

Senate Calendar

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2012

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**ACTION CALENDAR
UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Third Reading

S. 151.

An act relating to veterans' grave markers.

**AMENDMENT TO S. 151 TO BE OFFERED BY SENATOR ASHE
BEFORE THIRD READING**

Senator Ashe moves to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. chapter 86 is added to read:

CHAPTER 86. PURCHASE OF GRAVE MARKERS

§ 3221. GRAVE MARKERS AND ORNAMENTS

(a) A person shall not knowingly purchase, accept, or give anything of value in exchange for a metal grave marker, or any ornament or flag holder bearing a description or an emblem from any branch of the United States armed services or a police or fire department or which bears the designation "veteran."

(b) A person that violates this section shall be subject to a criminal fine of not more than \$5,000.00 per violation.

S. 202.

An act relating to regulation of flood hazard areas.

S. 214.

An act relating to customer rights regarding smart meters.

**AMENDMENT TO S. 214 TO BE OFFERED BY SENATOR
MACDONALD, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,
BEFORE THIRD READING**

Senator MacDonald, on behalf of the Committee on Finance, moves that the bill be amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 30 V.S.A. § 2811, in subsection (c), by striking out the word "Upon" and inserting in lieu thereof Beginning April 15, 2013, upon

Second: In Sec. 1, 30 V.S.A. § 2811, in subsection (d), after the word "Reports." by adding a new first sentence to read as follows: On or before

March 1, 2013, the commissioner of public service shall publish a report itemizing the opt-out wireless smart meter removal fees and the opt-out wireless smart meter reading fees authorized for each electric company under subsection (c) of this section.

AMENDMENT TO S. 214 TO BE OFFERED BY SENATORS BARUTH AND CAMPBELL BEFORE THIRD READING

Senators Baruth and Campbell move that the bill be amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 30 V.S.A. § 2811, subsection (b), by striking out subdivision (2) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

(2) allows a customer to choose not to have a wireless smart meter installed, at no additional monthly or other charge; and

Second: In Sec. 1, 30 V.S.A. § 2811, by striking out subsection (c) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

(c) Meter-reading fees. For customers who choose not to have a wireless smart meter installed, or who have a wireless smart meter removed, an electric company may charge a meter-reading fee. However, such fee shall be based on the actual per customer cost of reading an analog meter as of January 1, 2012 and shall be approved by the board.

Second Reading

Favorable with Recommendation of Amendment

S. 179.

An act relating to amending perpetual conservation easements.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Benning for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 10 V.S.A. § 302 is amended to read:

§ 302. POLICY, FINDINGS, AND PURPOSE

(a) The dual goals of creating affordable housing for Vermonters, and conserving and protecting Vermont's agricultural land, forestland, historic properties, important natural areas, and recreational lands are of primary importance to the economic vitality and quality of life of the state.

(b) In the best interests of all of its citizens and in order to improve the quality of life for Vermonters and to maintain for the benefit of future generations the essential characteristics of the Vermont countryside, and to support farm, forest, and related enterprises, Vermont should encourage and

assist in creating affordable housing and in preserving the state's agricultural land, forestland, historic properties, important natural areas and recreational lands, and in keeping conserved agricultural land in production and affordable for future generations of farmers.

(c) It is the purpose of this chapter to create the Vermont housing and conservation trust fund to be administered by the Vermont housing and conservation board to further the policies established by subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. § 6301 is amended to read:

§ 6301. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this chapter to encourage and assist the maintenance of the present uses of Vermont's agricultural, forest, and other undeveloped land and to prevent the accelerated residential and commercial development thereof; to preserve and to enhance Vermont's scenic natural resources; to strengthen the base of the recreation industry and to increase employment, income, business, and investment; ~~and~~ to enable the citizens of Vermont to plan its orderly growth in the face of increasing development pressures in the interests of the public health, safety, and welfare; and to encourage the use of conservation and preservation tools to support farm, forest, and related enterprises, thereby strengthening Vermont's economy to improve the quality of life for Vermonters, and to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.

Sec. 3. 10 V.S.A. § 6307 is amended to read:

§ 6307. ENFORCEMENT

(a) Injunction. In any case where rights and interests in real property are held by a municipality, state agency, or qualified organization under the authority of this chapter, the legislative body of the municipality, the state agency, or the qualified organization may institute injunction proceedings to enforce the rights of the municipality, state agency, or qualified organization, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, and may take all other proceedings as are available to an owner of real property under the laws of this state to protect and conserve its right or interest.

(b) Liquidated damages. Any contract or deed establishing or relating to the sale or transfer of rights or interests in real property under the authority of this chapter may provide for specified liquidated damages, actual damages, costs, and reasonable attorney fees in the event of a violation of the rights of the municipality, state agency, or qualified organization thereunder.

(c) Conservation rights. The holder of conservation rights and interests may seek injunctive relief and damages against any person who damages the

holder's rights and interests, irrespective of whether the owner of the land is a party to the proceeding.

