

1 H.494

2 An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government

3 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

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

7 ~~(a) Notwithstanding 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.335, as~~
8 ~~amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 62, and by 2022 Acts and~~
9 ~~Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.111, \$1,000,000 of Department of Corrections Out~~
10 ~~of State Bed General Fund appropriation carried forward from fiscal year 2022~~
11 ~~shall revert to the General Fund in fiscal year 2023 for appropriation to Justice~~
12 ~~Reinvestment II in fiscal year 2023. Pursuant to 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3~~
13 ~~Sec. 106(e), the \$1,000,000 unallocated appropriation shall be allocated as~~
14 ~~follows:~~

15 ~~(b) \$250,000 to Community Justice Centers to be distributed for the~~
16 ~~following:~~

17 ~~(1) \$95,640 for a 3 percent COLA increase for fiscal year 2024; and~~
18 ~~(2) \$154,360 in grants to be distributed equally to the 17 Community~~
19 ~~Justice Centers to be used for program development and implementation,~~
20 ~~technology upgrades, and staff and volunteer recruitment.~~

1 ~~(c) \$250,000 for re-Entry Re-entry Services to support the re-entry services~~
2 ~~for incarcerated women at Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility as~~
3 ~~provided by the Lund, Mercy Connections, Vermont Works for Women, and~~
4 ~~the DIVAS program.~~

5 ~~(d) \$500,000 to the Department of Corrections for the development and~~
6 ~~implementation of the Offender Management System (OMS) intelligence~~
7 ~~layer.~~

8 ~~Sec. D.104 FISCAL YEAR 2023 ONE TIME SURPLUS; ADDITIONAL~~
9 ~~———— FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE TIME FUNDING PRIORITIES~~

10 ~~(a) To the extent that the close of fiscal year 2023 results in fund balances~~
11 ~~in the General Fund or other special funds, it is the intent of the General~~
12 ~~Assembly that the following areas be prioritized for additional one-time~~
13 ~~funding in fiscal year 2024:~~

14 ~~(1) In the Agency of Human Services, \$4,625,000 for state match for the~~
15 ~~second year of a two-year pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and~~
16 ~~Spoke program. Funds shall be used to expand the substances covered by the~~
17 ~~program, include mental health and pediatric screenings, and make strategic~~
18 ~~investments with community partners.~~

19 ~~(2) In the Agency of Administration, \$1,150,000 to be used to continue~~
20 ~~implementation of a comprehensive statewide language access plan.~~

1 ~~(3) In the Agency of Digital Services, \$7,500,000 for the Technology~~
2 ~~Modernization Fund.~~

3 ~~(4) In the Agency of Administration, \$10,000,000 to be used to offset~~
4 ~~the cost of denied claims for Federal Emergency Management Agency~~
5 ~~(FEMA) reimbursement.~~

6 ~~(5) In the Criminal Justice Council, \$800,000 for financial support for~~
7 ~~second and third years of a three-phase accreditation process to include job~~
8 ~~task analysis, curriculum development and piloting.~~

9 ~~(6) In the Department of Environmental Conservation, \$800,000 for~~
10 ~~Emissions Repair Program established by 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 55, Sec.~~
11 ~~25 for fiscal years 2025 through 2028.~~

12 ~~(7) In the Department of Housing and Community Development~~
13 ~~\$5,000,000 for the Vermont Housing Improvement Program.~~

14 ~~(8) In the Department of Economic Development, \$2,000,000 for~~
15 ~~Brownfields redevelopment.~~

16 ~~(9) In the Department of Environmental Conservation \$5,000,000 for~~
17 ~~the Healthy Homes Initiative. Funds shall be used to make repairs or~~
18 ~~improvements to drinking water, wastewater or stormwater systems for~~
19 ~~Vermonters who have low to moderate income or who live in manufactured~~
20 ~~housing communities, or both.~~

21 Sec. E.133 VERMONT RETIREMENT SYSTEMS AND VERMONT

1 PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; SOURCE OF
2 FUNDS

3 ~~(a) The funds appropriated from the pension systems for administrative~~
4 ~~costs in Sees. B.133, B.134, and B.514.1 of this act are intended to provide~~
5 ~~spending authority needed to cover the operating costs of the State's pensions~~
6 ~~systems, including transferring funds from the State's pension systems to the~~
7 ~~Treasurers Retirement Admin Costs Fund (21520) and to the Vermont Pension~~
8 ~~Investment Commission Special Fund (21521) to cover the portion of the~~
9 ~~Treasurer's budget attributable to the State's pension systems and the Vermont~~
10 ~~Pension Investment Commission's budget.~~

11 ~~(1) Of the \$2,857,679 \$2,990,679 appropriated in Sec. B.133 of this act,~~
12 ~~\$1,937,839 \$2,018,947 constitutes the Vermont State Employees' Retirement~~
13 ~~System operating budget, and \$919,840 \$971,732 constitutes the portion of the~~
14 ~~Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont~~
15 ~~State Employees' Retirement System.~~

16 ~~(2) Of the \$1,650,789 appropriated in Sec. B.134 of this act, \$1,309,958~~
17 ~~constitutes the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System operating~~
18 ~~budget, and \$340,831 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension~~
19 ~~Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont Municipal~~
20 ~~Employees' Retirement System.~~

1 ~~(3) Of the \$3,299,987 appropriated in Sec. B.514.1 of this act,~~
2 ~~\$2,309,460 constitutes the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System~~
3 ~~operating budget, and \$990,527 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension~~
4 ~~Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Teachers'~~
5 ~~Retirement System.~~

6 ~~Sec. E.300.1 STATE REFUGEE OFFICE; INVENTORY AND NEEDS~~
7 ~~—————ASSESSMENT; REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL~~

8 ~~(a) Request for proposal. On or before September 15, 2023, the State~~
9 ~~Refugee Office shall issue a request for proposal for a comprehensive~~
10 ~~inventory and needs assessment of Vermont's immigrant community and the~~
11 ~~organizations providing support to this community. For purposes of this~~
12 ~~section, "Vermont's immigrant community" includes refugees, asylum seekers,~~
13 ~~asylees, humanitarian parolees, immigrants, individuals without a legal~~
14 ~~immigrant status, and any permanent lawful residents who may have held one~~
15 ~~of these statuses in the past.~~

16 ~~(b) Inventory and assessment. The State Refugee Office shall contract with~~
17 ~~an independent third party to conduct the inventory and assessment described~~
18 ~~in subsection (a) of this section. On or before November 15, 2024, the~~
19 ~~completed inventory and assessment shall be delivered to the State Refugee~~
20 ~~Office.~~

1 ~~(c) Scope. The inventory and assessment described in subsection (a) of this~~
2 ~~section shall include the following:~~

3 ~~(1) a list of any organizations in the State that formally provide social,~~
4 ~~housing, health, mental health, or legal support services to Vermont's~~
5 ~~immigrant community;~~

6 ~~(2) a summary of the services provided by each listed organization to~~
7 ~~Vermont's immigrant community;~~

8 ~~(3) the sources of funding supporting each organization;~~

9 ~~(4) the relationship with and support provided by the State Refugee~~
10 ~~Office and any listed refugee agency and the organization, including how each~~
11 ~~organization's needs, goals, and opportunities are communicated to the State~~
12 ~~Refugee Office;~~

13 ~~(5) how referrals are made to each organization; and~~

14 ~~(6) the governing structure of each organization.~~

15 ~~(d) Reports:~~

16 ~~(1) On or before January 15, 2024, the State Refugee Office shall submit~~
17 ~~a status update on the request for proposal described in subsection (a) of this~~
18 ~~section to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate~~
19 ~~Committee on Health and Welfare.~~

