mental condition that would prevent the individual from engaging in any combination of the work activities for at least 35 hours per week. [Repealed.]~~

(2) ~~“Able to work part time” means having a physical, emotional, or mental condition that would allow the individual to engage in any combination of the work activities for at least 10 hours per week but would prevent the individual from engaging in such activities for 35 or more hours per week. [Repealed.]~~

* * *

(25) ~~“Unable to work” means not able to work and not able to work part time. [Repealed.]~~

(26) ~~“Work activities” means the following activities limited to the extent and degree that they are allowed and countable in accordance with Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act:~~

- ~~(A) unsubsidized employment;~~
- ~~(B) subsidized private sector employment;~~
- ~~(C) subsidized public sector employment;~~
- ~~(D) work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available;~~
- ~~(E) on-the-job training;~~
- ~~(F) job search and job readiness assistance;~~
- ~~(G) community service programs;~~
- ~~(H) vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual);~~
- ~~(I) job skills training directly related to employment;~~
- ~~(J) education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency;~~
- ~~(K) satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate;~~

~~(L) the provision, consistent with the Department's rules applicable to self-employment, of child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program;~~

~~(M) attendance at a financial literacy class; and~~

~~(N) any other work activity recognized in accordance with Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, as amended. [Repealed.]~~

~~(27) "Work ready" means the participant possesses the education or skills demanded by the local job market or is capable of participating in one or more work activities at the level required by the participant's work requirement, and is not subject to any barrier. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. E.323.1 33 V.S.A. § 1004 is amended to read:
§ 1004. REACH FIRST PAYMENT

* * *

(c) For the purposes of calculating the payment, child support shall be treated as income, except that the first ~~\$500.00~~ \$100.00 amount of child support shall be disregarded from income.

Sec. E.323.2 33 V.S.A. § 1005(b)(8) is amended to read:

~~(8) Assistance with obtaining documentation of an apparent or claimed physical, emotional, or mental condition that reasonably can be presumed to limit or eliminate the individual's capacity to engage in employment or other work activity. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. E.323.3 33 V.S.A. § 1006 is amended to read:

§ 1006. CASE MANAGEMENT; FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PLANS;
COORDINATED SERVICES

* * *

(b) The family development plan shall include:

(1) Each ~~parent~~ parent's or caretaker's employment goal or plan to engage in the program, to the best of the parent's or caretaker's ability.

* * *

Sec. E.323.4 33 V.S.A. § 1011 is amended to read:

§ 1011. TRANSITION TO OTHER PROGRAMS

* * *

~~(b) If a family finds employment meeting or exceeding the work requirements for Reach Up for the family's size and composition, but is financially eligible for Reach Up, the Department shall transfer the family to Reach Up, unless the family chooses not to participate. A family transferring from Reach First to Reach Up shall be treated as a recipient for the purposes of income calculation. [Repealed.]~~

~~(c) If a family finds employment meeting or exceeding the work requirements for Reach Up for the family's size and composition, is not financially eligible for Reach Up, and is eligible for the Reach Ahead program, the Department shall transfer the family to Reach Ahead, unless the family chooses not to participate. A family transferring from Reach First to Reach Ahead shall be treated as a recipient for the purposes of income calculation. [Repealed.]~~

* * *

Sec. E.323.5 33 V.S.A. § 1203 is amended to read:

§ 1203. ELIGIBILITY

A family shall be eligible for Reach Ahead if the family resides in Vermont and:

(1) has left Reach Up or the postsecondary education program within the prior six months for employment that meets the federal work requirements for the ~~Reach Up~~ TANF program for the family's size and composition;

* * *

Sec. E.323.6 33 V.S.A. § 1212 is amended to read:

§ 1212. TRANSITION TO OTHER PROGRAMS

If a family loses employment meeting or exceeding the work requirements for ~~Reach Up~~ TANF for the family's size and composition and is financially eligible for Reach Up, the family shall be transferred to Reach First or Reach Up without an additional application process, unless the family chooses not to participate. Verification of income or other documentation may be required as provided for by rule.

Sec. E 323.7 REACH AHEAD PILOT PROGRAM

(a) Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in 33 V.S.A. chapter 12, funds appropriated to the Department for Children and Families for the Reach Ahead Pilot Program in fiscal year 2024 shall be used to:

(1) enroll families that have left the Reach Up program or the postsecondary education program within the prior 12 months for employment that meets the federal work requirements for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program for the family's size and composition;

(2) increase the amount of monthly food assistance from \$50 to \$100 in the first 12 months of a family's participation in Reach Ahead;

(3) increase the amount of monthly food assistance from \$5 to \$50 in the second 12 months of a family's participation in Reach Ahead; and

(4) provide incentive payments to participating families in the amounts of:

(A) \$750, to be paid after participating in the Program for six months;

(B) \$1,000, to be paid after participating in the Program for 12 months;

(C) \$1,000, to be paid after participating in the Program for 18 months; and

(D) \$1,000, to be paid after participating in the Program for 24 months.

(b) This program is funded with one-time money and is only in effect for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, unless additional funding is authorized.

Sec. E.323.8 REACH AHEAD PILOT PROGRAM

(a) The Department for Children and Families – Economic Services Division shall collect and report data that measures outcomes for participants of the Reach Ahead Pilot Program established in Sec. E.323.7 of this act; the indicators used to measure participant and Pilot Program progress; and the strategies that are implemented.

Sec. E.324 EXPEDITED CRISIS FUEL ASSISTANCE

(a) The Commissioner for Children and Families or designee may authorize crisis fuel assistance to those income-eligible households that have applied for an expedited seasonal fuel benefit but have not yet received it if the benefit cannot be executed in time to prevent them from running out of fuel. The crisis fuel grants authorized pursuant to this section count toward the one crisis fuel grant allowed per household for the winter heating season pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 2609(b).

Sec. E.325 DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – OFFICE
OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.325 of this act, \$18,776,814 shall be granted to community agencies to assist individuals experiencing homelessness by preserving existing services, increasing services, or increasing resources available statewide. These funds may be granted alone or in conjunction with federal Emergency Solutions Grants funds. Funds shall be administered in consultation with the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness.

(b) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.325 of this act, \$170,301 shall be granted to community agencies for financial coaching.

Sec. E.325.1 CHILD CARE FACILITIES FINANCING PROGRAM

(a) 33 V.S.A. § 3521 (Child Care Facilities Financing Program established) is repealed.

Sec. E.326 DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – OFFICE
OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY – WEATHERIZATION
ASSISTANCE

(a) Of the special fund appropriation in Sec. B.326 of this act, \$750,000 is for the replacement and repair of home heating equipment.

Sec. E.329 18 V.S.A. § 8725 is amended to read:

§ 8725. SYSTEM OF CARE PLAN

* * *

(e) Notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), on or before ~~January~~ February 15 of each year, the Department shall report to the Governor and the committees of jurisdiction regarding implementation of the plan, the extent to which the principles of service set forth in section 8724 of this title are achieved, and whether people with a developmental disability have any unmet service needs, including the number of people on waiting lists for developmental services.

* * *

Sec. E. 334 NURSING HOME RATE SETTING

(a) The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living and the Department of Vermont Health Access shall report to the House Committees on Human Services and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations not later than December 15, 2023, on the budgetary impact of eliminating the minimum occupancy threshold in the nursing home rate setting process and reducing the minimum occupancy threshold to not more than 80 percent in the

nursing home rate setting process. The report shall include a recommendation on whether to eliminate or reduce the minimum occupancy requirement, timeline, and next steps for implementing the recommendation and anticipated impact on sustainability of Vermont nursing homes.

Sec. E.335 28 V.S.A. § 126 is added to read:

§ 126. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM; CONFIDENTIALITY

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Department” has the same meaning as in subdivision 3(4) of this title.

(2) “Participant” means a Department staff member who has been involved in a traumatic incident by reason of employment at the Department and who has agreed to participate in the Department’s peer support program.

(3) “Peer support” means appropriate support and services offered by a peer support specialist to a participant.

(4) “Peer support program” means a program established by the Department of Corrections to provide appropriate peer support services to Department staff members.

(5) “Peer support session” means a peer support program session for a Department staff member who has been involved in a traumatic incident by reason of employment at the Department or related to other personal matters.

(6) “Peer support specialist” means a Department staff member who, by reason of the staff member’s prior experience, training, or interest, has expressed a desire and has been selected to provide appropriate peer support services to a participant.

(7) “Staff member” means a supervising officer as defined in subdivision 3(9) of this title, a correctional officer as defined in subdivision 3(10) of this title, and any other employee of the Department.

(b)(1) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, any communication made by a participant or peer support specialist in a peer support session of the peer support program, including any oral or written information conveyed during a peer support session, shall not be disclosed by any individual participating in the peer support session.

(2) Except as provided by subsection (d) of this section, any communication relating to a peer support session between peer support specialists, between peer support specialists and participants of the peer support program, between participants of the peer support program, or between any other Department staff member, including any oral or written information, shall not be disclosed by any individual participating in the communication.

(3) Written communications described in this subsection, such as notes, records, and reports related to a peer support session, are exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and shall be kept confidential. The Public Records Act exemptions created in this section shall not be subject to the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 317(e) (repeal of Public Records Act exemptions).

(c) Except as provided by subsection (d) of this section, any communication made by a participant or peer support specialist in a peer support session, including any oral or written communication, such as notes, records, and reports related to the peer support session, shall not be admissible in a judicial, administrative, or arbitration proceeding. Limitations on disclosure imposed by this subsection include disclosure during any

discovery conducted as part of an adjudicatory proceeding. Limitations on disclosure imposed by this subsection shall not include knowledge acquired by the Department or staff members from observations made during the course of employment or information acquired by the by the Department or staff members during the course of employment that is otherwise subject to discovery or introduction into evidence.

(d)(1) Confidentiality protections described in subsections (b) and (c) of this section shall only apply to a peer support session conducted by an individual who has:

(A) been designated by the Department or the peer support program to act as a peer support specialist; and

(B) received and completed training in peer support and providing emotional and moral support to Department staff members who have been involved in emotionally traumatic incidents by reason of their employment or other personal matters.

(2) Confidentiality protections described in subsections (b) and (c) of this section shall not apply to the following information as it pertains to an individual designated to receive such information in the normal course the individual's professional responsibilities:

(A) any threat of suicide or homicide made by a participant of a peer support session or any information conveyed in a peer support session relating to a threat of suicide or homicide;

(B) any information relating to the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, or other information that is required to be reported by law;

(C) any admission of criminal conduct; or

(D) any admission of a plan to commit a crime.

(e) Nothing in this section shall prohibit any communications between peer support specialists regarding a peer support session or between peer support specialists and participants of the peer support program.

Sec. E.338 CORRECTIONS – CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

(a) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 3709(a), the special funds appropriation of \$152,000 for the supplemental facility payments to Newport and Springfield shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.338.1 13 V.S.A. § 7554b is amended to read:

§ 7554b. HOME DETENTION PROGRAM

(a) Definition. As used in this section, “home detention” means a program of confinement and supervision that restricts a defendant to a preapproved residence continuously, except for authorized absences, and is enforced by appropriate means of surveillance and electronic monitoring by the Department of Corrections, including the use of passive electronic monitoring. The court may authorize scheduled absences such as for work, school, or treatment. Any changes in the schedule shall be solely at the discretion of the Department of Corrections. A defendant who is on home detention shall remain in the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections with conditions set by the court.

* * *

Sec. E.338.2 HOME DETENTION PROGRAM; REVIEW; REPORT

(a) The Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee shall review the Home Detention Program under 13 V.S.A. § 7554b, including its historical and current use, defendant eligibility criteria, and any potential changes to the types of crimes for which it can be used.

(b) On or before November 15, 2023, the Committee shall submit any findings resulting from its review in the form of proposed legislation to the [General Assembly](#).

Sec. E.338.3 REPEALS

(a) 13 V.S.A. § 7554(a)(1)(G) is repealed.

(b) 13 V.S.A. § 7554(a)(2)(F) is repealed.

(c) 13 V.S.A. § 7554d is repealed.

Sec. E.338.4 28 V.S.A. chapter 11 is amended to read:

* * *

§ 808e. ABSCONDING FROM FURLOUGH; WARRANT

(a) “Absconded” has the same meaning as “absconding” as defined in subdivision 722(1) of this title.

