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H.700

Introduced by Representatives Clarkson of Woodstock and Pugh of South

Burlington

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Commerce and trade; economic development

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create an official Crafts Crawl and mobile application to promote economic development and Vermont-made crafts.

An act relating to establishing a Vermont Crafts Crawl

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

Sec. 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

(a) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

(1) Vermont tourism generates \$2.5 billion per year and creates vibrancy within the State.

(2) In 2013, 40 to 50 percent of tourists came for Vermont shopping.

(3) In 2014, visitor spending contributed \$318 million in tax and fee revenues to the State of Vermont

(4) Art is a central part of Vermont culture and economy.

1 (5) Vermont has consistently been ranked as one of the states with the
2 highest number of artists per capita. Between 2005 and 2009, Vermont was
3 tied for fourth for the percent of artists participating in the labor force.

4 (6) As of 2006, over 6,000 Vermonters were employed by art-related
5 businesses.

6 (7) Vermont has the highest concentration of workers in the graphic
7 design industry.

8 (8) The Vermont Crafts Council hosts a biannual Open Studios
9 showcasing over 100 Vermont studios and exhibits.

10 (9) The Vermont Arts Council celebrates three specific art festivals, six
11 art walks, and promotes exploration of Vermont Byways.

12 (10) There are almost 40 craft breweries that are members of the
13 Vermont Brewers Association.

14 (11) There are 14 wineries that make their home in Vermont.

15 (12) About 20 percent of Vermont apples are used to make sweet, hard
16 and iced ciders as well as apple spirits.

17 (13) The Vermont Cheese Council includes 48 artisan cheese makers.

18 (14) There is no cohesive event that brings together and celebrates all
19 Vermont-made crafts.

20 (15) Vermont towns participate in the Discovery Map program,
21 displaying their own area attractions. Discovery Map has a mobile app that

1 displays eateries, activities, hotels, shopping, and services but does not
2 promote the Vermont crafts industry.

3 (16) The last Vermont sales tax holiday was in 2010. Sales tax holidays
4 are not a regular part of the State calendar and budget.

5 (17) Vermont's neighbor, Maine, hosts a "Maine Craft Weekend"
6 highlighting a statewide tour of Maine craft studios, breweries, businesses, and
7 events. Maine Craft Weekend is a partnership between The Maine Crafts
8 Association, the Maine Brewer's Guild, and the Maine Department of
9 Economic and Community Development's Maine Made Program.

10 (18) A study in 2007 by the University of Vermont's Center for Rural
11 Studies found that 38 percent of respondents felt that the State should place a
12 high or very high priority on spending funds on arts education and other art
13 programs and services.

14 (b) Purpose. The purposes of this act are:

15 (1) to strengthen and unify the existing arts and crafts market in
16 Vermont by implementing a Crafts Crawl and a mobile app;

17 (2) to address the current absence of a cohesive event and mobile
18 platform that would bring together, brand, and celebrate Vermont-made arts
19 and crafts;

1 (3) to create a partnership with the State, the Vermont Arts Council, The
2 Vermont Brewers Association, The Vermont Fruit Tree Growers Association,
3 and the Vermont Cheese Council; and

4 (4) to showcase Vermont made-crafts.

5 Sec. 2. CRAFTS CRAWL; INTENT

6 (a) The Crafts Crawl will encompass a weekend-long event in which one
7 day will be tax free.

8 (b) The Crafts Crawl will serve as a launch for an interactive Vermont arts
9 mobile app.

10 (c) The mobile app is intended to provide information for the Crafts Crawl
11 as well as become a unifying resource for both in-state and out-of-state visitors
12 to create their own Vermont experience centered around Vermont arts and
13 crafts.

14 (d) The mobile app should be designed to accomplish the following: assist
15 in the branding of Vermont arts and crafts; make navigating Vermont easier;
16 promote Vermont byways; enable users to create their own personalized
17 Vermont experience; and enhance attendance at Vermont cultural events.

18 (e) A tax-free day focused on Vermont arts and crafts would recognize
19 consumer demand for a tax-free holiday, and promote purchases during the
20 Crafts Crawl.

1 Sec. 3. DEFINITIONS

2 As used in this Act:

3 (1) “Crafts Crawl” means an annual, one weekend per year event, to
4 highlight Vermont-made crafts available to locals and tourists.

5 (2) “Craft” means a work of art produced in Vermont, including
6 painting, photography, sculpture, pottery, ceramics, weaving, quilting, sewing,
7 glass work, metal jewelry, metal forging, books, paper cutting, origami,
8 furniture, carving, vessels, cheese making, beer making, wine making, spirit
9 distilling, and cider pressing.

10 (3) “Mobile app” means an app for a mobile phone that makes
11 navigating Vermont easier for tourists. This would specifically focus on the
12 arts and crafts offered in Vermont. It would encompass the information for the
13 craft weekend, and then it would be used to help tourists locate arts and crafts
14 venues and creators throughout Vermont year round.

15 (4) “Tax-Free day” means the Sunday on which the crafts sold at the
16 Crafts Crawl will be sold without collecting State sales tax.

17 Sec. 4. APPOINTMENT OF EVENT ORGANIZERS

18 The Commissioner of Tourism and Marketing shall appoint a subcommittee
19 to plan, develop, and implement a Crafts Crawl weekend in the State.

1 Sec. 5. PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

2 (a) The Department of Taxes shall measure the sales revenue benefit to the
3 State from Vermont-made crafts.

4 (b) The Department of Tourism and Marketing shall maintain an annual
5 business update of venues, such as new business openings, closings, hours of
6 operation, and addresses.

7 (c) The Department of Tourism and Marketing shall track and report
8 annual activity of the mobile app and website activity.

9 Sec. 6. APPROPRIATIONS; CONTRACT POSITION

10 (a) From its annual appropriation, the amount of \$30,000.00 shall be
11 allocated from the Department of Tourism and Marketing for the promotion of
12 the Crafts Crawl.

13 (b) From its annual appropriation, the amount of \$100,000.00 is
14 appropriated from the Department of Tourism for:

15 (1) design and publication of the Crafts Crawl program;

16 (2) web development of which the purpose is to develop a mobile app
17 and website highlighting arts and craft businesses in Vermont; and

18 (3) organizational services to promote the development of the Crafts
19 Crawl.

1 (c) From its annual appropriation, the amount of \$30,000.00 shall be
2 allocated from the Department of Tourism and Marketing for the annual
3 maintenance and promotion of the Crafts Crawl, mobile app, and website.

4 Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

5 This act shall take effect on passage.