20 ~~(2) On or before December 1, 2024, the State Refugee Office shall~~
21 ~~submit a copy of the final inventory and assessment described in subsection (b)~~

1 ~~of this section to the House Committee on Human Services and the Senate~~
2 ~~Committee on Health and Welfare.~~

3 ~~Sec. E.300.2 LUND; SUSTAINABILITY PLAN~~

4 ~~It is the intent of the General Assembly that Lund will develop a~~
5 ~~sustainability plan and share it with the Agency of Human Services and the~~
6 ~~General Assembly.~~

7 Sec. E.300.3 DESIGNATED AND SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES;
8 INCREASE

9 ~~(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that it will be incumbent upon~~
10 ~~the designated and specialized service agencies to focus any new funds on~~
11 ~~recruitment and retention of their direct service staff and contractors providing~~
12 ~~direct services. In fiscal year 2024, the Agency of Human Services shall~~
13 ~~increase funding to the designated and specialized service agencies in such a~~
14 ~~manner so as to support a four percent fund increase that furthers improved~~
15 ~~transparency, accountability and equity for Vermonters. In fiscal year 2024, the~~
16 ~~Agency of Human Services shall increase funding to the designated and~~
17 ~~specialized service agencies in the following manner:~~

18 ~~(1) a three percent base increase.~~

19 ~~(2) a one percent fund increase to increase payment equity for~~
20 ~~Vermonters. These funds will be distributed according to the annual~~
21 ~~agreements or appropriate valuation model allocation between the Agency of~~

1 Human Services and providers but will ensure that each designated and
2 specialized service agency has the opportunity to receive an increase.

3 ~~Sec. E.300.4 HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE SYSTEMS ANALYSIS~~

4 ~~(a) On or before September 1, 2023, the Agency of Human Services shall~~
5 ~~convene a working group, including individuals with lived experience of~~
6 ~~homelessness, local and statewide representatives of the Continuums of Care~~
7 ~~Program, representatives of housing and homelessness related organizations, a~~
8 ~~member from the House Committee on General and Housing, a member from~~
9 ~~the House Committee on Human Services, a member from the Senate~~
10 ~~Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, and a~~
11 ~~member from the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare to review, develop,~~
12 ~~and provide recommendations on Vermont's homelessness response and~~
13 ~~prevention programs and governance system, including any measures of~~
14 ~~success that incorporate recent and relevant assessments and statewide plans.~~

15 ~~(b)(1) On or before January 15, 2024, the working group established~~
16 ~~pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall submit its initial findings and~~
17 ~~recommendations to the House Committees on Human Services and on~~
18 ~~General and Housing and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and~~
19 ~~on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to align with the~~
20 ~~federal goal to reduce homelessness by 25 percent by 2025, in accordance with~~

1 ~~the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, including~~
2 ~~strategies to:~~

3 ~~(A) address racial and other disparities, as well as the multiplier~~
4 ~~effects of two or more concurrent risk factors, among people experiencing~~
5 ~~homelessness;~~

6 ~~(B) justify State and local action through research of quantitative and~~
7 ~~qualitative data, including the perspectives of individuals who have or are~~
8 ~~currently experiencing homelessness;~~

9 ~~(C) eliminate the silos between State and local governments and~~
10 ~~organizations; public, private, and philanthropic sectors; and individuals who~~
11 ~~have or are currently experiencing homelessness;~~

12 ~~(D) increase the supply of and access to safe, affordable, and~~
13 ~~accessible housing and tailored supports for individuals at risk of or currently~~
14 ~~experiencing homelessness;~~

15 ~~(E) improve response systems to meet the urgent crisis of~~
16 ~~homelessness, especially unsheltered homelessness; and~~

17 ~~(F) reduce the risk of housing instability for households most likely~~
18 ~~to experience homelessness.~~

19 ~~(2) On or before January 1, 2024, the working group shall submit an~~
20 ~~interim report on its work pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (b) to~~
21 ~~the House Committees on Human Services and on General and Housing and to~~

1 ~~the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Economic Development,~~
2 ~~Housing and General Affairs.~~

3 ~~(3) On or before January 1, 2025, the working group convened in~~
4 ~~subsection (a) of this section shall submit a final report on its work pursuant to~~
5 ~~subdivision (1) of this subsection (b) to the House Committees on Human~~
6 ~~Services and on General and Housing and to the Senate Committees on Health~~
7 ~~and Welfare and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.~~

8 * * *

9 ~~Sec. E.306.3 ADULT DAY PROGRAMS; RATE STUDY~~

10 ~~(a) The Department of Vermont Health Access, in collaboration with the~~
11 ~~Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, and the Vermont~~
12 ~~Association of Adult Day Services shall propose payment methodologies that~~
13 ~~encourage increased enrollment or attendance or both and predictable funding~~
14 ~~levels for adult day programs.~~

15 ~~(b) On or before February 15, 2024, the Department of Vermont Health~~
16 ~~Access shall submit the report to the House Committees on Appropriations and~~
17 ~~on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on~~
18 ~~Health and Welfare.~~

19 ~~Sec. E.306.4 ASSISTIVE COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES~~

20 ~~(a) Beginning in fiscal year 2025, the Agency of Human Services shall~~
21 ~~move the appropriation for assistive community care services from the~~

1 ~~Department of Vermont Health Access to the Department of Disabilities,~~
2 ~~Aging, and Independent Living.~~

3 ~~Sec. E.307.1 BLUEPRINT FOR HEALTH; PAYMENTS TO PATIENT~~
4 ~~————— CENTERED MEDICAL HOMES; REPORT~~

5 ~~(a) On or before January 15, 2024, the Director of Health Care Reform in~~
6 ~~the Agency of Human Services shall recommend to the House Committees on~~
7 ~~Health Care and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and~~
8 ~~Welfare, on Appropriations, and on Finance the amounts by which health~~
9 ~~insurers and Vermont Medicaid should increase the amount of the per person,~~
10 ~~per month payments they make to Blueprint for Health patient-centered~~
11 ~~medical homes in furtherance of the goal of providing the additional resources~~
12 ~~necessary for delivery of comprehensive primary care services to Vermonters~~
13 ~~and in order to sustain access to primary care services in Vermont. The~~
14 ~~Agency shall provide an estimate of the State funding that would be needed to~~
15 ~~support the increase for Medicaid, both with and without federal financial~~
16 ~~participation. The Agency shall also evaluate and report on potential~~
17 ~~mechanisms for ensuring that all payers are contributing equitably to the~~
18 ~~Blueprint on behalf of their covered lives in Vermont, including a~~
19 ~~consideration of supporting Blueprint initiatives through the health care claims~~
20 ~~tax established in 32 V.S.A. chapter 243.~~

21 ~~Sec. E.307.3 MEDICAID DENTAL COVERAGE; ESTIMATED COST OF~~

1 ~~REMOVING COVERAGE LIMIT; REPORT~~

2 ~~(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to improve access to dental care~~
3 ~~for Vermont Medicaid beneficiaries by eliminating individual caps on dental~~
4 ~~spending. Following implementation of a proposed increase in the dental cap~~
5 ~~from \$1,000 to \$1,500 and evaluation of the financial impacts of the increase,~~
6 ~~the Department of Vermont Health Access shall project the potential costs of~~
7 ~~eliminating the dental cap entirely. The Department shall report its findings on~~
8 ~~the projected costs of lifting the dental cap as part of its fiscal year 2026 budget~~
9 ~~presentation.~~

10 ~~Sec. E.312.1 REGIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES~~

11 ~~COORDINATION; STUDY COMMITTEE; REPORT~~

12 ~~(a) Creation. There is created the Regional Emergency Medical Services~~
13 ~~(EMS) Coordination Study Committee to assess the current EMS District~~
14 ~~structure and the current level and cost of service in each district.~~