(b) The Commissioner of Corrections may issue a warrant for the arrest of a person who has absconded from furlough status in violation of subsection 808(a) or section ~~723~~ or 808a, ~~808b~~, or 808e of this title, requiring the person to be returned to a correctional facility. A law enforcement officer who is provided with a warrant issued pursuant to this section shall execute the warrant and return the person who has absconded from furlough to the Department of Corrections.

~~(b)(c)~~ (c) A person for whom an arrest warrant is issued pursuant to this section shall not earn credit toward service of ~~his or her~~ the person’s sentence for any days that the warrant is outstanding.

* * *

Sec. E.345 HOSPITAL SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION PLANNING; PILOT PROJECTS; [UPDATE](#)

(a) [The Green Mountain Care Board shall submit an update to the Health Reform Oversight Committee on or before November 1, 2023 regarding the financial status of hospitals as reflected in the fiscal year 2022 actual operating results, any early indications for fiscal year 2023 hospital budget performance, and an overview of the fiscal year 2024 budget guidance provided to hospitals. The update shall address how budget guidance development aligns with the intent and requirements of 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 167.](#)

* * * General Education * * *

Sec. E.500 EDUCATION – FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

(a) [The Global Commitment funds appropriated in Sec. B.500 of this act shall be used for physician claims for determining medical necessity of Individualized Education Programs \(IEPs\). These services are intended to increase access to quality health care for uninsured persons, underinsured persons, and Medicaid beneficiaries.](#)

[Sec. E.500.1 16 V.S.A. § 4018 is added to read:](#)

[§ 4018. AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS](#)

(a) Revenue from the sales and use tax imposed by 32 V.S.A. chapter 233 on retail sales of cannabis or cannabis products in this State shall be used to fund grant programs for the expansion of summer and afterschool programs with an emphasis on increasing access in underserved areas of the State.

(b) The Secretary of Education shall administer the grant programs, as follows:

(1) Cannabis sales tax revenue shall be used to support a mixed delivery system for afterschool and summer programming. Eligible recipients can be public, private, or nonprofit organizations.

(2) Grants may be used for technical assistance, program implementation, program expansion, program sustainability, and related costs.

(3) Funds may be used to directly target communities with low existing capacity to serve youth in afterschool and summer settings.

(4) The Agency may use up to \$500,000 for administrative costs to allow for the support of the grant program and technical assistance to communities. This could include subcontracts to support the grant programs.

(c) An Advisory Committee is created to support the Secretary of Education in administering funds pursuant to this section. The Agency shall provide administrative and technical support to the Committee. The Committee is to be composed of:

(1) the State's Chief Prevention Officer;

(2) the Commissioner for Children and Families or designee;

(3) the Commissioner of Health or designee;

(4) the Commissioner of Mental Health or designee;

(5) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;

(6) the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or designee;

(7) the Vermont Afterschool Executive Director or designee; and

(8) a representative from the Governor's Office.

(d) On or before each November 15, the Agency of Education shall submit to the General Assembly a plan to fund grants in furtherance of the purposes of subsection (a) of this section and report outcomes data on the grants made during the previous year. The Agency shall also report on the number of programs, slots, weeks, or hours; geographic distribution; and what is known about costs to families. The report should be inclusive of 21C programming. The grants shall be in an amount equal to the official forecasted revenues to be raised from the sales and use tax imposed by 32 V.S.A. § 233 on cannabis or cannabis products in this State. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall not apply to the plan to be made under this subsection.

Sec. E.500.2 REPEALS

(a) 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 164, Secs. 17c. (dedicated use of sales and use tax on cannabis) and 17d. (annual budgeting of sales and use tax revenue) are repealed.

Sec. E.502 EDUCATION – SPECIAL EDUCATION: FORMULA GRANTS

(a) Of the appropriation authorized in Sec. B.502 of this act, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an amount not to exceed \$4,195,600 shall be used by the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2024 as funding for 16 V.S.A. § 2967(b)(2)–(6). In

distributing such funds, the Secretary will not be limited by the restrictions contained within 16 V.S.A. § 2969(c)–(d).

Sec. E.503 EDUCATION – STATE-PLACED STUDENTS

(a) The Independence Place Program of the Lund Family Center will be considered a 24-hour residential program for the purposes of reimbursement of education costs.

Sec. E.504 ADULT BASIC EDUCATION FUNDING; REPORT

(a) The Secretary of Education shall review and report to the Joint Fiscal Committee on or before November 1, 2023 on the annual level of Education Funds directed to Adult Basic Education providers since fiscal year 2019 through the high school completion funding provided in the flexible pathways line item. The report shall include information on the cause of any changes in the level of Education Funds directed to Adult Basic Education Providers.

Sec. E.504.1 EDUCATION – FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.504 of this act, \$1,900,000 from the Education Fund will be distributed to school districts for reimbursement of high school completion services pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 943(c).

(b) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025(b), of this Education Fund appropriation, the amount of:

(1) \$921,500 is available for dual enrollment programs notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 944(f)(2);

(2) \$2,000,000 is available to support the Vermont Virtual High School;

(3) \$400,000 is available for secondary school reform grants;

(4) \$4,000,000 is available for Early College pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 946.

(c) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.504 of this act, \$921,500 from the General Fund is available for dual enrollment programs.

Sec. E.511.1 MORATORIUM ON APPROVAL OF NEW APPROVED INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the State Board of Education shall be prohibited from approving an application for initial approval of an approved independent school until further direction by the General Assembly.

Sec. E.514 VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

(a) The total annual employer contribution to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System (VSTRS) in fiscal year 2024 shall be \$203,281,051.

(b) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(g)(2), the annual contribution to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System (VSTRS) shall be \$194,281,051 of which \$184,811,051 shall be the State's contribution and \$9,470,000 shall be contributed from local school systems or educational entities pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1944(c).

(c) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(c)(2), of the annual contribution, \$34,825,673 is the "normal contribution," and \$159,455,378 is the "accrued liability contribution."

(d) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(c)(13)(A), \$9,000,000 shall be contributed from the General Fund for a supplemental plus accrued liability contribution.

Sec. E.514.1 VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM;
OPERATING BUDGET

(a) Of the \$3,448,255 appropriated in Sec. B.514.1 of this act, \$2,401,835 constitutes the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System operating budget, and \$1,046,420 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System.

Sec. E.514.2 VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM;
CALENDAR YEAR 2023–2024 SUPPLEMENTAL COST OF
LIVING PAYMENTS; INTENT; ACTUARIAL COST
ANALYSIS

(a) Intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

(1) The maximum percentage value methodology set forth in 16 V.S.A. § 1949 that applies to the postretirement adjustment allowances for the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System (VSTRS) shall be actuarially evaluated to determine the cost required to revert to the methodology used prior to the enactment of 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 114.

(2) The General Assembly further intends to make such a reversion by future legislative action amending 16 V.S.A. § 1949, provided that the present value of changes to the postretirement adjustment allowance methodology be fully funded at the time the change is made and not increase the unfunded liability in VSTRS.

(3) The General Assembly further intends that if the June 30, 2023, change in the Consumer Price Index exceeds the statutory maximum percentage values set forth in 16 V.S.A. § 1949 (b)(1), the General Assembly will provide a sufficient appropriation in the 2024 Budget Adjustment Act to make a one-time supplemental payment, similar in form to that described in subsection (b) of this section, to qualifying VSTRS retired members and beneficiaries in calendar year 2024.

(b) Calendar year 2023 supplemental payment. A one-time supplemental payment during calendar year 2023 shall be made to VSTRS retired members and beneficiaries who received a 2.5 percent postretirement adjustment allowance in an amount equal to the net difference between what members actually received in calendar year 2023 and what they would have received under a 3.8 percent postretirement adjustment allowance.

(c) Actuarial cost analysis. Following the completion of the next experience study, expected in fall 2023, the State Treasurer shall conduct an actuarial analysis to evaluate the cost of changing the current methodology for calculating the postretirement adjustment allowance for the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System to a methodology calculated by applying the maximum percentage values set forth in 16 V.S.A. § 1949(b)(1) to the postretirement adjustment allowance rather than applying the statutory maximum percentage values to the net percentage change in the Consumer Price Index. The actuarial analysis shall take into account any changes to actuarial assumptions that may occur following the experience study to be performed at the end of fiscal year 2023, as required by 16 V.S.A. § 1942.

(d) Report. Based on the actuarial cost analysis described in subsection (c) of this section, on or before January 15, 2024, the State Treasurer shall submit a report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with an actuarial cost estimate for changing the VSTRS postretirement adjustment allowance methodology as set forth in subsection (c) of this section.

Sec. E.514.3 16 V.S.A. § 1944 is amended to read:

§ 1944. VERMONT TEACHERS' RETIREMENT FUND

(a) Pension Fund. All of the assets of the System shall be credited to the Vermont Teachers' Retirement Fund.

(b) Member contributions.

(1) Contributions deducted from the compensation of members shall be accumulated in the Pension Fund and separately recorded for each member.

(2) The proper authority or officer responsible for making up each employer payroll shall cause to be deducted from the compensation:

(A) Of each Group A member, five and one-half percent of the member's total earnable compensation, including compensation paid for absence as provided by subsection 1933(d) of this title.

(B) Of each Group C member, the following shall apply:

* * *

(ii) Beginning on July 1, 2023, a Group C member shall have the rate set forth in this subdivision (b)(2)(B)(ii) applied to the member's total earnable compensation for the fiscal year, which shall include compensation paid for absence as provided by subsection 1933(d) of this title, and any additional stipends identified as of July 1. A member's rate shall not be adjusted during the fiscal year unless the member's full-time equivalency status changes, which shall require that the member's rate be recalculated and the new rate applied for the remainder of that fiscal year. For a member who works a part-time equivalency status, the rate shall apply to the member's total earnable compensation and not to an amount equal to an annualized base salary. If a member is employed on a part-time equivalency status with two or more employers, the highest rate shall be applied to the amounts deducted from each employer. A member's rate shall be calculated according to the following rates and income brackets:

* * *

~~(iii) Beginning on July 1, 2024 and annually thereafter, a Group C member shall have an effective rate, rounded to the nearest hundredth of a percent, that is calculated based on the member's base salary as of July 1 each year, which equals the member's total earnable compensation, including compensation paid for absence as provided by subsection 1933(d) of this title, and any additional stipends identified as of July 1 for the next fiscal year. A member's effective rate shall not be adjusted during any fiscal year unless the member's full-time equivalency status changes, which shall require that the member's effective rate be recalculated and the new rate applied for the remainder of that fiscal year. For a member who works a part-time equivalency status, the effective rate shall apply to the member's total earnable compensation and not to an amount equal to an annualized base salary. If a member is employed on a part-time equivalency status with two or more employers, the highest effective rate shall be applied to the amounts deducted from each employer. Beginning on July 1, 2024, a Group C~~

member shall have the rate set forth in this subdivision (b)(2)(B)(iii) applied to the member's total earnable compensation for the fiscal year, which shall include compensation paid for absence as provided by subsection 1933(d) of this title, and any additional stipends identified as of July 1. A member's rate shall not be adjusted during the fiscal year unless the member's full-time equivalency status changes, which shall require that the member's rate be recalculated and the new rate applied for the remainder of that fiscal year. For a member who works a part-time equivalency status, the rate shall apply to the member's total earnable compensation and not to an amount equal to an annualized base salary. If a member is employed on a part-time equivalency status with two or more employers, the highest rate shall be applied to the amounts deducted from each employer. A member's effective rate shall be calculated according to the following marginal-rates and income brackets:

(I) if a member's base salary is at or below \$40,000.00, the rate is ~~6.25~~ 6.15 percent;

(II) if a member's base salary is \$40,000.01 or more but not more than \$60,000.00, the rate is ~~the equivalent of \$2,900.00 on \$40,000.00 and 6.75 percent of the member's salary that is \$40,000.01 or more~~ \$50,000.00, the rate is 6.20 percent;

(III) if a member's base salary is ~~\$60,000.01~~ \$50,000.01 or more but not more than ~~\$80,000.00~~ \$60,000.00, the rate is ~~the equivalent of \$3,850.00 on \$60,000.00 and 7.5 percent of the member's salary that is \$60,000.01 or more~~ 6.30 percent;

(IV) if a member's base salary is ~~\$80,000.01~~ \$60,000.01 or more but not more than ~~\$100,000.00~~ \$70,000.00, the rate is ~~the equivalent of \$5,350.00 on \$80,000.00 and 8.25 percent of the member's salary that is \$80,000.01 or more~~ 6.40 percent; and

(V) if a member's base salary is ~~\$100,000.01~~ \$70,000.01 or more ~~but not more than \$80,000.00~~, the rate is ~~the equivalent of \$7,000.00 on \$100,000.00 and 9.0 percent of the member's salary that is \$100,000.01 or more~~ 6.55 percent.

