

Journal of the House

Friday, April 19, 2024

At nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. Avram Patt of Worcester.

Bill Referred to Committee on Ways and Means

S. 213

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to the regulation of wetlands, river corridor development, and dam safety

Appearing on the Notice Calendar, and pursuant to House Rule 35(a), affecting the revenue of the State, was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Third Reading; Bill Passed

H. 626

House bill, entitled

An act relating to animal welfare

Was taken up, read the third time, and passed.

Third Reading; Bill Passed in Concurrence

S. 187

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to student application of sunscreen

Was taken up, read the third time, and passed in concurrence.

Action on Bill Postponed

S. 209

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to prohibiting unserialized firearms and unserialized firearms frames and receivers

Was taken up and, pending third reading of the bill, on motion of **Rep. Arsenault of Williston**, action on the bill was postponed until April 22, 2024.

**Second Reading; Proposal of Amendment Agreed to;
Third Reading Ordered**

S. 30

Rep. Williams of Barre City, for the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to creating a Sister State Program

Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence with proposal of amendment by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. VERMONT SISTER STATE PROGRAM; WORKING GROUP

(a) Creation. There is created the Vermont Sister State Program Working Group for the purpose of determining the administration, oversight, scope, and objectives of a Vermont Sister State Program.

(b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following members:

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

(2) the Secretary of Education or designee;

(3) the Secretary of Agriculture or designee;

(4) the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Vermont Arts Council or designee of the Board of the Trustees;

(5) the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Vermont Council on World Affairs or designee of the Board of the Directors; and

(6) the Vermont Adjutant General or designee.

(c) Meetings.

(1) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or designee shall call the first meeting of the Working Group to occur on or before September 1, 2024.

(2) The Working Group shall select a chair from among its members at the first meeting.

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

(4) In furtherance of its duties, the Working Group is encouraged to solicit input and participation from interested stakeholders, including those with experience in cultural exchange or in international relations, agriculture, trade, education, arts, recreation, or governance.

(d) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall review sister state programs in other jurisdictions and receive testimony from relevant stakeholders in order to make recommendations for legislative action. In conducting its analysis, the Working Group shall consider and make recommendations on the following:

(1) which department in State government is best suited to administer, house, and provide support to the Program;

(2) the makeup of the membership of the Committee overseeing the Program;

(3) sources of funding that will financially support the Program;

(4) specific objectives of the Program that align with the following goals:

(A) that the Program exist to create, administer, and maintain mutually beneficial and long-lasting partnerships between Vermont and other select countries or provinces;

(B) that the Program foster the connection of immigrants and refugee communities in Vermont with their nations of origin;

(C) that the Program promote and foster cultural exchange, tourism, trade, and education between Vermont and Sister States; and

(D) that through the Program, the Committee communicate with and support military personnel, foreign service officers, aid organizations, nongovernmental organizations, Peace Corps volunteers, and any other relevant entities working in Sister States.

(5) the criteria for evaluating proposed and existing Sister State agreements;

(6) the requirements for creating and managing Sister State agreements, including:

(A) the term length for agreements; and

(B) the appropriate number of active agreements at one time; and

(7) any other issue the Working Group deems relevant to the success of the Vermont Sister State Program.

(e) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) A nonlegislative member of the Working Group 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.

(2) Payments to members of the Working Group authorized under this subsection shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(f) Reporting.

(1) An initial report on the Working Group's progress on the work set forth in this section shall be submitted to the General Assembly on or before February 15, 2025.

(2) A final report shall include the Working Group's findings and recommendations for legislative language based on the requirements set forth in this section. The report shall also include the names of the stakeholders that the Working Group heard from during its work. The report shall be submitted to the General Assembly on or before November 1, 2025.

(g) Expiration. The Working Group shall cease to exist on March 31, 2026.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

Rep. Toleno of Brattleboro, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommended that the House propose to the Senate to amend the bill as recommended by the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, the report of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development agreed to, and third reading ordered.

Bill Committed

S. 192

House Bill, entitled

An act relating to forensic facility admissions criteria and processes

Was taken up and, pending second reading of the bill, **Rep. Donahue of Northfield** moved that the bill be committed to the Committee on Health Care, which was agreed to.