15 ~~(b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following~~
16 ~~members:~~

17 ~~(1) a member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker~~
18 ~~of the House;~~

19 ~~(2) a member of the Senate, appointed by the Committee on~~
20 ~~Committees;~~

21 ~~(3) the EMS Chief of the EMS Office in the Department of Health;~~

1 ~~(4) the Commissioner of the Department of Health or designee;~~

2 ~~(5) the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety or designee;~~

3 ~~(6) one member, appointed by the Vermont League of Cities and~~

4 ~~Towns;~~

5 ~~(7) one member who is a volunteer emergency medical technician or~~

6 ~~paramedic, appointed by the Vermont Ambulance Association;~~

7 ~~(8) one member, appointed by the Vermont Association of Hospitals and~~

8 ~~Health Systems;~~

9 ~~(9) one member, appointed by the Vermont State Firefighters'~~

10 ~~Association;~~

11 ~~(10) one member, appointed by Professional Fire Fighters of Vermont;~~

12 ~~(11) one member, appointed by the Statewide EMS Medical Director;~~

13 ~~(12) one member, appointed by the EMS Education Council;~~

14 ~~(13) three members representing three separate EMS Districts, with at~~

15 ~~least one selected District primarily covering small, rural communities,~~

16 ~~appointed by the EMS Chief at the Department of Health; and~~

17 ~~(14) two members of the public, appointed by the Governor.~~

18 ~~(c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study the provision of~~

19 ~~emergency medical services in the State, including the following issues:~~

20 ~~(1) ways to decrease costs;~~

21 ~~(2) ways to improve EMS coordination;~~

1 ~~(3) ways to increase access to emergency services within each district;~~

2 ~~and~~

3 ~~(4) ways to optimize the EMS-District structure and authority, including~~
4 ~~consideration of recommendations on the number and configuration of EMS~~
5 ~~Districts and their powers, duties, and authority.~~

6 ~~(d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,~~
7 ~~and legal assistance of the Department of Health.~~

8 ~~(e) Report. On or before December 31, 2023, the Committee shall submit a~~
9 ~~written report to the House Committees on Government Operations and~~
10 ~~Military Affairs and on Health Care and the Senate Committees on~~
11 ~~Government Operations and on Health and Welfare with its findings and any~~
12 ~~recommendations for legislative action.~~

13 ~~(f) Meetings.~~

14 ~~(1) The EMS Chief of the EMS Office in the Department of Health shall~~
15 ~~call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before July 15, 2023.~~

16 ~~(2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the~~
17 ~~first meeting.~~

18 ~~(3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.~~

19 ~~(4) The Committee shall cease to exist on December 31, 2023.~~

20 ~~(g) Compensation and reimbursement.~~

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

7 ~~(2) Other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem~~
8 ~~compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.~~
9 ~~§ 1010 for not more than eight meetings. These payments shall be made from~~
10 ~~monies appropriated to the Department of Health.~~

11 ~~(h) Appropriation. The sum of \$100,000 is appropriated to the Department~~
12 ~~of Health from the General Fund in fiscal year 2024 to support the work of the~~
13 ~~Committee as set forth in this section, including hiring a consultant to assist the~~
14 ~~Committee in conducting its study and writing a report on its findings and~~
15 ~~recommendations.~~

16 ~~Sec. E.316 STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP; FACILITY PLANNING~~
17 ~~————— FOR JUSTICE INVOLVED YOUTH~~

18 ~~(a) The Department for Children and Families, in consultation with the~~
19 ~~Department of Buildings and General Services, shall assemble a stakeholder~~
20 ~~working group to provide regular input on the planning, design, development,~~

1 ~~and implementation of the temporary stabilization facility for youth and on the~~
2 ~~development of a long-term plan for the high-end system of care.~~

3 ~~(b) The stakeholder working group, constituted as a subcommittee of, or~~
4 ~~drawn from, existing groups or created as a separate group, may include~~
5 ~~representatives from:~~

6 ~~(1) the families of children in the Department's custody for delinquency~~
7 ~~offenses;~~

8 ~~(2) youth who have been in custody for juvenile offenses;~~

9 ~~(3) the Juvenile Defender's Office;~~

10 ~~(4) the Office of State's Attorneys;~~

11 ~~(5) the Family Court;~~

12 ~~(6) the Office of Racial Equity;~~

13 ~~(7) the Vermont Family Network;~~

14 ~~(8) the Vermont Federation of Families;~~

15 ~~(9) the Children and Family Council for Prevention Programs;~~

16 ~~(10) the Vermont Protection and Advocacy;~~

17 ~~(11) the Department of Mental Health;~~

18 ~~(12) the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living;~~

19 ~~(13) the State Program Standing Committees for Developmental~~
20 ~~Services, Children's Mental Health, and Adult Mental Health; and~~

21 ~~(14) any other groups the Department may select.~~

1 ~~(c) The Department shall regularly present relevant information to the~~
2 ~~stakeholder working group established pursuant to this section and review~~
3 ~~recommendations from the working group regarding:~~

4 ~~(1) facility design layout, programming, and policy development for the~~
5 ~~temporary stabilization facility, including data on the number of cases and~~
6 ~~types of case mix, as well as likely length of stay; and~~

7 ~~(2) the Department's data and assumptions for size, type of treatment,~~
8 ~~and security levels for future permanent facilities included in the planning~~
9 ~~process proposed in the fiscal year 2024 capital bill; optimal locations,~~
10 ~~including whether a campus plan is appropriate; and any plans regarding the~~
11 ~~use of outside contractors for facility operations, including State oversight of~~
12 ~~appropriate quality of care.~~

13 ~~(d) The stakeholder working group established in this section shall be~~
14 ~~subject to the requirements of the Vermont Open Meeting Law.~~

15 ~~(e) On or before January 15, 2024, the Commissioner of Children and~~
16 ~~Families shall develop and submit a strategic plan to the House Committees on~~
17 ~~Corrections and Institutions and on Human Services and to the Senate~~
18 ~~Committees on Health and Welfare and Institutions, as part of the overall~~
19 ~~planning process for development of the high-end system of care, for~~
20 ~~preventing the disproportionality of youth who are Black, Indigenous, or~~
21 ~~Persons of Color in staff or building secure facilities. The strategic plan shall~~

1 ~~include mechanisms for collecting necessary data, and the process of~~
2 ~~development shall include input from relevant public stakeholders.~~

3 ~~(f) The stakeholder working group shall cease to exist on June 30, 2025.~~

4 ~~Sec. E.318 PARENT CHILD CENTERS NETWORK; EMPLOYEE~~

5 ~~———— SALARIES AND BENEFITS~~

6 ~~(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly increased funding appropriated~~
7 ~~in fiscal year 2024 to the parent child centers be used to increase employee~~
8 ~~salaries and benefits, and not for new or expanded programming.~~

9 ~~Sec. E.321.1. GENERAL ASSISTANCE HOUSING; PLAN TO END~~

10 ~~———— HOTEL AND MOTEL PROGRAM ESTABLISHED DURING~~

11 ~~———— COVID-19 EMERGENCY~~

12 ~~(a)(1) In fiscal year 2024, \$20,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General~~
13 ~~Fund to the Department for Children and Families to support any services~~
14 ~~necessary to transition individuals from the hotel and motel housing program~~
15 ~~established in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The~~
16 ~~Department shall collaborate with the Vermont Housing and Conservation~~
17 ~~Board, community action agencies, housing opportunity programs, and other~~
18 ~~relevant stakeholders to locate alternative housing and supportive services for~~
19 ~~individuals utilizing the hotel and motel housing program established in~~
20 ~~response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.~~