(VI) If a member's base salary is \$80,000.01 or more but not more than \$90,000.00, the rate is 6.80 percent.

(VII) If a member's base salary is \$90,000.01 or more but not more than \$100,000.00, the rate is 7.10 percent.

(VIII) If a member's base salary is \$100,000.01 or more, the rate is 7.35 percent.

Sec. E.515 RETIRED TEACHERS' HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL BENEFITS

(a) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944b(b)(2), and 16 V.S.A. § 1944b(h)(1), the annual contribution to the Retired Teachers' Health and Medical Benefits plan shall be \$61,290,528, of which \$53,740,528 shall be the State's contribution and \$7,550,000 shall be from the annual charge for teacher health care contributed by employers pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1944d. Of the annual contribution, \$17,589,046 is the "normal contribution," and \$43,701,482 is the "accrued liability contribution."

* * * Higher Education * * *

Sec. E.600 UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

(a) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue warrants to pay 1/12 of the appropriation in Sec. B.600 of this act to the University of Vermont on or about the 15th day of each calendar month of the year.

(b) Of this appropriation, \$380,326 shall be transferred to the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) to comply with State matching fund requirements necessary for the receipt of available federal or private funds, or both.

Sec. E.602 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

(a) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue warrants to pay 1/12 of the appropriation in Sec. B.602 of this act to the Vermont State Colleges on or about the 15th day of each calendar month of the year.

(b) Of this appropriation, \$427,898 shall be transferred to the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center to comply with State matching fund requirements necessary for the receipt of available federal or private funds, or both.

Sec. E.603 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES – ALLIED HEALTH

(a) If Global Commitment fund monies are unavailable, the total grant funding for the Vermont State Colleges shall be maintained through the General Fund or other State funding sources.

(b) The Vermont State Colleges shall use the Global Commitment funds appropriated in Sec. B.603 of this act to support the dental hygiene, respiratory therapy, and nursing programs that graduate approximately 315 health care providers annually. These graduates deliver direct, high-quality health care services to Medicaid beneficiaries or uninsured or underinsured persons.

Sec. E.605 VERMONT STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.605 of this act, \$25,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) to be deposited into the Trust Fund established in 16 V.S.A. § 2845.

(b) Of this appropriation, not more than \$300,000 may be used by VSAC for a student aspirational initiative to serve one or more high schools.

(c) Of the appropriated amount remaining after accounting for subsections (a) and (b) of this section, not less than 93 percent of this appropriation shall be used for direct student aid.

(d) In this act or any other legislation enacted into law this year or in 2022, to the extent other funding is appropriated or otherwise provided to VSAC, or is appropriated to the Agency of Human Services or any of its Departments for disbursement to VSAC for the administration of a program or initiative, up to seven percent may be used by VSAC for its costs of administration, and VSAC may recoup its reasonable costs of collecting the forgivable loans in repayment. Funds shall not be used for indirect costs. To the extent these are federal funds, allocation for expenses associated with administering the funds shall be consistent with federal grant requirements.

(e) \$1,000,000 of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.605 of this act shall be used to continue operating the Vermont Trades Scholarship Program in accordance with 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 14.

Sec. E.605.1 NEED-BASED STIPEND FOR DUAL ENROLLMENT AND
EARLY COLLEGE STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025(b), the sum of \$41,225 in education funds and \$41,225 in general funds is appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) for dual enrollment and need-based stipend purposes to fund a flat-rate, need-based stipend or voucher program for financially needy students enrolled in a dual enrollment course pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 944 or in early college pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 946 to be used for the purchase of books, cost of transportation, and payment of fees. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall establish the criteria for program eligibility. Funds shall be granted to eligible students on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are depleted.

(b) On or before January 15, 2024, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall report on the program to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Sec. E.702 10 V.S.A. § 4829(a) is amended to read:

(a) A person engaged in the business of farming who suffers damage by deer to the person's crops, fruit trees, or crop-bearing plants on land not posted against the hunting of deer, or a person engaged in the business of farming who suffers damage by black bear to the person's cattle, sheep, swine, poultry, or bees or bee hives on land not posted against hunting or trapping of black bear is entitled to reimbursement for the damage up to an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 per year, and may apply to the Department of Fish and Wildlife within 72 hours of the occurrence of the damage for reimbursement for the damage. As used in this section, "post" means any signage that would lead a reasonable person to believe that hunting is prohibited on the land.

* * *

Sec. E.811 LAND ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY BOARD;
ATTACHMENT FOR ADMINISTRATION; REPORT

(a) On or before December 15, 2023, the Land Access and Opportunity Board shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Government Operations regarding the appropriate State entity for the Board to be attached to for administrative purposes. The report shall, in consideration of the mission, powers, and duties of the Board, identify various State entities to which the Board could be attached for administrative purposes and shall examine the potential benefits and drawbacks of the Board being attached to each of the entities identified. The report shall consider the benefits and drawbacks of the Board continuing to be attached to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for administrative purposes.

Sec. E.900 TRANSPORTATION FUND RESERVE – REVERSIONS
EXCLUDED

(a) To calculate the fiscal year 2024 Transportation Fund Stabilization Reserve requirement of five percent of prior year appropriations, reversions of \$20,727,012 are excluded from the fiscal year 2023 total appropriations amount.

Sec. E.1000 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83 Sec. 53(b)(5), as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.102, is further amended to read:

* * *

(B) \$20,000,000 shall be appropriated to the State Treasurer's Office and used for redeeming State of Vermont general obligation bonds prior to maturity. ~~Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. §1001b(e), beginning in fiscal year 2024, to the extent bonds are redeemed, an amount equal to the reduction in payments for debt service required resulting from any redemption shall be transferred and reserved in the Capital Expenditure Cash Fund, as established in 32 V.S.A. §1001b created in Sec. E. 106.1 of H.740 of 2022.~~

* * * Workforce and Economic Development Policies (H.484) * * *

Sec. F.1 TEACHER LICENSING FEES; SUSPENSION

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, peer review process one-time licensure fee requirements under 16 V.S.A. § 1697(a)(7) are suspended during fiscal years 2024 through 2029.

(b) In fiscal year 2024, the estimated fees that would have been collected under 16 V.S.A. § 1697(a)(7) shall be accounted for through funds appropriated to the Agency of Education from the General Fund.

Sec. F.2 EDUCATOR WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

(a) Educator demographics. In order to understand and improve the longstanding and well-documented issue of underrepresentation in the Vermont educator workforce, including underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; New Americans; and other historically underrepresented communities, the Agency of Education shall collect demographic information from educators and report such information in its annual teacher and staff full-time equivalencies report. The Agency shall submit the educator demographic information section of the report annually to the General Assembly on or before each January 15.

Sec. F.3 18 V.S.A. § 39 is added to read:

§ 39. VERMONT PSYCHIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER FORGIVABLE LOAN INCENTIVE PROGRAM

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Corporation" means the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation established in 16 V.S.A. § 2821.

(2) "Eligible individual" means an individual who satisfies the eligibility requirements under this section for a forgivable loan.

(3) "Eligible school" means an approved postsecondary education institution, as defined under 16 V.S.A. § 2822.

(4) "Forgivable loan" means a loan awarded under this section covering tuition, which may also cover room, board, and the cost of required books and supplies for up to full-time attendance at an eligible school.

(5) "Program" means the Vermont Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Forgivable Loan Incentive Program created under this section.

(b) The Vermont Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Forgivable Loan Incentive Program is created and shall be administered by the Corporation in collaboration with the Department of Health. The Program provides forgivable loans to students enrolled in a master's program at an eligible school who commit to working as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner in this State and who meet the eligibility requirements in subsection (d) of this section.

(c) The Corporation shall disburse forgivable loan funds under the Program on behalf of eligible individuals, subject to the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for this purpose.

(d) To be eligible for a forgivable loan under the Program, an individual, whether a resident or nonresident, shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

(1) be enrolled at an eligible school in a program, whether through in-person or remote instruction, that leads to a master's degree or specialty in psychiatric mental health;

(2) maintain good standing at the eligible school at which the individual is enrolled;

(3) agree to work as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner in Vermont for a minimum of one year following licensure for each year of forgivable loan awarded;

(4) have executed a credit agreement or promissory note that will reduce the individual's forgivable loan benefit, in whole or in part, pursuant to subsection (f) of this section, if the individual fails to complete the period of service required in subdivision (3) of this subsection;

(5) have completed the Program's application form and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), in accordance with a schedule determined by the Corporation; and

(6) have provided such other documentation as the Corporation may require.

(e) If an eligible individual fails to serve as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner in this State in compliance with the Program for a period that would entitle the individual to the full forgivable loan benefit received by the individual, other than for good cause as determined by the Corporation in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health, then the individual shall receive only partial loan forgiveness for a pro rata portion of the loan pursuant to the terms of the interest-free reimbursement promissory note signed by the individual at the time of entering the Program.

(f) The Corporation shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary to implement the provisions of this section, including maximum forgivable loan amounts.

Sec. F.4 18 V.S.A. § 40 is added to read:

§ 40. VERMONT DENTAL HYGIENIST FORGIVABLE LOAN INCENTIVE PROGRAM

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Corporation" means the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation established in 16 V.S.A. § 2821.

(2) "Eligible individual" means an individual who satisfies the eligibility requirements under this section for a forgivable loan.

(3) "Eligible school" means an approved postsecondary education institution, as defined under 16 V.S.A. § 2822.

(4) “Forgivable loan” means a loan awarded under this section covering tuition, which may also include room, board, and the cost of required books and supplies for up to full-time attendance at an eligible school.

(5) “Program” means the Vermont Dental Hygienist Forgivable Loan Incentive Program created under this section.

(b) The Vermont Dental Hygienist Forgivable Loan Incentive Program is created and shall be administered by the Department of Health in collaboration with the Corporation. The Program provides forgivable loans to students enrolled in an eligible school who commit to working as a dental hygienist in this State and who meet the eligibility requirements in subsection (d) of this section.

(c) The Corporation shall disburse forgivable loan funds under the Program on behalf of eligible individuals, subject to the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for this purpose.

(d) To be eligible for a forgivable loan under the Program, an individual, whether a resident or nonresident, shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

(1) be enrolled at a dental hygienist program at an eligible school;

(2) maintain good standing at the eligible school at which the individual is enrolled;

(3) agree to work as a dental hygienist in Vermont for a minimum of one year following licensure for each year of forgivable loan awarded;

(4) have executed a credit agreement or promissory note that will reduce the individual’s forgivable loan benefit, in whole or in part, pursuant to subsection (g) of this section, if the individual fails to complete the period of service required in this subsection;

(5) have completed the Program’s application form, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and the Vermont grant application each academic year of enrollment in accordance with a schedule determined by the Corporation; and

(6) have provided such other documentation as the Corporation may require.

(e) If an eligible individual fails to serve as a dental hygienist in this State for a period that would entitle the individual to the full forgivable loan benefit received by the individual, other than for good cause as determined by the Corporation in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health, then the individual shall receive only partial loan forgiveness for a pro rata portion of the loan pursuant to the terms of the interest-free credit agreement or promissory note signed by the individual at the time of entering the Program.

(f) There shall be no deadline to apply for a forgivable loan under this section. Forgivable loans shall be awarded on a rolling basis as long as funds are available, and any funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall roll over and shall be available to the Department of Health and the Corporation in the following fiscal year to award additional forgivable loans as set forth in this section.

(g) The Corporation shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary to implement the provisions of this section, including maximum forgivable loan amounts.

Sec. F.5 BROWNFIELDS FUNDING; USE IN FISCAL YEAR 2024

(a) The Department of Economic Development shall use the funds appropriated in fiscal year 2024 for brownfields redevelopment for the assessment, remediation, and

redevelopment of brownfield sites to be used in the same manner as the Brownfields Revitalization Fund established by 10 V.S.A. § 6654 except, notwithstanding the grant limitations in 10 V.S.A. § 6654, projects supported by this appropriation shall not be limited to a maximum amount per site. The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall award the amount of \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 to regional planning commissions for the purposes of brownfields assessment. In awarding funds under this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall select one regional planning commission to administer these funds. To ensure statewide availability, the selected regional planning commission shall subgrant to regional planning commissions with brownfield programs, with not more than 10 percent of the funds being used for administrative purposes.

