

**No. R-456. Joint resolution relating to respectful language in the Vermont Statutes Annotated.**

(J.R.S.58)

By Senator Pollina,

*Whereas*, the State of Vermont is committed to eliminating all forms of abuse and harassment and to protecting the civil rights of all Vermonters, and

*Whereas*, this commitment includes achieving long-term systemic change to end discrimination against people with disabilities, and

*Whereas*, deliberate use of disrespectful language directed at people with disabilities is a form of harassment and abuse, and

*Whereas*, even if a word or phrase was not originally used with discriminatory intent, evolving societal perceptions may now cause the word or phrase to be viewed as showing disrespect to persons with disabilities, and

*Whereas*, the general assembly enacted Act No. 24 of 2011 directing that a working group under the supervision of the agency of human services identify instances in the Vermont Statutes Annotated of language that is now viewed as disrespectful to persons with disabilities, and

*Whereas*, the working group prepared a comprehensive inventory of instances where disrespectful language appears in the Vermont Statutes Annotated and recommended alternative words and phrases as replacements, and

*Whereas*, the general assembly desires that respectful language be used when referring to persons with disabilities, both in legislative deliberations and in the Vermont Statutes Annotated, now therefore be it

**Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:**

That the General Assembly requests that the legislative council prepare a bill that will propose to amend the Vermont Statutes Annotated by replacing words and phrases as recommended by the study group created pursuant to Act No. 24 of 2011.