1 ~~(2) Of the amount appropriated in subdivision (1) of this subsection,~~
2 ~~\$10,000,000.00 shall be allocated to the Vermont Housing and Conservation~~
3 ~~Board for the purchase and support of manufactured housing and the remaining~~
4 ~~\$10,000,000.00 shall be utilized by the housing opportunity programs,~~
5 ~~community action agencies, and the Department for the provision of supportive~~
6 ~~services.~~

7 ~~(b) The following households participating in the hotel and motel program~~
8 ~~on June 1, 2023 shall be eligible for alternative housing and supportive~~
9 ~~services pursuant to this section:~~

10 ~~(1) a household that lost its housing due to a natural disaster, such as a~~
11 ~~flood, fire, or hurricane;~~

12 ~~(2) a household that has a member who has experienced domestic~~
13 ~~violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking;~~

14 ~~(3) a household that has a member who has experienced a dangerous or~~
15 ~~life threatening incident related to violence against the member that either~~
16 ~~occurred within the member's home or caused the member to reasonably~~
17 ~~believe that the member was at risk of further harm if the member remained in~~
18 ~~the home;~~

19 ~~(4) a household with a child or children who are either under 18 years of~~
20 ~~age or who are 18 or 19 years of age and attending secondary school on a full-~~
21 ~~time basis or an equivalent level of vocational or technical training;~~

1 ~~State board or agency or State legislative official shall, upon five working~~
2 ~~days' notice, make available appropriate assistive listening equipment for use~~
3 ~~during the proceeding or activity.~~

4 ~~Sec. E.330.2 – 1 V.S.A. § 333 is amended to read:~~

5 ~~§ 333. APPOINTMENT OF INTERPRETER~~

6 ~~(a) The presiding officer in a proceeding shall appoint an interpreter after~~
7 ~~making a preliminary determination that the interpreter is able to:~~

8 ~~(1) readily communicate with the person who is deaf or hard of hearing,~~
9 ~~to Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind;~~

10 ~~(2) accurately interpret statements or communications from the person~~
11 ~~who is deaf or hard of hearing, Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind; and to~~

12 ~~(3) interpret the proceedings to the person who deaf or hard of hearing~~
13 ~~Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind.~~

14 * * *

15 ~~Sec. E.330.3 – 1 V.S.A. § 336 is amended to read:~~

16 ~~§ 336. RULES; INFORMATION; LIST OF INTERPRETERS~~

17 ~~(a) The Vermont Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall, by~~
18 ~~rule, establish factors to be considered by the presiding officer under section~~
19 ~~333 of this title before appointing an interpreter who is not a qualified~~
20 ~~interpreter. Such factors shall encourage the widest availability of interpreters~~
21 ~~in Vermont while at the same time ensuring The State of Vermont shall~~

1 ~~maintain a contract to operate a statewide sign language interpreter referral~~
2 ~~service to provide services to all Vermonters in need of sign language~~
3 ~~interpreters, which shall ensure that the interpreter:~~

4 ~~(1) is able to communicate readily with the person who is deaf or hard~~
5 ~~of hearing Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind;~~

6 ~~(2) is able to interpret accurately statements or communications by the~~
7 ~~person who is deaf or hard of hearing Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind;~~

8 ~~(3) is able to interpret the proceedings to the person who is deaf or hard~~
9 ~~of hearing Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind;~~

10 ~~(4) shall maintain confidentiality;~~

11 ~~(5) shall be impartial with respect to the outcome of the proceeding;~~

12 ~~(6) shall not exert any influence over the person who is deaf or hard of~~
13 ~~hearing Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind; and~~

14 ~~(7) shall does not accept assignments the interpreter does not feel~~
15 ~~competent to handle.~~

16 ~~(b) Rules established by the Vermont Commission of the Deaf and Hard of~~
17 ~~Hearing pursuant to subdivision 331(3) of this title amending the standards of~~
18 ~~competency established by the national or Vermont Registry of the Deaf shall~~
19 ~~be limited to the factors set forth in subsection (a) of this section. [Repealed.]~~

1 ~~other person having a prosecutorial function may only be used against the~~
2 ~~person in a criminal proceeding if:~~

3 ~~(1) The the admission or confession was made knowingly, voluntarily,~~
4 ~~and intelligently and is not subject to alternative interpretations resulting from~~
5 ~~the person's habits and patterns of communication.; and~~

6 ~~(2) The the admission or confession, if made during a custodial~~
7 ~~interrogation, was made after reasonable steps were taken, including the~~
8 ~~appointment of a qualified interpreter, to ensure that the defendant understood~~
9 ~~his or her the defendant's constitutional rights.~~

10 ~~(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section supplement the~~
11 ~~constitutional rights of the person who is deaf or hard of hearing Deaf, Hard of~~
12 ~~Hearing, or DeafBlind.~~

13 ~~Sec. E.330.6 – 1 V.S.A. § 339 is amended to read:~~

14 ~~§ 339. COMMUNICATIONS MADE TO INTERPRETERS; PROHIBITION~~
15 ~~——— ON DISCLOSURE~~

16 ~~(a) An interpreter, whether or not the interpreter is a qualified interpreter,~~
17 ~~shall not disclose or testify to:~~

18 ~~(1) a communication made by a person to an interpreter acting in his or~~
19 ~~her the capacity as of an interpreter for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing~~
20 ~~Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind or a person with limited English~~
21 ~~proficiency; or~~

1 ~~(b) On or before February 15, 2024, the Department of Vermont Health~~
2 ~~Access shall report the results of its rate study to the House Committees on~~
3 ~~Human Services and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health~~
4 ~~and Welfare and on Appropriations.~~

5 ~~Sec. E.335 CORRECTIONS OUT OF STATE BEDS APPROPRIATION;~~
6 ~~UNEXPENDED FUNDS CARRY FORWARD TO JUSTICE~~
7 ~~REINVESTMENT II APPROPRIATION; REPORT~~

8 ~~(a) In fiscal year 2024, any unexpended funds for the Department of~~
9 ~~Corrections out of state beds appropriation will shall be carried forward to~~
10 ~~fiscal year 2025, and the amount reported to the Joint Legislative Justice~~
11 ~~Oversight Committee in September 2024, to provide funding for justice~~
12 ~~reinvestment related programs. Funds may only be expended on justice~~
13 ~~reinvestment related programs upon approval of the Joint Legislative Justice~~
14 ~~Oversight Committee. The House Committees on Appropriations and on~~
15 ~~Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and~~
16 ~~on Judiciary will be notified of any proposed expenditures on justice~~
17 ~~reinvestment related programs.~~

18 ~~(b) Any funds authorized to be used on justice reinvestment related~~
19 ~~programs pursuant to subsection (a) of this section may be spent over multiple~~
20 ~~fiscal years until fully expended.~~

21 ~~Sec. E.335.1 CORRECTIONAL SERVICES; OUT OF STATE BEDS~~

1 ~~(a) To the extent that the General Fund is reduced in the Correctional~~
2 ~~Services—out of state beds appropriation under Sec. B.339 of this act, the~~
3 ~~corresponding amount of General Fund is budgeted in the Correctional~~
4 ~~Services Justice Reinvestment II appropriation under Sec. B.338.1 of this act in~~
5 ~~a net neutral manner. As a result of this neutral reallocation of General Fund~~
6 ~~among the two appropriations, any unexpended appropriations remaining in~~
7 ~~Correctional Services—out of state beds appropriation on June 30 of any fiscal~~
8 ~~year shall revert pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 703.~~