Sec. F.6 10 V.S.A. § 6654(e) is amended to read:

(e) A grant may be awarded by the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development with the approval of the Secretary of Natural Resources, provided that:

- (1) A grant may not exceed \$50,000 for characterization and assessment of a site.
- (2) A grant may not exceed ~~\$200,000~~ \$500,000 for remediation of a site.
- (3) A grant may be used by an applicant to purchase environmental insurance relating to the performance of the characterization, assessment, or remediation of a Brownfield site in accordance with a corrective action plan approved by the Secretary of Natural Resources.
- (4) Financial assistance may be provided to applicants by developing a risk sharing pool, an indemnity pool, or other insurance mechanism designed to help applicants.
- (5) All reports generated by financial assistance from the Brownfield Revitalization Fund, including site assessments, site investigations, feasibility studies, corrective action plans, and completion reports shall be provided as hard copies to the Secretaries of Commerce and Community Development and of Natural Resources.

Sec. F.7 10 V.S.A. § 4 is amended to read:

§ 4. NEW RELOCATING EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES

* * *

(e) As used in this section:

* * *

(2) “Relocating employee” means an individual who submits an application before becoming a resident of this State and who meets the following criteria:

(A)(i) ~~On or after July 1, 2021~~ the individual is a new relocating employee who meets the following criteria:

- (I) the individual becomes a full-time resident of this State;
- (II) the individual becomes a full-time employee at a Vermont location of a for-profit or nonprofit business organization domiciled or authorized to do business in this State, or of a State, municipal, or other public sector employer; and
- (III) the employer attests to the Agency that, after reasonable time and effort, the employer was unable to fill the employee’s position from among Vermont applicants; or

(ii) ~~on or after February 1, 2022~~ the individual is a new remote employee who meets the following criteria:

(I) the individual becomes a full-time resident of this State; and
 (II) the individual is a full-time employee of an out-of-state business and performs the majority of ~~his or her~~ the employee's employment duties remotely from a home office or a co-working space located in this State.

(B) The individual receives gross salary or wages that equal or exceed the Vermont livable wage rate calculated pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 526.

(C) The individual is subject to Vermont income tax.

Sec. F.8 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. H.18, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 46, is further amended to read:

Sec. H.18. COMMUNITY RECOVERY AND REVITALIZATION
 GRANT PROGRAM

* * *

(b) Eligible applicants.

(1) To be eligible for a grant, the applicant must be located within the State and:

(A)(i) the applicant is a for-profit entity with not less than a 10 percent equity interest in the project, or a nonprofit entity, which has documented financial impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic; or

(ii) intends to utilize the funds for an enumerated use as defined in the U.S. Treasury Final Rule for Coronavirus State and Fiscal Recovery Funds;

(B)(i) the applicant is a municipality;

(ii) the municipality needs to make infrastructure improvements to incentivize community development; and

(iii) the proposed infrastructure improvements and the projected development or redevelopment are compatible with confirmed municipal and regional development plans and the project has clear local significance for employment.

(2) The applicant must demonstrate:

(A) community and regional support for the project;

(B) that grant funding is needed to complete the project;

(C) leveraging of additional sources of funding from local, State, or federal economic development programs; and

(D) an ability to manage the project, with requisite experience and a plan for fiscal viability.

(3) The following are ineligible to apply for a grant:

(A) ~~a State or local government operated business~~ [Repealed.]

(B) a business that, together with any affiliated business, owns or operates more than 20 locations, regardless of whether those locations do business under the same name or within the same industry; and

(C) a publicly traded company.

(c) Grant funds; eligible uses for municipalities. A municipality is only authorized to utilize program funding under this section if:

(1) the project clearly requires substantial public investment over and above the normal municipal operating or bonded debt expenditures;

(2) the public improvements being requested are integral to the expected private development; and

(3) the project meets one of the following criteria:

(A) the development includes new or rehabilitated affordable housing, as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 4303;

(B) the development will include at least one entirely new business or business operation or expansion of an existing business within the project, and this business will provide new, quality, full-time jobs that meet or exceed the prevailing wage for the region as reported by the Department of Labor; ~~or~~

(C) the development will enhance transportation by creating improved traffic patterns and flow or creating or improving public transportation systems; or

(D) the development will promote and provide community benefit through educational services, agriculture, arts and entertainment, or food security.

(g) Application process; decisions; awards.

(1)(A) Under the grant program established in this section, a municipality, upon approval of its legislative body, may apply to the Vermont Economic Progress Council pursuant to the process set forth in this section to use grant funding for a project.

(B) The Agency shall accept applications from for-profit or nonprofit entities on a rolling basis until Program funds are expended.

(2) [Repealed.]

(3) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall appoint an interagency team, which may include members from among the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Department of Public Service, the Agency of Natural Resources, or other State agencies and departments, which team shall review, analyze, and recommend projects for funding consistent with the guidelines the Agency develops in coordination with the Joint Fiscal Office and the following:

(A) project readiness, quality, and demonstrated collaboration with stakeholders and other funding sources;

(B) alignment and consistency with regional plans and priorities; and

(C) creation and retention of workforce opportunities.

(4) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall consider the recommendations of the interagency team and shall give final approval to projects.

(5) The Secretary may give priority to projects that support the goals of the Vermont State Strategic Plan, or that promote job growth and retention in support of the goals.

* * *

Sec. F.9 RURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Creation; purpose.

(1) A Rural Industry Development Grant Program is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide grant funding through local development corporations for business relocation and expansion efforts, including the purchase, demolition, and renovation of property for industrial use.

(2)(A) To the extent funding is authorized and appropriated, the Agency shall make grants through the Program to assist local development corporations with business relocation and expansion efforts throughout Vermont.

(B) The Agency shall ensure an accounting of the respective State and Grantee shares of investment in any property be maintained to refund to the State an appropriate share of any net proceeds resulting from future sale or transfer of such property acquired or improved through a grant awarded under this program.

(b) Grant considerations. In making grant awards, the Agency shall consider:

(1) the real estate needs of growing and relocating businesses, including nonprofit organizations, in the applicant's region;

(2) the ability of the proposed project to meet the site-specific needs of businesses considering whether to expand or locate in this State;

(3) the funding that the applicant has identified, or secured, to leverage a grant award; and

(4) the readiness of an applicant to move a project forward.

(c) Eligible applicants; priority.

(1) To be eligible for a grant, an applicant must be a local development corporation, as defined in subdivision 212(10) of this title, located within this State.

(2) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development may designate projects and agreements as first priority based on rural communities that continue to experience insufficient economic and grand list growth.

(d) Eligible activities. A grant recipient may use funding for the following:

(1) to purchase land for potential industrial use;

(2) for the costs of site development, permitting, or providing infrastructure for property the recipient owns;

(3) for the equity investment required for a loan transaction through the Vermont Economic Development Authority under 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, subchapter 3; or

(4) for the matching requirement of another State or federal grant consistent with this section.

(e) Application; market assessment.

(1) An applicant shall include in its application a local and regional market assessment that demonstrates reasonable need for the proposed development and identifies imminent, potential, or existing business growth opportunities.

(2) An applicant shall submit the following to demonstrate a readiness to begin and complete the proposed project:

(A) community and regional support for the project;

(B) that grant funding is needed to complete the proposed project;

(C) an ability to manage the project, with requisite experience and a plan for fiscal viability; and

(D) a description of the permitting required to proceed with the project and a plan for obtaining the permits.

(f) Awards; amount.

(1) An award shall not exceed the lesser of \$1,000,000 or 20 percent of the total project cost.

(2) A recipient may combine grant funds with funding from other sources.

(3) The Agency shall release grant funds upon determining that the applicant has met all application conditions and requirements.

(4) A grant recipient may apply for additional grant funds if future amounts are appropriated for the Program and the funds are for a separate but eligible use.

(g) Deed restrictions; property sales. The Agency shall include deed restrictions that require the return of the principal amount to the state and may require the payment of a percentage of the sales profit.

Sec. F.10 24 V.S.A. § 2799 is amended to read:

§ 2799. BETTER PLACES PROGRAM; CROWD GRANTING

(a)(1) There is created the Better Places Program within the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Better Places Fund, which the Department shall manage pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5.

(2) The purpose of the Program is to utilize crowdfunding to spark community revitalization through collaborative grantmaking for projects that create, activate, or revitalize public spaces.

(3) The Department may administer the Program in coordination with and support from other State agencies and nonprofit and philanthropic partners.

(b) The Fund is composed of the following:

- (1) State or federal funds appropriated by the General Assembly;
- (2) gifts, grants, or other contributions to the Fund; and
- (3) any interest earned by the Fund.

(c) As used in this section, “public space” means an area or place that is open and accessible to all people with no charge for admission and includes village greens, squares, parks, community centers, town halls, libraries, and other publicly accessible buildings and connecting spaces such as sidewalks, streets, alleys, and trails.

(d)(1) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall establish an application process, eligibility criteria, and criteria for prioritizing assistance for awarding grants through the Program.

(2) The Department may award a grant to a municipality, a nonprofit organization, or a community group with a fiscal sponsor for a project that is located in or serves a designated downtown, village center, new town center, or neighborhood development area that will create a new public space or revitalize or activate an existing public space.

(3) The Department may award a grant to not more than ~~one project~~ three projects per calendar year within a municipality.

(4) The minimum amount of a grant award is \$5,000, and the maximum amount of a grant award is \$40,000.

(5) The Department shall develop matching grant eligibility requirements to ensure a broad base of community and financial support for the project, subject to the following:

(A) A project shall include in-kind support and matching funds raised through a crowdfunding approach that includes multiple donors.

(B) An applicant may not donate to its own crowdfunding campaign.

(C) A donor may not contribute more than \$10,000 or 35 percent of the campaign goal, whichever is less.

(D) An applicant shall provide matching funds raised through crowdfunding of not less than 33 percent of the grant award.

(e) The Department of Housing and Community Development, with the assistance of a fiscal agent, shall distribute funds under this section in a manner that provides funding for projects of various sizes in as many geographical areas of the State as possible.

(f) The Department of Housing and Community Development may use up to 15 percent of any appropriation to the Fund from the General Fund to assist with crowdfunding, administration, training, and technological needs of the Program.

Sec. F.11 24 V.S.A. § 2792(d) is amended to read:

(d) The Department shall provide staff and administrative support to the State Board, ~~and shall produce guidelines to direct municipalities seeking to obtain designation under this chapter, and shall pay per diem compensation for board members pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010(b).~~

Sec. F.12 24 V.S.A. § 2793(b) is amended to read:

(b) ~~Within 45 days of receipt of a completed application~~ Upon the first meeting of the State Board held after 45 days of receipt of a completed application, the State Board shall designate a downtown development district if the State Board finds in its written decision that the municipality has:

* * *

Sec. F.13 24 V.S.A. § 2793a(b) is amended to read:

(b) ~~Within 45 days of receipt of a completed application~~ Upon the first meeting of the State Board held after 45 days of receipt of a completed application, the State Board shall designate a village center if the State Board finds the applicant has met the requirements of subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. F.14 24 V.S.A. § 2793b(b) is amended to read:

(b) ~~Within 45 days of receipt of a completed application~~ Upon the first meeting of the State Board held after 45 days of receipt of a completed application, the State Board shall designate a new town center development district if the State Board finds, with respect to that district, the municipality has:

* * *

Sec. F.15 24 V.S.A. § 2793e(d) is amended to read:

(d) ~~Within 45 days of receipt of a completed application~~ Upon the first meeting of the State Board held after 45 days of receipt of a completed application, for designation of a neighborhood development area, the State Board, after opportunity for public comment, shall approve a neighborhood development area if the Board determines that the applicant has met the requirements of this section.

Sec. F.16 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 196, Sec. 1, as amended by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 13, is further amended to read:

Sec. 1. SIMPLIFYING GOVERNMENT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

(a) The Secretary of ~~State~~ Digital Services shall serve as the chair of a steering committee, composed of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development, the Secretary of Administration, and the Secretary of Digital Services or their designees.

(b) ~~The Secretary of State, in collaboration with the steering committee, and in collaboration with other State agencies and departments and interested stakeholders as necessary, shall:~~

(1) review and consider the necessary procedural and substantive steps to enhance the Secretary of State's one-stop business portal for businesses, entrepreneurs, and citizens to provide information about starting and operating a business in Vermont; and

(2) submit on or before December 15, ~~2019~~ 2023:

(A) a design proposal that includes a project scope, timeline, roadmap, and cost projections;

(B) any statutory or regulatory changes needed to implement the proposal; and

(C) a sustainable funding model for the portal.