Favorable Reports; Second Reading; Third Reading Ordered**S. 109**

Rep. Farlice-Rubio of Barnet, for the Committee on Health Care, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to Medicaid coverage for doula services

Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

Rep. Toleno of Brattleboro, for the Committee on Appropriations, reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

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

Action on Bill Postponed**H. 563**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to criminal motor vehicle offenses involving unlawful trespass, theft, or unauthorized operation

Was taken up and, pending consideration of the Senate proposal of amendment, on motion of **Rep. Burditt of West Rutland**, action on the bill was postponed until April 24, 2024.

Message from the Senate No. 49

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

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has considered a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 861. An act relating to reimbursement parity for health care services delivered in person, by telemedicine, and by audio-only telephone.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

The Senate has considered House proposal of amendment to Senate proposal of amendment to House bill of the following title:

H. 659. An act relating to captive insurance.

And has concurred therein with an amendment in the passage of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

The Senate has on its part adopted Senate concurrent resolution of the following title:

S.C.R. 13. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Alice Whiting of Johnson on her 90th birthday.

The Senate has on its part adopted concurrent resolutions originating in the House of the following titles:

H.C.R. 219. House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2024 as National Foster Care Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 220. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2023 North Country Union High School Falcons Division II championship football team.

H.C.R. 221. House concurrent resolution congratulating North Country Union High School Principal Christopher Young on being named the National Association of Secondary School Principals 2024 Advocacy Champion of the Year.

H.C.R. 222. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative Timothy Yeatman Hayward.

H.C.R. 223. House concurrent resolution honoring the academic and administrative leadership of former Kingdom East School District Superintendent Jennifer Botzjorns.

H.C.R. 224. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2023 Hartford High School Hurricanes Division II championship field hockey team.

H.C.R. 225. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2023 Hartford High School Hurricanes Division II championship boys' golf team.

H.C.R. 226. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Hartford High School Hurricanes Division II championship boys' indoor track and field team.

H.C.R. 227. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 West Rutland High School Golden Horde girls' basketball team on winning the school's third consecutive Division IV championship.

H.C.R. 228. House concurrent resolution honoring the dedication and leadership of Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library Director Phyllis Skidmore.

H.C.R. 229. House concurrent resolution honoring the music therapists of Vermont.

H.C.R. 230. House concurrent resolution in memory of Weathersfield Fire Chief Darrin Spaulding.

Adjournment

At ten o'clock and seventeen minutes in the forenoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until Monday, April 22, 2024, at ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, pursuant to the provisions of J.R.S. 53.

Concurrent Resolutions Adopted

The following concurrent resolutions, having been placed on the Consent Calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no member having requested floor consideration as provided by Rule 16b of the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, are hereby adopted on the part of the House:

H.C.R. 219

House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2024 as National Foster Care Month in Vermont

H.C.R. 220

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2023 North Country Union High School Falcons Division II championship football team

H.C.R. 221

House concurrent resolution congratulating North Country Union High School Principal Christopher Young on being named the National Association of Secondary School Principals 2024 Advocacy Champion of the Year

H.C.R. 222

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative Timothy Yeatman Hayward

H.C.R. 223

House concurrent resolution honoring the academic and administrative leadership of former Kingdom East School District Superintendent Jennifer Botzojorns

H.C.R. 224

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2023 Hartford High School Hurricanes Division II championship field hockey team

H.C.R. 225

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2023 Hartford High School Hurricanes Division II championship boys' golf team

H.C.R. 226

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Hartford High School Hurricanes Division II championship boys' indoor track and field team

H.C.R. 227

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 West Rutland High School Golden Horde girls' basketball team on winning the school's third consecutive Division IV championship

H.C.R. 228

House concurrent resolution honoring the dedication and leadership of Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library Director Phyllis Skidmore

H.C.R. 229

House concurrent resolution honoring the music therapists of Vermont

H.C.R. 230

House concurrent resolution in memory of Weathersfield Fire Chief Darrin Spaulding

S.C.R. 13

Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Alice Whiting of Johnson on her 90th birthday

[The full text of the concurrent resolutions appeared in the House and Senate Calendar Addendums on the preceding legislative day and will appear in the Public Acts and Resolves of the 2024 Adjourned Session.]