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

10 ~~§ 7554b. HOME DETENTION PROGRAM~~

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

20 ~~* * *~~

21 ~~Sec. E.338.2b—HOME DETENTION PROGRAM; REVIEW; REPORT~~

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

5 ~~(b) On or before November 15, 2023, the Committee shall submit any~~
6 ~~findings resulting from its review in the form of proposed legislation to the~~
7 ~~House Committee on Corrections and Institutions.~~

8 ~~Sec. E.338.3c REPEALS~~

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

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

11 ~~(c) 13 V.S.A. § 7554b is repealed on July 1, 2025.~~

12 ~~(d) 13 V.S.A. § 7554d is repealed.~~

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

14 ~~CHAPTER 11. SUPERVISION OF ADULT INMATES AT~~
15 ~~THE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES~~

16 ~~* * *~~

17 ~~Subchapter 1A. Offender Reintegration~~

18 ~~* * *~~

19 ~~§ 722. DEFINITIONS~~

20 ~~As used in this subchapter:~~

21 ~~(1) “Absconding” means:~~

1 ~~§ 724. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF COMMUNITY SUPERVISION~~

2 ~~—— FURLOUGH~~

3 ~~***~~

4 ~~(d) Technical violations.~~

5 ~~(1) As used in this section, “technical violation” means a violation of~~
6 ~~conditions of furlough that does not constitute a new crime.~~

7 ~~(2) It shall be abuse of the Department’s discretion to revoke furlough or~~
8 ~~interrupt furlough status for 90 days or longer for a technical violation, unless:~~

9 ~~(A)(1) The offender’s risk to reoffend can no longer be adequately~~
10 ~~controlled in the community, and no other method to control noncompliance is~~
11 ~~suitable.~~

12 ~~(B)(2) The violation or pattern of violations indicate the offender poses~~
13 ~~a danger to others.~~

14 ~~(C)(3) The offender’s violation is absconding from community~~
15 ~~supervision furlough. As used in this subdivision, “absconding” means:~~

16 ~~(i) the offender has not met supervision requirements, cannot be~~
17 ~~located with reasonable efforts, and has not made contact with Department~~
18 ~~staff within three days if convicted of a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A.~~
19 ~~§ 5301(7) or seven days if convicted of a crime not listed in 13 V.S.A.~~
20 ~~§ 5301(7);~~

1 ~~appropriation under Sec. B.339 of this act, the corresponding amount of~~
2 ~~General Fund is budgeted in the Correctional Services appropriated to~~
3 ~~Corrections — Justice Reinvestment II appropriation under Sec. B.338.1 of this~~
4 ~~act shall be increased in a net neutral manner. As a result of this neutral~~
5 ~~reallocation of General Fund among the two appropriations, any unexpended~~
6 ~~appropriations remaining in Correctional Services — out of state beds~~
7 ~~appropriation on June 30 of any fiscal year shall revert pursuant to 32 V.S.A. §~~
8 ~~703.~~

9 Sec. E.345 HOSPITAL SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION PLANNING;

10 PILOT PROJECTS; ~~REPORT UPDATE~~

11 ~~(a) The Agency of Human Services, in consultation with the Green~~
12 ~~Mountain Care Board, shall engage in transformation planning with up to four~~
13 ~~hospitals, or more than four hospitals to the extent funding is available, to~~
14 ~~reduce inefficiencies, lower costs, improve population health outcomes, reduce~~
15 ~~health inequities, and increase access to essential services while maintaining~~
16 ~~sufficient capacity for emergency management. The transformation planning~~
17 ~~shall be informed by the data analysis and community engagement process set~~
18 ~~forth in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 167, Sec. 2.~~

19 ~~(b) In order to ensure alignment across hospital system transformation~~
20 ~~efforts, the Secretary of Human Services or designee and the Chair and staff of~~
21 ~~the Green Mountain Care Board shall consult regarding the planning activities~~

1 ~~set forth in this section and the data analysis and community engagement~~
2 ~~process set forth in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 167, Sec. 2.~~

3 ~~(c) On or before February 15, 2024, the Agency, in consultation with the~~
4 ~~Board, shall provide an update to the House Committee on Health Care and the~~
5 ~~Senate Committee on Health and Welfare regarding the progress of the~~
6 ~~hospital system transformation planning activities described in subsection (a)~~
7 ~~of this section.~~

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

15 ~~Sec. E.500.1 UNIVERSAL AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER~~

16 ~~(a) Pursuant to 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 164, which dedicates the~~
17 ~~cannabis sales tax revenue to support grant programs for the expansion of~~
18 ~~summer and afterschool programs, with an emphasis on increasing access in~~
19 ~~underserved areas of the State, a Universal Afterschool and Summer Special~~
20 ~~Fund is created, to be managed by the Secretary of Education. The cannabis~~

1 ~~sales tax revenue shall be transferred to the Universal Afterschool and Summer~~
2 ~~Special Fund. The Secretary shall use the assets in the Fund as follows:~~

3 ~~(1) To set up programs to support the expansion of universal afterschool~~
4 ~~and summer programs with a focus on underserved areas of the State.~~

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

8 ~~(A) Grants may be used for technical assistance, program~~
9 ~~implementation, program expansion, program sustainability, and related costs.~~

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

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

15 ~~(b) Advisory Committee. An Advisory Committee is created to support the~~
16 ~~Secretary of Education in administering the funds. The Agency will provide~~
17 ~~administrative and technical support to the Committee. The Committee is to~~
18 ~~be composed of:~~

19 ~~(1) State's Chief Prevention Officer;~~

20 ~~(2) DCF Commissioner or designee;~~

21 ~~(3) VDH Commissioner or designee;~~

1 ~~(4) DMH Commissioner or designee;~~

2 ~~(5) ANR Secretary or designee;~~

3 ~~(6) ACCD Secretary or designee;~~

4 ~~(7) Vermont Afterschool Executive Director or Designee; and~~

5 ~~(8) a Representative from the Governor's Office.~~

6 ~~Sec. E.500.2 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 164 (Cannabis Regulation), Sec.~~

7 ~~17d is amended to read:~~

8 ~~Sec. 17d. ANNUAL BUDGETING OF SALES AND USE TAX~~

9 ~~————— REVENUE~~

10 ~~On or before November 15, 2021, and on or before each subsequent~~

11 ~~November 15, the Agency of Education shall submit to the General Assembly~~

12 ~~a plan to fund grants in furtherance of the purposes of Sec. 17c of this act, and~~

13 ~~report outcomes data on the grants made during the previous year. The~~

14 ~~Agency will also report on the number of programs, slots, weeks or hours;~~

15 ~~geographic distribution, and what is known about costs to families. The report~~

16 ~~should be inclusive of 21C programming. The grants shall be in an amount~~

17 ~~equal to the official forecasted revenues to be raised from the sales and use tax~~

18 ~~imposed by 32 V.S.A. chapter 233 on cannabis or cannabis products in this~~

19 ~~State. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall~~

20 ~~not apply to the plan to be made under this subsection.~~

21 ~~Sec. E.514.21c VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM;~~

1 ~~_____ SUPPLEMENTAL COST OF LIVING PAYMENT; FISCAL~~
2 ~~_____ YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATION~~

3 ~~(a) In fiscal year 2024, notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, the amount of~~
4 ~~\$3,000,000 is appropriated to VSTRS from the Education Fund, for Calendar~~
5 ~~Year 2023 supplemental payments made in Sec. E.514.1 of this act and~~
6 ~~associated costs.~~

7 ~~(b) In fiscal year 2024, notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, the amount of~~
8 ~~\$9,100,000.00 is reserved in the Education Fund to fund future supplemental~~
9 ~~cost of living payments to qualifying retired members and beneficiaries of the~~
10 ~~Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System or the present value of any~~
11 ~~changes made to the methodology for calculating the postretirement~~
12 ~~adjustments allowance set forth in 16 V.S.A. § 1949, or both.~~