(c) The steering committee shall evaluate the cost and efficacy, and integrate into the current one-stop portal to the extent feasible, features that:

(1) enhance State websites to simplify registrations and provide a ~~clear~~ comprehensive, one-stop compilation of other State business requirements, including permits and licenses;

(2) implement a data collection component that offers the registrant the option to self-identify, and make available to the public through the business search function, demographic information concerning ownership of the business, including whether the business is woman-owned, veteran-owned, BIPOC-owned, LGBTQ-owned, or minority-owned;

(3) simplify the mechanism for making payments to the State by allowing a person to pay amounts ~~he or she~~ the person owes to the State for taxes, fees, or other charges to a single recipient within State government;

~~(3)~~(4) simplify annual filing requirements by allowing a person to make a single filing to a single recipient within State government and check a box if nothing substantive has changed from the prior year;

~~(4)~~(5) provide guidance, assistance with navigation, and other support to persons who are forming or operating a small business;

~~(5)~~(6) after registration, provide information about additional and ongoing State requirements and a point of contact to discuss questions or explore any assistance needed;

~~(6)~~(7) provide guidance and information about State and federal programs and initiatives, as well as State partner organizations and Vermont-based businesses of interest; and

~~(7)~~(8) map communication channels for project updates, including digital channels such as e-mail, social media, and other communications.

(d) All State agencies and departments shall designate a single employee or team of employees who are charged with the duty to provide assistance to the steering committee upon its request.

(e) The steering committee shall focus its review on providing services through the one-stop business portal primarily for the benefit of businesses with 20 or fewer employees.

(f) The Agency of Digital Services shall assign a project manager or business analyst to report directly to the Secretary of State to assist with the implementation of this act through June 30, ~~2020~~ 2025 for the purpose of developing and implementing a one-stop navigable portal for businesses, entrepreneurs, and citizens to access information about

starting a business in Vermont, and to provide ongoing support to businesses interfacing with State government.

* * * Fees * * *

* * * Enhanced Driver's License * * *

Sec. G.100 23 V.S.A. § 7 is amended to read:

§ 7. ENHANCED DRIVER'S LICENSE; MAINTENANCE OF DATABASE
INFORMATION; FEE

* * *

(d) The fee for an enhanced license shall be ~~\$30.00~~ \$36.00 in addition to the fees otherwise established by this title.

* * *

* * * Department of Motor Vehicles * * *

Sec. G.101 23 V.S.A. § 114 is amended to read:

§ 114. FEES

(a) The Commissioner shall be paid the following fees for miscellaneous transactions:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Listings of 1 through 4 registrations | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (2) Certified copy of registration application | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (3) Sample plates | \$18.00 <u>\$22.00</u> |
| (4) Lists of registered dealers, transporters, periodic inspection stations, fuel dealers, and distributors, including gallonage sold or delivered and rental vehicle companies | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> per page |
| (5) [Repealed.] | |
| (6) Periodic inspection sticker record | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (7) Certified copy individual crash report | \$12.00 <u>\$15.00</u> |
| (8) Certified copy police crash report | \$18.00 <u>\$22.00</u> |
| (9) Certified copy suspension notice | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (10) Certified copy mail receipt | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (11) Certified copy proof of mailing | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (12) Certified copy reinstatement notice | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (13) Certified copy operator's license application | \$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> |
| (14) Certified copy three-year operating record | \$14.00 <u>\$17.00</u> |
| (15) [Repealed.] | |

(16) Government official photo identification card	\$6.00 <u>\$8.00</u>
(17) Listing of operator's licenses of 1 through 4	\$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u>
(18) Statistics and research	\$42.00 <u>\$51.00</u> per hour
(19) Insurance information on crash	\$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u>
(20) Certified copy complete operating record	\$20.00 <u>\$24.00</u>
(21) Records not otherwise specified	\$8.00 <u>\$10.00</u> per page
(22) Public records request for Department records requiring custom computer programming	\$100.00 per hour, but not less than \$500.00
(23) Public records request for Department records requiring custom computer programming (updated)	\$119.00 <u>\$143.00</u>

* * *

Sec. G.102. 23 V.S.A. § 115 is amended to read:

§ 115. NONDRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARDS

(a) Any Vermont resident may make application to the Commissioner and be issued an identification card that is attested by the Commissioner as to true name, correct age, residential address unless the listing of another address is requested by the applicant or is otherwise authorized by law, and any other identifying data as the Commissioner may require that shall include, in the case of minor applicants, the written consent of the applicant's parent, guardian, or other person standing in loco parentis. Every application for an identification card shall be signed by the applicant and shall contain such evidence of age and identity as the Commissioner may require, consistent with subsection (l) of this section. New and renewal application forms shall include a space for the applicant to request that a "veteran" designation be placed on the applicant's identification card. If a veteran, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 101(2), requests a veteran designation and provides a Department of Defense Form 214 or other proof of veteran status specified by the Commissioner, and the Office of Veterans Affairs confirms the veteran's status as an honorably discharged veteran or a veteran discharged under honorable conditions, the identification card shall include the term "veteran" on its face. The Commissioner shall require payment of a fee of ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 at the time application for an identification card is made, except that an initial nondriver identification card shall be issued at no charge to an individual who surrenders ~~his or her~~ the individual's license in connection with a suspension or revocation under subsection 636(b) of this title due to a physical or mental condition.

(b) Every identification card shall expire, unless earlier canceled, at 12:00 midnight on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the date of birth of the cardholder following the date of original issue, and may be renewed every four years upon payment of a ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 fee. A renewed identification card shall expire, unless earlier canceled, at 12:00 midnight on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the date of birth of the cardholder following the expiration of the card being renewed. At least 30 days before an identification card will expire, the Commissioner shall mail first-class to the cardholder

or send the cardholder electronically an application to renew the identification card; a cardholder shall be sent the renewal notice by mail unless the cardholder opts in to receive electronic notification. An individual born on February 29 shall, for the purposes of this section, be considered as born on March 1.

(c) In the event an identification card is lost, destroyed, mutilated, or a new name is acquired, a replacement may be obtained upon furnishing satisfactory proof to the Commissioner and paying a ~~\$20.00~~ \$24.00 fee.

* * *

* * * Registration; General Provisions * * *

Sec. G.103 23 V.S.A. § 304 is amended to read:

§ 304. REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES; NUMBER PLATES; VANITY

AND OTHER SPECIAL PLATES

* * *

(b) The authority to issue vanity motor vehicle number plates or special number plates for safety organizations and service organizations shall reside with the Commissioner. Determination of compliance with the criteria contained in this section shall be within the discretion of the Commissioner. Series of number plates for safety and service organizations that are authorized by the Commissioner shall be issued in order of approval, subject to the operating considerations in the Department as determined by the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall issue vanity and special organization number plates in the following manner:

(1) Vanity plates. Subject to the restrictions of this section, vanity plates shall be issued at the request of the registrant of a motor vehicle unless the vehicle is registered under the International Registration Plan, upon application and upon payment of an annual fee of ~~\$48.00~~ \$58.00 in addition to the annual fee for registration. The Commissioner shall not issue two sets of plates bearing the same initials or letters unless the plates also contain a distinguishing number. Vanity plates are subject to reassignment if not renewed within 60 days of expiration of the registration.

(2) Special organization plates.

* * *

(B) The officer of a safety organization or service organization may apply to the Commissioner to approve special plates indicating membership in a qualifying organization to be issued to organization members for a ~~\$17.00~~ \$21.00 special fee for each set of plates in addition to the annual fee for registration. The application shall include designation of an officer or member to serve as the principal contact with the Department and a distinctive name or emblem, or both, for use on the proposed special plate. The name and emblem shall not be objectively obscene or confusing to the general public and shall not promote, advertise, or endorse a product, brand, or service provided for sale. The organization's name and emblem must not infringe on or violate a trademark, trade name, service mark, copyright, or other proprietary or property right,

and the organization must have the right to use the name and emblem. After consulting with the principal contact, the Commissioner shall determine the design of the special plate on the basis that the primary purpose of motor vehicle number plates is vehicle identification. An organization may have only one design, regardless of the number of individual organizational units, squads, or departments within the State that may conduct the same or substantially similar activities.

(C) After the plate design is finalized and an officer or the principal contact provides the Commissioner a written statement authorizing issuance of the plates, the organization shall deposit ~~\$2,200.00~~ \$2,600.00 with the Commissioner. Of this deposit, \$500.00 shall be retained by the Department to recover costs of developing the organization plate. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 502, the Commissioner may charge the actual costs of production of the plates against the fees collected and the balance shall be deposited in the Transportation Fund. Upon application, special plates shall be issued to a registrant of a vehicle registered at the pleasure car rate or of a truck registered for less than 26,001 pounds (but excluding trucks registered under the International Registration Plan) who furnishes the Commissioner satisfactory proof that ~~he or she~~ the registrant is a member of an organization that has satisfied the requirements of this subdivision (b)(2). For each of the first 100 applicants to whom sets of plates are issued, the ~~\$17.00~~ \$21.00 special plate fee shall not be collected and shall be subtracted from the balance of the deposit. When the ~~\$1,700.00~~ \$2,100.00 balance of the deposit is depleted, applicants shall be required to pay the ~~\$17.00~~ \$21.00 fee as provided for in subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection. No organization shall charge its members any additional fee or premium charge for the authorization, right, or privilege to display special number plates, but any organization may recover up to ~~\$1,700.00~~ \$2,100.00 from applicants for the special plates.

* * *

(f) Upon the request of a registrant of a motor vehicle with the previous issue number plates, the Commissioner shall issue current issue number plates bearing the same number as shown on the previous issue plates that are being replaced. The initial one-time fee for the plates shall be ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 in addition to the regular registration fee. Official plates and plates with numbers of 9999 or lower are specifically exempted.

* * *

Sec. G.104 23 V.S.A. § 304b is amended to read:

§ 304b. CONSERVATION MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION PLATES

(a) The Commissioner shall, upon application, issue conservation registration plates for use only on vehicles registered at the pleasure car rate, on trucks registered for less than 26,001 pounds, and on vehicles registered to State agencies under section 376 of this title, but excluding vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan. Plates so acquired shall be mounted on the front and rear of the vehicle. The Commissioners of Motor Vehicles and of Fish and Wildlife shall determine the graphic design of the special plates in a manner that serves to enhance the public awareness of the State's interest in restoring and protecting its wildlife and major watershed areas. The Commissioners of Motor Vehicles and of Fish and Wildlife may alter the graphic design of these special

plates, provided that plates in use at the time of a design alteration shall remain valid subject to the operator's payment of the annual registration fee. Applicants shall apply on forms prescribed by the Commissioner and shall pay an initial fee of ~~\$26.00~~ \$32.00 in addition to the annual fee for registration. In following years, in addition to the annual registration fee, the holder of a conservation plate shall pay a renewal fee of ~~\$26.00~~ \$32.00. The Commissioner may adopt rules under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to implement the provisions of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. G.105 23 V.S.A. § 304c is amended to read:

§ 304c. MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION PLATES: BUILDING

BRIGHT SPACES FOR BRIGHT FUTURES FUND

(a) The Commissioner shall, upon application, issue "Building Bright Spaces for Bright Futures Fund," referred to as "the Bright Futures Fund," registration plates for use only on vehicles registered at the pleasure car rate, on trucks registered for less than 26,001 pounds, on vehicles registered to State agencies under section 376 of this title, and excluding vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan. Plates so acquired shall be mounted on the front and rear of the vehicle. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall utilize the graphic design recommended by the Commissioner for Children and Families for the special plates to enhance the public awareness of the State's interest in supporting children's services. Applicants shall apply on forms prescribed by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles and shall pay an initial fee of ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 in addition to the annual fee for registration. In following years, in addition to the annual registration fee, the holder of a Bright Futures Fund plate shall pay a renewal fee of ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall adopt rules under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to implement the provisions of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. G.106 23 V.S.A. § 307 is amended to read:

§ 307. CARRYING OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE; REPLACEMENT

AND CORRECTED CERTIFICATES

* * *

(b) In case of the loss, mutilation, or destruction of a certificate, the owner of the vehicle described in it shall forthwith notify the Commissioner and remit a fee of ~~\$16.00~~ \$20.00, upon receipt of which the Commissioner shall furnish the owner with a duplicate certificate.

(c) A corrected registration certificate shall be furnished by the Commissioner upon request and receipt of a fee of ~~\$16.00~~ \$20.00.

(d) An operator cited for violating subsection (a) of this section with respect to a pleasure car, motorcycle, or truck that could be registered for less than 26,001 pounds shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$5.00, which penalty shall be exempt

from surcharges under 13 V.S.A. § 7282(a), if ~~he or she~~ the operator is cited within the 14 days following the expiration of the motor vehicle's registration.

Sec. G.107 23 V.S.A. § 323 is amended to read:

§ 323. TRANSFER FEES

A person who transfers the ownership of a registered motor vehicle to another, upon the filing of a new application and upon the payment of a fee of ~~\$25.00~~ \$30.00, may have registered in ~~his or her~~ the person's name another motor vehicle for the remainder of the registration period without payment of any additional registration fee, provided the proper registration fee of the motor vehicle sought to be registered is the same as the registration fee of the transferred motor vehicle. However, if the proper registration fee of the motor vehicle sought to be registered by such person is greater than the registration fee of the transferred motor vehicle, the applicant shall pay, in addition to such fee of ~~\$25.00~~ \$30.00, the difference between the registration fee of the motor vehicle previously registered and the proper fee for the registration of the motor vehicle sought to be registered.

* * * Registration; Fees and Exemptions * * *

Sec. G.108 23 V.S.A. § 361 is amended to read:

§ 361. PLEASURE CARS

The annual registration fee for ~~registration of any motor vehicle of the~~ a pleasure car ~~type, as defined in subdivision 4(28) of this title,~~ and all vehicles powered by electricity, shall be ~~\$74.00~~ \$89.00, and the biennial fee shall be ~~\$136.00~~ \$163.00.

Sec. G.109 23 V.S.A. § 364 is amended to read:

§ 364. MOTORCYCLES

The annual fee for registration of a motorcycle, with or without sidecar, shall be ~~\$46.00~~ \$56.00.

Sec. G.110 23 V.S.A. § 364a is amended to read:

§ 364a. MOTOR-DRIVEN CYCLES: REGISTRATION; FINANCIAL

RESPONSIBILITY

(a) The annual fee for registration of a motor-driven cycle shall be ~~\$28.00~~ \$34.00.

* * *

Sec. G.111 23 V.S.A. § 364b is amended to read:

§ 364b. ALL-SURFACE VEHICLES; REGISTRATION

(a) The annual fee for registration of an all-surface vehicle (ASV) shall be the sum of the fees established by sections 3305 and 3504 of this title, plus ~~\$26.00~~ \$32.00.

* * *

Sec. G.112 23 V.S.A. § 367 is amended to read:

§ 367. TRUCKS

(a)(1) The annual fee for registration of tractors, truck-tractors, or motor trucks except truck cranes, truck shovels, road oilers, bituminous distributors, and farm trucks used as specified in subsection (f) of this section shall be based on the total weight of the truck-tractor or motor truck, including body and cab plus the heaviest load to be carried. In computing the fees for registration of tractors, truck-tractors, or motor trucks with trailers or semi-trailers attached, except trailers or semi-trailers with a gross weight of less than 6,000 pounds, the fee shall be based upon the weight of the tractor, truck-tractor, or motor truck, the weight of the trailer or semi-trailer, and the weight of the heaviest load to be carried by the combined vehicles. In addition to the fee set out in the following schedule, the fee for vehicles weighing between 10,000 and 25,999 pounds inclusive shall be an additional ~~\$35.50~~ \$42.53, the fee for vehicles weighing between 26,000 and 39,999 pounds inclusive shall be an additional ~~\$70.98~~ \$85.03, the fee for vehicles weighing between 40,000 and 59,999 pounds inclusive shall be an additional ~~\$248.48~~ \$297.68, and the fee for vehicles 60,000 pounds and over shall be an additional ~~\$390.48~~ \$467.80. The fee shall be computed at the following rates per 1,000 pounds of weight determined pursuant to this subdivision and rounded up to the nearest whole dollar; the minimum fee for registering a tractor, truck-tractor, or motor truck to 6,000 pounds shall be the same as for the pleasure car type:

~~\$15.20~~ \$18.21 when the weight exceeds 6,000 pounds but does not exceed 8,000 pounds.

~~\$17.39~~ \$20.83 when the weight exceeds 8,000 pounds but does not exceed 12,000 pounds.

~~\$19.17~~ \$22.97 when the weight exceeds 12,000 pounds but does not exceed 16,000 pounds.

~~\$20.50~~ \$24.56 when the weight exceeds 16,000 pounds but does not exceed 20,000 pounds.

~~\$21.46~~ \$25.71 when the weight exceeds 20,000 pounds but does not exceed 30,000 pounds.

~~\$21.92~~ \$26.26 when the weight exceeds 30,000 pounds but does not exceed 40,000 pounds.

~~\$22.45~~ \$26.90 when the weight exceeds 40,000 pounds but does not exceed 50,000 pounds.

~~\$22.65~~ \$27.13 when the weight exceeds 50,000 pounds but does not exceed 60,000 pounds.

~~\$23.42~~ \$28.06 when the weight exceeds 60,000 pounds but does not exceed 70,000 pounds.

~~\$24.24~~ \$29.00 when the weight exceeds 70,000 pounds but does not exceed 80,000 pounds.

~~\$24.99~~ \$29.94 when the weight exceeds 80,000 pounds but does not exceed 90,000 pounds.

* * *

(b) The annual fee for registration of a category I special purpose vehicle shall be ~~\$178.00~~ \$214.00, and the annual fee for a category II special purpose vehicle shall be ~~\$415.00~~ \$498.00.

* * *

Sec. G.113 23 V.S.A. § 371 is amended to read:

§ 371. TRAILER AND SEMI-TRAILER

(a)(1) The one-year and two-year fees for registration of a trailer or semi-trailer, except a contractor's trailer or farm trailer, shall be as follows:

(A) ~~\$27.00~~ \$33.00 and ~~\$51.00~~ \$62.00, respectively, when such trailer or semi-trailer has a gross weight of trailer and load of 1,500 pounds or less;

(B) ~~\$52.00~~ \$63.00 and ~~\$102.00~~ \$123.00, respectively, when such trailer or semi-trailer has a gross weight of trailer and load of more than 1,500 pounds and is drawn by a vehicle of the pleasure car type;

(C) ~~\$52.00~~ \$63.00 and ~~\$102.00~~ \$123.00, respectively, when such trailer or semi-trailer is drawn by a motor truck or tractor, when such trailer or semi-trailer has a gross weight of more than 1,500 pounds but less than 3,000 pounds;

(D) ~~\$52.00~~ \$63.00 and ~~\$102.00~~ \$123.00, respectively, when such trailer or semi-trailer is used in combination with a truck-tractor or motor truck registered at the fee provided for combined vehicles under section 367 of this title. Excepting for the fees, the provisions of this subdivision shall not apply to trailer coaches as defined in section 4 of this title nor to modular homes being transported by trailer or semi-trailer.

(2) The one-year and two-year fees for registration of a contractor's trailer shall be ~~\$197.00~~ \$237.00 and ~~\$394.00~~ \$473.00, respectively.

* * *

Sec. G.114 23 V.S.A. § 372 is amended to read:

§ 372. MOTOR BUS

The annual fee for registration of a motor bus shall be based on the actual weight of such bus, plus passenger carrying capacity at 150 pounds per person, and shall be ~~\$2.00~~ \$2.40 per 100 pounds of such weight, except for motor buses registered under section 372a or 376 of this title. Fractions of a hundred-weight shall be disregarded. The minimum fee for the registration of any motor bus shall be \$43.00.

Sec. G.115 23 V.S.A. § 372a is amended to read:

§ 372a. LOCAL TRANSIT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

(a) The annual registration fee for any motor bus used in local transit or public transportation service shall be ~~\$62.00~~ \$75.00, except for those vehicles owned by a municipality for such service that are subject to the provisions of section 376 of this title. In the event a bus registered for local transit or public transportation service is subsequently registered for general use during the same registration year, such fee shall be applied toward the fee for general registration.

* * *

Sec. G.116 23 V.S.A. § 373 is amended to read:

§ 373. EXHIBITION VEHICLES; YEAR OF MANUFACTURE PLATES

(a) The annual fee for the registration of a motor vehicle that is maintained for use in exhibitions, club activities, parades, and other functions of public interest and that is not used for general daily transportation of passengers or property on any highway shall be ~~\$21.00~~ \$26.00, in lieu of fees otherwise provided by law. Permitted use shall include:

* * *

Sec. G.117 23 V.S.A. § 376 is amended to read:

§ 376. STATE, MUNICIPAL, FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND RESCUE

ORGANIZATION MOTOR VEHICLES

* * *

(b) The fee for registration of a motor vehicle owned by any municipality in this State and used entirely by it or any other municipality for municipal purposes shall be ~~\$12.00~~ \$15.00 in lieu of fees otherwise specified in this chapter. ~~As used in~~ For purposes of this subsection, the term municipality shall include county-owned vehicles. The Commissioner shall issue specially designed registration plates for county-owned sheriffs' departments' vehicles.

(c) The registration fee for registration of a motor truck, trailer, ambulance, or other motor vehicle, owned by a volunteer fire department or other volunteer ~~fire-fighting~~ firefighting organization or other organization conducting rescue operations and used solely for fire fighting or rescue purposes shall be ~~\$12.00~~ \$15.00 in lieu of fees otherwise specified in this chapter. A motor vehicle or trailer registered under this section shall be plainly marked on both sides of the body or cab to indicate its ownership.

* * *

(f) A replacement registration plate shall be provided by the Commissioner upon the payment of a fee of ~~\$9.00~~ \$11.00.

(g)(1) The fee for registration of a motor vehicle obtained from the government as excess government property, or a vehicle purchased with 100 percent federal funds and used for federally supported local programs, shall be \$14.00, in lieu of fees otherwise specified in this chapter. The Commissioner shall determine the eligibility as to whether or not the motor vehicle qualifies for this registration and ownership of the vehicle shall be plainly marked on both sides of the body or cab.

* * *

Sec. G.118 23 V.S.A. § 382 is amended to read:
 § 382. DIESEL-POWERED PLEASURE CARS

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the annual registration fee for a pleasure car or tractor, truck-tractor, or motor truck up to 6,000 pounds powered by fuel as defined in section 3002 of this title shall be ~~\$74.00~~ \$89.00, and the biennial fee shall be ~~\$136.00~~ \$163.00.

* * * Registration; Registration of Dealers and Transporters * * *

Sec. G.119 23 V.S.A. § 453 is amended to read:
 § 453. FEES AND NUMBER PLATES

(a)(1) An application for registration as a dealer in new or used cars or motor trucks shall be accompanied by a fee of ~~\$503.00~~ \$603.00 for each certificate issued in such dealer's name. The Commissioner shall furnish free of charge with each dealer's registration certificate three number plates showing the distinguishing number assigned such dealer. The Commissioner may furnish additional plates according to the volume of the dealer's sales in the prior year or, in the case of an initial registration, according to the dealer's reasonable estimate of expected sales, as follows:

* * *

(2) If the issuance of additional plates is authorized under subdivision (1) of this subsection, up to two plates shall be provided free of charge, and the Commissioner shall collect ~~\$55.00~~ \$66.00 for each additional plate thereafter.

(b) Application by a "dealer in farm tractors or other self-propelled farm implements," which shall mean a person actively engaged in the business of selling or exchanging new or used farm tractors or other self-propelled farm implements, for such dealer registration shall annually be accompanied by a fee of ~~\$78.00~~ \$94.00. The Commissioner shall furnish free of charge with each such dealer registration certificate two sets of number plates showing the distinguishing number assigned such dealer and in ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's discretion may furnish further sets of plates at a fee of \$12.00 per set; such number plates may, however, be displayed only upon a farm tractor or other self-propelled farm implement.

(c) Application by a "dealer in motorized highway building equipment and road making appliances," which shall mean a person actively engaged in the business of selling or exchanging new or used motorized highway building equipment or road making appliances, for such dealer registration shall annually be accompanied by a fee of ~~\$123.00~~ \$148.00. The Commissioner shall furnish free of charge with each such dealer registration certificate two sets of number plates showing the distinguishing number assigned such dealer and in ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's discretion may furnish further sets of plates at a fee of \$30.00 per set; such number plates may, however, be displayed only upon motorized highway building equipment or road making appliances.