13 ~~Sec. E.700 CLEAN HEAT HOMES PROGRAM~~

14 ~~(a) Purpose. The purpose of the Clean Heat Homes Program is to provide~~
15 ~~incentives for weatherization, clean heat systems, and electrification ready~~
16 ~~upgrades for low and moderate income Vermonters. The Program shall be~~
17 ~~focus on underserved households who are not eligible for the Weatherization~~
18 ~~Assistance Program operated by the Department for Children and Families~~
19 ~~Office of Economic Opportunity but who earn less than 120 percent of Area~~
20 ~~Median Income.~~

1 ~~(b) The Agency of Natural Resources shall grant \$3,000,000 of the funds~~
2 ~~appropriated in Sec. B.1105 of this act to the Vermont Energy Investment~~
3 ~~Corporation to administer the Program. The Vermont Energy Investment~~
4 ~~Corporation shall:~~

5 ~~(1) identify and conduct outreach to eligible households;~~

6 ~~(2) serve as a single point of contact to help identify, coordinate, and~~
7 ~~provide incentive funding to support “whole home climate upgrades”~~
8 ~~including:~~

9 ~~(A) thermal energy efficiency and moisture management~~
10 ~~improvements,~~

11 ~~(B) fossil fuel heating system displacement options, and~~

12 ~~(C) panel and wiring improvements necessary to support modern~~
13 ~~electric technologies, such as cold climate heat pumps, heat pump water~~
14 ~~heaters, batteries, and EV charging.~~

15 ~~(3) Coordinate with distribution utilities and other weatherization and~~
16 ~~energy efficiency providers to ensure Program funds are used to complement~~
17 ~~and leverage other existing incentives.~~

18 ~~Sec. E.1000 32 V.S.A. § 1001b is amended to read:~~

19 ~~§ 1001b. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE CASH FUND INFRASTRUCTURE~~

20 ~~———— RESERVE FUND~~

1 ~~(a) Creation. There is hereby created the Capital Expenditure Cash Fund~~
2 ~~Capital Infrastructure Reserve Fund to be administered by the Commissioner~~
3 ~~of Finance and Management, in consultation with the State Treasurer, for the~~
4 ~~purpose of using general funds to defray the costs of future capital~~
5 ~~expenditures that would otherwise be authorized in the capital construction act~~
6 ~~and paid for using the State's general obligation bonding authority and debt~~
7 ~~service obligations or paid for as a direct associated cost of a capital project.~~

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

9 ~~(1) any appropriations or transfers made by the General Assembly; and~~

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

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

15 ~~(1) costs associated with a proposed capital project that occur prior to~~
16 ~~the construction phase of that project, including feasibility, planning, design,~~
17 ~~and engineering and architectural costs tangible capital investments, as~~
18 ~~described in section 310 of this title, with an anticipated lifespan of 20 years or~~
19 ~~more;~~

20 ~~(2) projects with an anticipated lifespan of 20 years; engineering and~~
21 ~~architectural costs directly associated with a proposed capital project; and~~

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

3 ~~(4) other eligible capital projects receiving an appropriation from the~~
4 ~~General Assembly.~~

5 ~~(d) Project recommendation and approval. The House Corrections and~~
6 ~~Institutions Committee shall review any requests for use of the Fund and~~
7 ~~recommend projects to be paid for from the Fund to the House Committee on~~
8 ~~Appropriations. Expenditures shall only be made from the Fund by~~
9 ~~appropriation by the General Assembly.~~

10 ~~(e) Fund balance. All balances in the Fund at the end of any fiscal year~~
11 ~~shall be carried forward and remain part of the Fund.~~

12 ~~(f) Spending authority. Any entity authorized to make expenditures from~~
13 ~~the Fund shall have not more than two years from the legislative session in~~
14 ~~which the act authorizing the expenditure was enacted to encumber the funds.~~
15 ~~Any remaining unencumbered funds shall remain part of the Fund.~~

16 ~~(e)(g) Early redemption transfer. If any expenditures are made from the~~
17 ~~Fund or the General Assembly appropriates general funds to pay for the early~~
18 ~~redemption of general obligation bonds pursuant to subdivision (c)(3) of this~~
19 ~~section, then an amount equal to the reduction in debt service required in any~~
20 ~~fiscal year resulting from that redemption shall be transferred to the Fund.~~

21 ~~(h) Report.~~

1 ~~Infrastructure Reserve Fund, established pursuant to Sec. 1001b of this title.~~
2 ~~The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall not~~
3 ~~apply to the report to be made under this subsection. In developing its annual~~
4 ~~estimate, and in preparing its annual report, the Committee shall consider:~~

5 * * *

6 ~~Sec. E.1000.2 32 V.S.A. § 307 is amended to read:~~

7 ~~§ 307. FORM OF BUDGET~~

8 ~~(a) The budget shall be arranged and classified so as to show separately the~~
9 ~~following estimates and recommendations:~~

10 * * *

11 ~~(f) The budget shall also include the Governor's recommendation for any~~
12 ~~proposed transfers to the Capital Infrastructure Reserve Fund, established in~~
13 ~~Sec. 1001b of this title.~~

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

15 ~~Sec. F.1 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT;~~

16 ~~—ALLOCATION OF FUNDS~~

17 ~~(a) Of the \$1,500,000 appropriated from the General Fund to the~~
18 ~~Department of Labor in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 5a., \$1,200,000~~
19 ~~is reverted to the General Fund in fiscal year 2024 and allocated as follows:~~

20 ~~(1) \$200,000 to the State Workforce Development Board for the New~~
21 ~~American Labor Force Program as appropriated in Sec. B.1100 (q).~~

1 ~~(2) \$1,000,000 to provide services through the Work-Based Learning~~
2 ~~and Training Program pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 547 as appropriated in Sec.~~
3 ~~B.100(q).~~

4 ~~Sec. F.2 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 51a is amended to read:~~

5 ~~Sec. F.3 16 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 6 is added to read:~~

6 ~~Subchapter 6. Forgivable Loan Incentive Programs~~

7 ~~§ 2871. VERMONT TEACHER FORGIVABLE LOAN INCENTIVE~~

8 ~~PROGRAM~~

9 ~~(a) As used in this section:~~

10 ~~(1) “Corporation” means the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation~~
11 ~~established in section 2821 of this title.~~

12 ~~(2) “Eligible individual” means an individual who satisfies the eligibility~~
13 ~~requirements under this section for a forgivable loan.~~

14 ~~(3) “Eligible school” means an approved postsecondary education~~
15 ~~institution as defined under section 2822 of this title.~~

16 ~~(4) “Forgivable loan” means a loan awarded under this section covering~~
17 ~~tuition, which may also include room, board, and the cost of required books~~
18 ~~and supplies for up to full time attendance in an undergraduate or graduate~~
19 ~~program at an eligible school.~~

20 ~~(5) “Program” means the Vermont Teacher Forgivable Loan Incentive~~
21 ~~Program created under this section.~~

1 ~~(b) The Vermont Teacher Forgivable Loan Incentive Program is created~~
2 ~~and shall be administered by the Corporation. The Program provides~~
3 ~~forgivable loans to students enrolled in an eligible school who commit to~~
4 ~~working as a teacher in a Vermont public school and who meet the eligibility~~
5 ~~requirements in subsection (d) of this section. The intent of the Program is to~~
6 ~~encourage students to enter into teaching professions, with an emphasis on~~
7 ~~encouraging Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color Vermonters, New~~
8 ~~Americans, and other historically underrepresented communities in an effort to~~
9 ~~diversify the educator workforce.~~

10 ~~(c) The Corporation shall disburse forgivable loan funds under the Program~~
11 ~~on behalf of eligible individuals, subject to the appropriation of funds by the~~
12 ~~General Assembly for this purpose.~~

13 ~~(d) To be eligible for a forgivable loan under the Program, an individual,~~
14 ~~whether a resident or nonresident of Vermont, shall satisfy all of the following~~
15 ~~requirements:~~

16 ~~(1) be enrolled in teaching program at an eligible school;~~

17 ~~(2) maintain good standing at the eligible school at which the individual~~
18 ~~is enrolled;~~

19 ~~(3) agree to work as a teacher in Vermont employed directly by a public~~
20 ~~school located in Vermont for a minimum of one year following licensure for~~
21 ~~each year of forgivable loan awarded;~~

1 ~~(4) have executed a credit agreement or promissory note that will reduce~~
2 ~~the individual's forgivable loan benefit, in whole or in part, pursuant to~~
3 ~~subsection (f) of this section, if the individual fails to complete the period of~~
4 ~~service required in this subsection;~~

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

9 ~~(6) have provided such other documentation as the Corporation may~~
10 ~~require.~~

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

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

1 and shall be available to the Corporation in the following fiscal year to award
2 additional forgivable loans as set forth in this section.

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

9 Sec. F.4 EMERGING PATHWAYS TO TEACHING; REPORT

10 (a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to encourage and support the
11 development and retention of qualified and effective Vermont educators. To
12 combat the growing educator shortage throughout the State and meet the needs
13 of Vermont students, it is necessary to invest in nontraditional educator
14 training programs.

15 (b) Grant program.

16 (1) Program creation. In fiscal year 2024, there is established the
17 Emerging Pathways Grant Program, to be administered by the Agency of
18 Education, to provide grants to expand support, mentoring, and professional
19 development to prospective educators seeking licensure through the Agency of
20 Education's emerging pathways, including peer review and apprentice

1 ~~pathways, with the goal of increased program completion rates and increased~~
2 ~~rates of licensure of underrepresented demographics.~~

3 ~~(2) Program administration. The Agency shall adopt policies,~~
4 ~~procedures, and guidelines necessary for implementation of the Program~~
5 ~~described in subdivision (1) of this subsection.~~

6 ~~(3) Eligibility criteria. The Agency shall issue grants to organizations,~~
7 ~~school districts, or a group of school districts for the development and~~
8 ~~administration of programs and program coordinators designed to provide~~
9 ~~prospective educators in emerging pathways to teaching with the support~~
10 ~~necessary for successful entry into the educator workforce. Recruitment,~~
11 ~~support, and retention of prospective educator candidates shall focus on~~
12 ~~diversity, equity, and inclusion. Support provided through the Program may~~
13 ~~include:~~

14 ~~(A) support through the Praxis exam process;~~

15 ~~(B) local, educator led seminars designed around the Vermont~~
16 ~~licensure portfolio themes;~~

17 ~~(C) local educator mentors;~~

18 ~~(D) support in completing the peer review portfolio and licensing~~
19 ~~process; and~~

20 ~~(E) continued professional development support within the first year~~
21 ~~of licensure.~~

1 ~~(4) Report. On or before January 15, 2024, the Agency of Education~~
2 ~~shall report to the Senate and House Committees on Education on the status of~~
3 ~~the implementation of the Emerging Pathways Grant Program and a summary~~
4 ~~and performance review of the programs to which grants were awarded. The~~
5 ~~report shall include any metrics used in the performance review, the number of~~
6 ~~program participants, endorsement areas of participants, feedback from~~
7 ~~participants and mentors, and any recommendation for legislative action.~~

8 ~~Sec. F7 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONAL~~
9 ~~DEVELOPMENT; INTENT; CONTRACT~~

10 ~~(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to assist the Department of~~
11 ~~Corrections to continue and further engage in a professional development~~
12 ~~initiative to enhance supervisory effectiveness and strengthen leadership~~
13 ~~development within the Department and among its employees. The~~
14 ~~Department's enhanced supervisory training is part of its effort to address an~~
15 ~~employee workforce crisis and strengthen workplace satisfaction.~~

16 ~~(b) The Department of Corrections shall contract or expand an existing~~
17 ~~contract with a vendor to provide supervisory and management professional~~
18 ~~development services to the Department and among its employees.~~

19 ~~(c) On or before March 15, 2024, the Department and the contracted~~
20 ~~vendor shall testify before the House Committee on Corrections and~~
21 ~~Institutions about the progress and effectiveness of its professional~~

1 ~~development initiative. The Department shall make management, supervisory,~~
2 ~~and frontline staff available to testify.~~

3 ~~Sec. F8-28 V.S.A. § 126 is added to read:~~

4 ~~§ 126. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM;~~

5 ~~———CONFIDENTIALITY~~

6 ~~(a) As used in this section:~~

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

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

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

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

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

20 ~~(6) “Peer support specialist” means a Department staff member who, by~~
21 ~~reason of the staff member’s prior experience, training, or interest, has~~

1 ~~expressed a desire and has been selected to provide appropriate peer support~~
2 ~~services to a participant.~~

3 ~~(7) “Staff member” means a supervising officer as defined in~~
4 ~~subdivision 3(9) of this title, a correctional officer as defined in subdivision~~
5 ~~3(10) of this title, and any other employee of the Department.~~

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

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

17 ~~(3) Written communications described in this subsection, such as notes,~~
18 ~~records, and reports related to a peer support session, are exempt from public~~
19 ~~inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and shall be kept~~
20 ~~confidential. The Public Records Act exemptions created in this section shall~~

1 ~~not be subject to the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 317(e) (repeal of Public Records~~
2 ~~Act exemptions).~~

3 ~~(c) Except as provided by subsection (d) of this section, any~~
4 ~~communication made by a participant or peer support specialist in a peer~~
5 ~~support session, including any oral or written communication, such as notes,~~
6 ~~records, and reports related to the peer support session, shall not be admissible~~
7 ~~in a judicial, administrative, or arbitration proceeding. Limitations on~~
8 ~~disclosure imposed by this subsection include disclosure during any discovery~~
9 ~~conducted as part of an adjudicatory proceeding. Limitations on disclosure~~
10 ~~imposed by this subsection shall not include knowledge acquired by the~~
11 ~~Department or staff members from observations made during the course of~~
12 ~~employment or information acquired by the by the Department or staff~~
13 ~~members during the course of employment that is otherwise subject to~~
14 ~~discovery or introduction into evidence.~~

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

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

20 ~~(B) received and completed training in peer support and providing~~
21 ~~emotional and moral support to Department staff members who have been~~

1 ~~involved in emotionally traumatic incidents by reason of their employment or~~
2 ~~other personal matters.~~

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

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

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

12 ~~(C) any admission of criminal conduct; or~~

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

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

17 ~~(f)(1) The Department shall not be liable for any disclosure made in~~
18 ~~violation of this section by a peer support specialist or participant who~~
19 ~~participates in a peer support session.~~

20 ~~(2) A peer support specialist who in good faith provides appropriate peer~~
21 ~~support services to a participant of the peer support program shall be immune~~

1 ~~from criminal or civil liability for any injury to the participant unless the peer~~
2 ~~support specialist's conduct constitutes gross negligence, recklessness, or~~
3 ~~intentional misconduct.~~

4 ~~Sec. F9 CLIMATE WORKFORCE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN;~~

5 ~~———— ADVANCE VERMONT~~

6 ~~(a) Advance Vermont shall create a climate workforce focused digital~~
7 ~~public resource that engages current and prospective employees, Vermont~~
8 ~~youth, adults interested in changing careers, and individuals yet to earn a~~
9 ~~postsecondary credential, or those who are looking to upskill.~~