(d) If a dealer is engaged only in the business of selling or exchanging motorcycles or motor-driven cycles, the registration fee shall be ~~\$62.00~~ \$75.00, which shall include three

number plates. The Commissioner may, in ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's discretion, furnish further sets of plates at a fee of \$10.00 for each set.

(e) If a dealer is engaged only in the business of selling or exchanging trailers, semi-trailers, or trailer coaches, the registration fee shall be ~~\$123.00~~ \$148.00, which shall include three number plates; such number plates may, however, be displayed only upon a trailer, semi-trailer, or trailer coach. The Commissioner may, in ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's discretion, furnish further plates at a fee of \$10.00 for each such plate.

* * *

Sec. G.120 23 V.S.A. § 457 is amended to read:

§ 457. TEMPORARY PLATES

At the time of the issuance of a registration certificate to a dealer as provided in this chapter, the Commissioner shall furnish the dealer with a sufficient number of number plates and temporary validation stickers, temporary number plates, or temporary decals for use during the 60-day period immediately following sale of a vehicle or motorboat by the dealer. The plates and decals shall have the same general design as the plates or decals furnished individual owners, but the plates and decals may be of a material and color as the Commissioner may determine. The Commissioner shall collect a fee of ~~\$5.00~~ \$6.00 for each temporary plate issued.

Sec. G.121 23 V.S.A. § 463 is amended to read:

§ 463. SALE OF VEHICLE TO GO OUT OF STATE

A registered motor vehicle dealer is authorized to issue an in-transit registration permit for the purpose of movement over the highways of certain motor vehicles otherwise required to be registered when these vehicles are sold in this State to be transported to and registered in another state or province. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall, upon request, provide registered motor vehicle dealers with such numbers of applications and special in-transit number plates for vehicles sold in this State to be transported to and registered in another state or province as shall be necessary. The Commissioner is authorized to charge a fee of ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00 for the processing of the plate application and the issuance of the plate. The dealer, upon the sale of a motor vehicle to be transported to and registered in another state or province, shall cause the application to be filled out and transmitted to the Commissioner and shall attach to the vehicle the in-transit number plate corresponding to the application. No registered motor vehicle dealer shall sell, exchange, give, or transfer any application or in-transit plate to any person other than the person to whom the dealer sells or exchanges a motor vehicle to be registered in another state or province. The application shall be in a form prescribed and furnished by the Commissioner. The special in-transit number plate to be attached to the vehicle will be issued in the form and design as prescribed by the Commissioner and shall be valid for a period of 30 days from the date of issue.

Sec. G.122 23 V.S.A. § 476 is amended to read:

§ 476. MOTOR VEHICLE WARRANTY FEE

A motor vehicle warranty fee of ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00 is imposed on the registration of each new motor vehicle in this State, not including trailers, tractors, motorized highway building equipment, road-making appliances, snowmobiles, motorcycles, motor-driven cycles, or trucks with a gross vehicle weight over 12,000 pounds.

Sec. G.123 23 V.S.A. § 494 is amended to read:
§ 494. FEES

The annual fee for a transporter's registration certificate, number plate, or validation sticker is ~~\$123.00~~ \$148.00.

* * * Registration; Display of Number Plates * * *

Sec. G.124 23 V.S.A. § 514 is amended to read:
§ 514. REPLACEMENT NUMBER PLATES

(a) In case of the loss of a number plate, the owner of the motor vehicle to which it was assigned shall immediately notify the Commissioner of such loss, and the Commissioner shall furnish such owner with a new plate. The fee charged shall be ~~\$12.00~~ \$15.00 for each plate. The owner of a motor vehicle who has lost one number plate may operate ~~his or her~~ the owner's vehicle with only one number plate attached, until a new plate is furnished ~~him or her~~ to the owner, provided ~~he or she~~ the owner notified the Commissioner as required under this section.

(b) Any replacement number plate shall be issued at a fee of ~~\$12.00~~ \$15.00. However, if the Commissioner, in ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's discretion, determines that a plate has become illegible as a result of deficiencies in the manufacturing process or by use of faulty materials, the replacement fee shall be waived.

Sec. G.125 23 V.S.A. § 516 is amended to read:
§ 516. SALE OF VEHICLE TO GO OUT OF STATE BY A PERSON

OTHER THAN DEALER

The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles is authorized to issue an in-transit registration permit for the purpose of movement over the highways of certain motor vehicles otherwise required to be registered when the vehicles are sold in this State by a person, other than a registered motor vehicle dealer, to be transported to and registered in another state or province. The registration may be obtained by submitting an application on a form prescribed and furnished by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles. The Commissioner is authorized to charge a fee of ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00 for the processing of the application and the issuance of the plate. The in-transit registration plate pursuant to this section shall be valid for a period of 30 days from issuance and shall be in the form and design prescribed by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles. Issuance of an in-transit plate for vehicles sold by a registered motor vehicle dealer to a person to be transported to and registered in another state or province shall be governed by the provisions of section 463 of this title.

Sec. G.126 23 V.S.A. § 517 is amended to read:
§ 517. INTRASTATE IN-TRANSIT PERMIT

The Commissioner may issue an intrastate in-transit registration permit to authorize the movement within Vermont of a motor vehicle otherwise required to be registered, if the vehicle is sold in this State by a person other than a registered motor vehicle dealer. The permit may be obtained after submission of an application on a form prescribed and furnished by the Commissioner and payment of a ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00 fee. The permit shall be valid for a period of 10 days from the date of issuance and shall be in the form and design prescribed by the Commissioner.

* * * Operator's License; General Provisions * * *

Sec. G.127 23 V.S.A. § 608 is amended to read:

§ 608. FEES

(a) The four-year fee required to be paid the Commissioner for licensing an operator of motor vehicles or for issuing an operator's privilege card shall be ~~\$51.00~~ \$62.00. The two-year fee required to be paid the Commissioner for licensing an operator or for issuing an operator's privilege card shall be ~~\$32.00~~ \$39.00, and the two-year fee for licensing a junior operator or for issuing a junior operator's privilege card shall be ~~\$32.00~~ \$39.00.

(b) An additional fee of ~~\$3.00~~ \$4.00 per year shall be paid for a motorcycle endorsement. The endorsement may be obtained for either a two-year or four-year period, to be coincidental with the length of the operator's license.

Sec. G.128 23 V.S.A. § 613 is amended to read:

§ 613. REPLACEMENT LICENSE

(a) In case of the loss, mutilation, or destruction of a license or error in a license, the licensee shall forthwith notify the Commissioner who shall furnish such licensee with a replacement on receipt of ~~\$20.00~~ \$24.00.

* * *

Sec. G.129 23 V.S.A. § 617 is amended to read:

§ 617. LEARNER'S PERMIT

* * *

(b)(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, any licensed person may apply to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for a learner's permit for the operation of a motorcycle in the form prescribed by the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall offer both a motorcycle learner's permit that authorizes the operation of three-wheeled motorcycles only and a motorcycle learner's permit that authorizes the operation of any motorcycle. The Commissioner shall require payment of a fee of ~~\$20.00~~ \$24.00 at the time application is made.

(2) After the applicant has successfully passed all parts of the applicable motorcycle endorsement examination, other than a skill test, the Commissioner may issue to the applicant a learner's permit that entitles the applicant, subject to subsection 615(a) of this title, to operate a three-wheeled motorcycle only, or to operate any motorcycle, upon the public highways for a period of 120 days from the date of issuance. The fee for the examination shall be ~~\$9.00~~ \$11.00.

(3) A motorcycle learner's permit may be renewed only twice upon payment of a ~~\$20.00~~ \$24.00 fee. If, during the original permit period and two renewals the permittee has not successfully passed the applicable skill test or motorcycle rider training course, ~~he~~ or she ~~the permittee~~ may not obtain another motorcycle learner's permit for a period of 12 months from the expiration of the permit unless:

* * *

(d) An applicant shall pay ~~\$20.00~~ \$24.00 to the Commissioner for each learner's permit or a duplicate or renewal thereof.

* * *

* * * Operator's License; General Provisions * * *

Sec. G.130 23 V.S.A. § 634 is amended to read:

§ 634. FEE FOR EXAMINATION

(a) The fee for an examination for a learner's permit shall be ~~\$32.00~~ \$39.00. The fee for an examination to obtain an operator's license when the applicant is required to pass an examination pursuant to section 632 of this title shall be ~~\$19.00~~ \$23.00. The fee for a motorcycle skill test to obtain a motorcycle endorsement shall be ~~\$19.00~~ \$23.00.

(b) A scheduling fee of ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 shall be paid by the applicant before ~~he or she~~ the applicant may schedule the road test required under section 632 of this title. Unless an applicant gives the Department at least 48 hours' notice of cancellation, if the applicant does not appear as scheduled, the ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 scheduling fee is forfeited. If the applicant appears for the scheduled road test, the fee shall be applied toward the license examination fee. The Commissioner may waive the scheduling fee until the Department is capable of administering the fee electronically.

* * *

* * * Operator's License; Suspension and Revocation * * *

Sec. G.131 23 V.S.A. § 675 is amended to read:

§ 675. FEE PRIOR TO TERMINATION OR REINSTATEMENT OF

SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF LICENSE

(a) Before a suspension or revocation issued by the Commissioner of a person's operator's license or privilege of operating a motor vehicle may be terminated or before a person's operator's license or privilege of operating a motor vehicle may be reinstated, there shall be paid to the Commissioner a fee of ~~\$80.00~~ \$96.00 in addition to any other fee required by statute. This section shall not apply to suspensions issued under the provisions of chapter 11 of this title nor suspensions issued for physical disabilities or failing to pass reexamination. The Commissioner shall not reinstate the license of a driver whose license was suspended pursuant to section 1205 of this title until the Commissioner receives certification from the court that the costs due the State have been paid.

* * *

* * * Operator's License; Driver Training School Licenses * * *

Sec. G.132 23 V.S.A. § 702 is amended to read:

§ 702. TRAINING SCHOOL AND INSTRUCTOR'S LICENSES

A person shall not operate a driver training school or act as an instructor unless the person has secured a license from the Commissioner. Applications for such licenses may be filed with the Commissioner and shall contain the information and shall be on the forms the Commissioner may prescribe. Each application for a driver's training school license shall be accompanied by an application fee of ~~\$150.00~~ \$180.00, which shall not be refunded. If the application is approved by the Commissioner, the applicant upon payment of an additional fee of ~~\$225.00~~ \$270.00 shall be granted a license, which shall become void two years after the first day of the month of issue unless sooner revoked as provided in this subchapter. The renewal fee shall be ~~\$225.00~~ \$270.00. Each application for an instructor's license shall be accompanied by an application fee of ~~\$105.00~~ \$126.00, which shall not be refunded. If the application is approved by the Commissioner, the applicant upon payment of an additional fee of ~~\$75.00~~ \$90.00 shall be granted a license, which shall become void two years after the first day of the month of issue unless sooner revoked as provided in this subchapter. The renewal fee shall be ~~\$75.00~~ \$90.00.

Sec. G.133 23 V.S.A. § 703 is amended to read:

§ 703. POSSESSION OF LICENSE

Each person granted a driver's training school license shall display the same conspicuously on the school premises. Each person granted an instructor's license shall carry the same in ~~his or her~~ the person's possession while engaged in giving driver training. In case of loss, mutilation, or destruction of a license certificate, the Commissioner shall issue a duplicate certificate upon payment of a fee of ~~\$8.00~~ \$10.00.

* * * Operation of Vehicles; Equipment * * *

Sec. G.134 23 V.S.A. § 1230 is amended to read:

§ 1230. CHARGE

For each inspection certificate issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Commissioner shall be paid ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00, provided that State and municipal inspection stations that inspect only State or municipally owned and registered vehicles shall not be required to pay a fee. All vehicle inspection certificate charge revenue shall be allocated to the Transportation Fund with one-half reserved for bridge maintenance activities.