10 ~~(b) The resource shall include:~~

11 ~~(1) centralized information about career and education opportunities in~~
12 ~~Vermont that build awareness of needed climate careers; and~~

13 ~~(2) video series and other media featuring opportunities with employers~~
14 ~~and employee success stories.~~

15 ~~Sec. F10 VERMONT SUSTAINABLE JOBS FUND; BUSINESS~~

16 ~~———— COACHING~~

17 ~~(a) The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund shall recruit a cohort of up to twelve~~
18 ~~existing companies and a cohort of up to twelve trained tradespeople to receive~~
19 ~~advanced business assistance to enable them to either pivot their existing~~
20 ~~business or start a new business that will expand the State's ability to deploy~~

1 ~~renewable energy and efficiency technologies to more homes and businesses~~
2 ~~across the State.~~

3 ~~Sec. F11 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES; VERMONT POLICE~~
4 ~~ACADEMY; STUDY~~

5 ~~(a) On or before January 15, 2024, the Vermont Criminal Justice Council~~
6 ~~and representatives of the Vermont State Colleges and other public and private~~
7 ~~postsecondary institutions that offer a degree program in criminal justice shall~~
8 ~~review, consider, and take steps necessary to standardize the curricula offered~~
9 ~~and avoid redundant requirements for obtaining certification by prospective~~
10 ~~criminal justice personnel and shall submit a report of its actions to the House~~
11 ~~Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate~~
12 ~~Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs.~~

13 ~~Sec. F12 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES; CERTIFICATE IN 3-D~~
14 ~~—TECHNOLOGY~~

15 ~~(a) The Vermont State Colleges shall establish a Certificate in 3-D~~
16 ~~Technology program, offered as a full-time, six-week, intensive residential~~
17 ~~summer program at Vermont State University, which will:~~

18 ~~(1) offer knowledge and hands-on experience that appeals to a wide~~
19 ~~range of interests from science and engineering to the arts and humanities;~~

20 ~~(2) position students for greater success in college and with an~~
21 ~~employable edge upon completion;~~

1 ~~(3) attract diverse types of learners from high schools and CTE centers;~~

2 ~~(4) foster interest in STE(A)M with learners across different disciplines;~~

3 ~~(5) leverage the latest 3-D technology available at the Advanced~~

4 ~~Manufacturing Center; and~~

5 ~~(6) build local and national awareness of the Vermont State College~~

6 ~~System's innovative, experiential learning methodology and technical~~

7 ~~expertise.~~

8 ~~Sec. F13 CREDENTIAL OF VALUE GOAL; PUBLIC PRIVATE~~

9 ~~———— PARTNERSHIP; REPORT~~

10 ~~(a) Advance Vermont shall continue work pursuant to 2022 Acts and~~

11 ~~Resolves No. 183, Sec. 39 in support of the State's goal articulated in 10~~

12 ~~V.S.A. § 546 that 70 percent of working-age Vermonters hold a credential of~~

13 ~~value by 2025.~~

14 ~~(b) On or before December 15, 2023, Advance Vermont shall report to the~~

15 ~~House and Senate committees of jurisdiction regarding the use of grant funds~~

16 ~~received from the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in fiscal year 2024,~~

17 ~~activities performed, and outcomes achieved pursuant to this section.~~

18 ~~Sec. F15 AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; DESIGNATED AND~~

19 ~~———— SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES; WORKFORCE~~

20 ~~———— DEVELOPMENT~~

1 ~~(a) Of the funds appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of~~
2 ~~Human Services in this act, \$3,000,000 shall be distributed to the designated~~
3 ~~and specialized service agencies equitably based on each agency's proportion~~
4 ~~of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff to the total number of FTE staff across all~~
5 ~~designated and specialized service agencies statewide.~~

6 ~~(b)(1) Each designated and specialized service agency shall make the funds~~
7 ~~received pursuant to subsection (a) of this section available to its current and~~
8 ~~prospective employees on a rolling basis in exchange for a one year service~~
9 ~~obligation to work at a designated or specialized service agency in this State.~~

10 ~~(2) The funds may be used for the following purposes:~~

11 ~~(A) student loan repayment; and~~

12 ~~(B) tuition assistance.~~

13 ~~(3) Loan repayment and tuition assistance funds shall be in the form of~~
14 ~~forgivable loans, with the debt forgiven upon the employee's completion of the~~
15 ~~required service obligation.~~

16 ~~(c) On or before March 1, 2024, the Agency of Human Services shall make~~
17 ~~a presentation available to the House Committees on Appropriations, on Health~~
18 ~~Care, and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations~~
19 ~~and on Health and Welfare on the use of the funds appropriated in this section.~~

20 ~~Sec. F17-10 V.S.A. § 2 is added to read:~~

21 ~~§ 2. SMALL BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EXCHANGE~~

1 ~~(a) There is created the Small Business Technical Assistance Exchange, a~~
2 ~~business assistance program through which the regional development~~
3 ~~corporations shall provide small and mid-sized businesses with professional~~
4 ~~and technical assistance:~~

5 ~~(1) through in-house Business Navigators;~~

6 ~~(2) through partnerships with organizations specializing in outreach to~~
7 ~~mature workers, youth, individuals with disabilities, individuals who have been~~
8 ~~involved with the correction system, Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color~~
9 ~~Vermonters, New Americans, and other historically marginalized populations;~~
10 ~~and~~

11 ~~(3) through grants to private providers for professional services,~~
12 ~~including:~~

13 ~~(A) business operations, financial management, and grant writing;~~

14 ~~(B) digital strategies;~~

15 ~~(C) architecture and physical space design;~~

16 ~~(D) reconfiguring manufacturing equipment and processes and~~
17 ~~incorporating safety measures;~~

18 ~~(E) technology and software consulting;~~

19 ~~(F) legal and other professional services; and~~

20 ~~(G) other technical assistance.~~

1 ~~(b)(1) Through the Exchange, the regional development corporations shall~~
2 ~~maintain a directory of, and build connections to, Vermont technical assistance~~
3 ~~providers who have demonstrated the ability and expertise to assist businesses~~
4 ~~with critical tools to grow and adapt their businesses to the ever-changing~~
5 ~~business climate.~~

6 ~~(2) The Exchange shall award technical assistance grants of not more~~
7 ~~than \$5,000 per business for technical services from approved providers.~~

8 ~~(3) To be eligible to receive technical assistance through the Exchange,~~
9 ~~a business:~~

10 ~~(A) must be a for-profit entity located in Vermont; and~~

11 ~~(B) must have at least \$5,000 in average annual revenue.~~

12 ~~(4) A business whose owner's income is higher than the federal labor~~
13 ~~market area in which the business operates, as evidenced by a self-attestation~~
14 ~~provided by the owner, shall provide a 50 percent match for the costs of~~
15 ~~professional services funded by a grant.~~

16 ~~(c) The regional development corporations shall:~~

17 ~~(1) operate the Exchange to produce benefits for both the client~~
18 ~~companies as well as the vendors providing the assistance;~~

19 ~~(2) conduct outreach and direct engagement to promote participation by~~
20 ~~businesses in rural areas of this State and businesses owned by mature workers,~~
21 ~~youth, individuals with disabilities, individuals who have been involved with~~

1 ~~the correction system, Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color Vermonters,~~
2 ~~New Americans, and other historically marginalized populations; and~~
3 ~~(3) supporting businesses in anticipating and addressing changing~~
4 ~~workforce needs and availability through creative solutions, including split~~
5 ~~shifts, shorter workweeks, and cross training.~~
6 ~~(d) The regional development corporations shall publish a report on the~~
7 ~~activities and performance of the Exchange on or before January 15 and July~~
8 ~~15 each year.~~