* * * Operation of Vehicles; Weight, Size, Loads * * *

Sec. G.135 23 V.S.A. § 1392 is amended to read:

§ 1392. GROSS WEIGHT LIMITS ON HIGHWAYS

Except as provided in section 1400 of this title, a person ~~or corporation~~ shall not operate or cause to be operated a motor vehicle in excess of the total weight, including vehicle, object, or contrivance and load, of:

* * *

(13) Despite the axle-load provisions of section 1391 of this title and the maximum gross load of subdivision (4) of this section, a special annual permit, which shall expire with the vehicle's registration, except for vehicles not registered in Vermont in which

case the permit shall become void on January 1 following date of issue, may be issued to a person operating on designated routes on the State Highway System for a fee of ~~\$382.00~~ \$458.00 for each vehicle registered for a weight of 80,000 pounds. This special permit shall be issued only for a combination of vehicle and semi-trailer or trailer equipped with five or more axles, with a distance between axles that meets the minimum requirements of registering the vehicle to 80,000 pounds as allowed under subdivision (4) of this section. The maximum gross load under this special permit shall be 90,000 pounds. Unless authorized by federal law, this subdivision shall not apply to operation on the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

(14) Despite the axle-load provisions of section 1391 of this title and the axle spacing and maximum gross load provisions of subdivision (4) of this section, a special annual permit, which shall expire with the vehicle's registration, except for vehicles not registered in Vermont in which case the permit shall become void on January 1 following date of issue, may be issued to a person transporting loads on vehicles on designated routes on the State Highway System for the following fees for each vehicle unit. Unless authorized by federal law, the provisions of this subdivision regarding weight limits or tolerances, or both, shall not apply to operation on the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. This special permit shall be issued for the following vehicles and conditions:

(A) 3-axle trucks with a single steering axle and a rear tandem axle that have a maximum gross weight of not more than 60,000 pounds when registered for a minimum gross weight of not more than 55,000 pounds, the permit fee shall be ~~\$156.00~~ \$187.00.

(B) 4-axle trucks with a single steering axle and a rear tri-axle unit that have a maximum gross weight of not more than 69,000 pounds when registered for a minimum weight of 60,000 pounds, the permit fee shall be ~~\$352.00~~ \$422.00.

(C) 4-axle tractor semi-trailer or truck trailer combination with a maximum gross weight of not more than 72,000 pounds, provided the distance between the second axle of the tractor and the rear axle of the trailer is at least 24 feet measured to the nearest foot. For each foot or fraction of a foot less than 24 feet, measured to the nearest foot, a reduction of 2,000 pounds in the maximum gross weight shall be made. The permit fee shall be ~~\$15.00~~ \$18.00.

(D) 5- or more axle tractor semi-trailer or truck trailer combination with a maximum gross weight of not more than 76,000 pounds, provided that the distance between the first and last axle of two consecutive sets of tandem axles is at least 24 feet measured to the nearest foot. For each foot or fraction of a foot less than 24 feet, measured to the nearest foot, a reduction of 2,000 pounds in the maximum gross weight shall be made. The permit fee shall be ~~\$15.00~~ \$18.00.

* * *

(17) Notwithstanding the gross vehicle weight provisions of subdivision (4) of this section, a truck trailer combination or truck tractor, semi-trailer combination with six or more load-bearing axles registered for 80,000 pounds shall be allowed to bear a maximum of 99,000 pounds by special annual permit, which shall expire with the

vehicle's registration, except for vehicles not registered in Vermont in which case the permit shall become void on January 1 following the date of issue, for operating on designated routes on State and town highways, subject to the following:

* * *

(F) The fee for the annual permit as provided in this subdivision (17) shall be ~~\$382.00~~ \$458.00 for vehicles bearing up to 90,000 pounds and ~~\$560.00~~ \$671.00 for vehicles bearing up to 99,000 pounds.

* * *

Sec. G.136 23 V.S.A. § 1402 is amended to read:

§ 1402. OVERWEIGHT, WIDTH, HEIGHT, AND LENGTH PERMITS;

FEES

(a) Overweight, overwidth, indivisible overlength, and overheight permits. Overweight, overwidth, indivisible overlength, and overheight permits shall be signed by the Commissioner or by ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's agent and a copy shall be kept in the office of the Commissioner or in a location approved by the Commissioner. Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, a copy shall also be available in the towing vehicle and must be available for inspection on demand of a law enforcement officer. Before operating a traction engine, tractor, trailer, motor truck, or other motor vehicle, the person to whom a permit to operate in excess of the weight, width, indivisible overlength, and height limits established by this title is granted shall pay a fee of ~~\$40.00~~ \$48.00 for each single trip permit or ~~\$112.00~~ \$135.00 for a blanket permit, except that the fee for a fleet blanket permit shall be ~~\$112.00~~ \$135.00 for the first unit and ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00 for each unit thereafter. At the option of a carrier, an annual permit for the entire fleet, to operate over any approved route, may be obtained for ~~\$112.00~~ \$135.00 for the first tractor and ~~\$6.00~~ \$8.00 for each additional tractor, up to a maximum fee of \$1,000.00. The fee for a fleet permit shall be based on the entire number of tractors owned by the applicant. An applicant for a fleet permit may apply for any number of specific routes, each of which shall be reviewed with regard to the characteristics of the route and the type of equipment operated by the applicant. When the weight or size of the vehicle-load are considered sufficiently excessive for the routing requested, the Agency of Transportation shall, on request of the Commissioner, conduct an engineering inspection of the vehicle-load and route, for which a fee of \$300.00 will be added to the cost of the permit if the load is a manufactured home. For all other loads of any size or with gross weight limits less than 150,000 pounds, the fee shall be \$800.00 for any engineering inspection that requires up to eight hours to conduct. If the inspection requires more than eight hours to conduct, the fee shall be \$800.00 plus \$60.00 per hour for each additional hour required. If the vehicle and load weigh 150,000 pounds or more but not more than 200,000 pounds, the engineering inspection fee shall be \$2,000.00. If the vehicle and load weigh more than 200,000 pounds but not more than 250,000 pounds, the engineering inspection fee shall be \$5,000.00. If the vehicle and load weigh more than 250,000 pounds, the engineering inspection fee shall be \$10,000.00. The study must be completed prior to the permit being issued. Prior to the issuance of a permit, an applicant whose vehicle weighs

150,000 pounds or more, or is 15 or more feet in width or height, shall file with the Commissioner a special certificate of insurance showing minimum coverage of \$250,000.00 for death or injury to one person, \$500,000.00 for death or injury to two or more persons, and \$250,000.00 for property damage, all arising out of any one crash.

(b) Overlength permits. Except as provided in subsections 1432(c) and (e) of this title, it shall be necessary to obtain an overlength permit as follows:

(1) For vehicles with a trailer or semitrailer longer than 75 feet, anywhere in the State on highways approved by the Agency of Transportation. In such cases, the vehicle may be operated with a single trip overlength permit issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles for a fee of ~~\$28.00~~ \$34.00. If the vehicle is 100 feet or more in length, the permit applicant shall file with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles a special certificate of insurance showing minimum coverage of \$250,000.00 for death or injury to one person, \$500,000.00 for death or injury to two or more persons, and \$250,000.00 for property damage, all arising out of any one crash.

* * *

* * * Title to Motor Vehicles; General Provisions * * *

Sec. G.137 23 V.S.A. § 2002 is amended to read:

§ 2002. FEES

(a) The Commissioner shall be paid the following fees:

(1) for any certificate of title, including a salvage certificate of title, or an exempt vehicle title, ~~\$35.00~~ \$42.00;

(2) for each security interest noted upon a certificate of title, including a salvage certificate of title, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;

(3) for a certificate of title after a transfer, ~~\$35.00~~ \$42.00;

(4) for each assignment of a security interest noted upon a certificate of title, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;

(5) for a duplicate certificate of title, including a salvage certificate of title, ~~\$35.00~~ \$42.00;

(6) for an ordinary certificate of title issued upon surrender of a distinctive certificate, ~~\$35.00~~ \$42.00;

(7) for filing a notice of security interest, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;

(8) for a certificate of search of the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles, for each motor vehicle searched against, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;

(9) for filing an assignment of a security interest, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;

(10) for a certificate of title after a security interest has been released, ~~\$35.00~~ \$42.00;

(11) for a certificate of title for a motor vehicle acquired by a veteran with financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and exempt from registration fees pursuant to section 378 of this title, no fee;

(12) for a corrected certificate of title, ~~\$35.00~~ \$42.00.

* * *

* * * Titling of Vessels, Snowmobiles, and All-terrain Vehicles * * *

Sec. G.138. 23 V.S.A. § 3802 is amended to read:

§ 3802. FEES

(a) The Commissioner shall be paid the following fees:

- (1) for filing an application for a first certificate of title, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;
- (2) for each security interest noted upon a certificate of title, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;
- (3) for a certificate of title after a transfer, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;
- (4) for each assignment of a security interest noted upon a certificate of title, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;
- (5) for a duplicate certificate of title, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;
- (6) for an ordinary certificate of title issued upon surrender of a distinctive certificate, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;
- (7) for filing a notice of security interest, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;
- (8) for a certificate of search of the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles for each vessel, snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle searched against, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;
- (9) for filing an assignment of a security interest, ~~\$11.00~~ \$14.00;
- (10) for a certificate of clear title after the security interest or interests have been released, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00;
- (11) for a corrected certificate of title, ~~\$22.00~~ \$27.00.

* * *

* * * Commercial Driver's License Act * * *

Sec. G.139 23 V.S.A. § 4108 is amended to read:

§ 4108. COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE, COMMERCIAL

LEARNER'S PERMIT QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

* * *

(f) The fee for a knowledge test and the fee for a skills test shall each be ~~\$32.00~~ \$39.00. The fee for an endorsement test shall be ~~\$14.00~~ \$17.00. In the event that an applicant fails a test three times, ~~he or she~~ the applicant may not take the test again for at least six months. A fee of ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 shall be paid by the applicant before ~~he or she~~

the applicant may schedule a skills test. If an applicant does not appear for the scheduled skills test, the ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 scheduling fee is forfeited, unless the applicant has given the Department of Motor Vehicles at least 48 hours' notice of cancellation of the test. If the applicant appears for the skills test, the ~~\$24.00~~ \$29.00 scheduling fee for that test will be used as part of the test fee. Use of an interpreter is prohibited during the administration of the knowledge or skills tests.

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Sec. G.140 23 V.S.A. § 4110 is amended to read:

§ 4110. APPLICATION FOR COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE OR
COMMERCIAL LEARNER'S PERMIT

* * *

(8) The proper fee.

(A) The four-year fee for a commercial driver's license shall be ~~\$90.00~~ \$108.00. The two-year fee shall be ~~\$60.00~~ \$72.00. In those instances where the applicant surrenders a valid Vermont Class D license, the total fees due shall be reduced by:

* * *

(B) The fee for a commercial learner's permit is ~~\$15.00~~ \$18.00.

* * *

(b) When a licensee or permittee changes ~~his or her~~ the licensee's or permittee's name, mailing address, or residence or in the case of the loss, mutilation, or destruction of a license or permit, the licensee or permittee shall forthwith notify the Commissioner and apply in person for a duplicate license or permit in the same manner as set forth in subsection (a) of this section. The fee for a duplicate license or permit shall be ~~\$15.00~~ \$18.00.

* * *

* * * Motor Vehicle Purchase and Use Tax * * *

Sec. G.141 32 V.S.A. § 8903 is amended to read:

§ 8903. TAX IMPOSED

(a)(1) There is hereby imposed upon the purchase in Vermont of a motor vehicle by a resident a tax at the time of such purchase, payable as hereinafter provided. The amount of the tax shall be six percent of the taxable cost of a:

* * *

(2) For any other motor vehicle, it shall be six percent of the taxable cost of the motor vehicle or ~~\$2,075.00~~ \$2,486.00 for each motor vehicle, whichever is smaller, except that pleasure cars that are purchased, leased, or otherwise acquired for use in short-term rentals shall be subject to taxation under subsection (d) of this section.

(b)(1) There is hereby imposed upon the use within this State a tax of six percent of the taxable cost of a:

* * *

(2) For any other motor vehicle, it shall be six percent of the taxable cost of the motor vehicle or ~~\$2,075.00~~ \$2,486.00 for each motor vehicle, whichever is smaller, by a person at the time of first registering or transferring a registration to such motor vehicle payable as hereinafter provided, except no use tax shall be payable hereunder if the tax imposed by subsection (a) of this section has been paid, or the vehicle is a pleasure car that was purchased, leased, or otherwise acquired for use in short-term rentals, in which case the vehicle shall be subject to taxation under subsection (d) of this section.

* * *

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. **H.100** EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. C.100 through C.116 (fiscal year 2023 adjustments, appropriations, and amendments) shall take effect upon passage.

(b) All remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2023.