Sec. 4. 10 V.S.A. § 6308 is amended to read:

§ 6308. ~~TERMINATION OF RIGHTS~~ RIGHTS IN PERPETUITY UNLESS LIMITED

(a) If the legislative body of a municipality in the case of municipal rights or interests, or a state agency, in the case of state-owned rights or interests, finds that the retention of the rights or interests is no longer needed to carry out the purposes of this chapter, the rights or interests may be released and conveyed to the co-owner, to another public agency, to another party holding other rights or interests in the land, or to a third party. Where the conveyance is to a party other than another public agency or qualified organization, the municipality or state agency shall receive adequate compensation from that party for the conveyance of the rights or interests.

~~(b) Wherever possible, in order to promote the interests of the state, municipalities, qualified organizations, or private landowners involved, agreements for the conveyance of rights or interests in real property less than fee simple, entered into under the authority of this chapter, shall contain a provision limiting the agreement to a specified number of years except where both parties agree, such agreements may provide for the conveyance of rights and interests in perpetuity.~~

The conveyance of rights or interests in real property less than fee simple made under the authority of this chapter shall be perpetual, except if the conveyance is limited by its terms to a specific period.

Sec. 5. 10 V.S.A. § 823 is amended to read:

§ 823. INTERESTS IN REAL PROPERTY

Conservation and preservation rights and interests shall be deemed to be interests in real property and shall run with the land. A document creating such a right or interest shall be deemed to be a conveyance of real property and shall be recorded under 27 V.S.A. chapter 5 of Title 27. Such a right or interest shall be subject to the requirement of filing a notice of claim within the 40- year period as provided in 27 V.S.A. § 603. Such a right or interest shall be enforceable in law or in equity. Any subsequent transfer, mortgage, lease, or other conveyance of the real property or an interest in the real property shall reference the grant of conservation rights and interests in the real property, provided, however, that the failure to include a reference to the grant shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the conservation rights and interests.

Sec. 6. 27 V.S.A. § 604(a) is amended to read:

(a) This subchapter shall not bar or extinguish any of the following interests, by reason of failure to file the notice provided for in section 605 of this title:

* * *

(7) Any easement or interest in the nature of an easement, or any rights appurtenant thereto granted, excepted or reserved by a recorded instrument creating such easement or interest, ~~including any rights for future use, except rights and interests created pursuant to chapter 34 of Title 10.~~

(8) Any conservation rights or interests created pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 155.

Sec. 7. 10 V.S.A. § 6303(a) is amended to read:

(a) The rights and interests in real property which may be acquired, used, encumbered, and conveyed by a municipality, state agency, or qualified organization shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

* * *

(7) ~~Option~~ Preemptive rights and options to purchase. The acquisition of preemptive rights such as a right of first refusal or an option to purchase land or rights and interests therein.

Sec. 8. 32 V.S.A. § 9606 is amended to read:

§ 9606. PROPERTY TRANSFER RETURN

* * *

(e) The property transfer return required under this section shall also contain a certificate in such form as the secretary of the agency of natural resources shall prescribe and shall be signed under oath on affirmation by each of the parties or their legal representatives. The certificate shall indicate that each party has investigated and disclosed all of his or her knowledge relating to the flood regulations, if any, affecting the property.

(f) The property transfer return required under this section shall also contain a certificate in such form as the commissioner of taxes shall prescribe and shall be signed under oath on affirmation by each of the parties or their legal representatives. The certificate shall indicate that the transfer, mortgage, deed, lease, or other conveyance references all grants of conservation rights or interests in the real property, as required by 10 V.S.A. § 823.

(g) The property transfer tax return shall not be required of properties qualified for the exemption stated in subdivision 9603(17) of this title. A public utility shall notify the listers of a municipality of the grantors, grantees,

consideration, date of execution, and location of the easement when it files for recording a deed transferring a utility line easement that does not require a transfer tax return.

~~(g)~~(h) The commissioner of taxes is authorized to disclose to any person any information appearing on a property transfer tax return, including statistical information derived therefrom, and such information derived from research into information appearing on property transfer tax returns as is necessary to determine if the property being transferred is subject to 10 V.S.A. chapter 151.

Sec. 9. WORKING GROUP ON CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

(a) Creation of working group. There is created a working group on perpetual conservation easements to study the issues relating to the creation of a formal and transparent public process for the amendment of perpetual conservation easements, the criteria for approving such amendments, and the entity most appropriate to review and approve such amendments.

(b) Membership. The conservation easements working group (the working group) shall be composed of the following members:

(1) The secretary of agriculture, food and markets or designee.

(2) A representative of the Vermont housing and conservation board, designated by the board.

(3) The commissioner of forests, parks and recreation or designee.

(4) One member of the legal staff in the Vermont office of the attorney general, designated by the attorney general.

(5) A representative of Vermont Land Trust, designated by its board.

(6) A representative of Upper Valley Land Trust, designated by its board.

(7) A representative of the Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, designated by its board.

(8) A representative of the Vermont Green Mountain Club, designated by its board.

(9) A representative of the Vermont chapter of The Nature Conservancy, designated by its director.

(10) A representative of a regional land trust in Vermont, appointed by the governor.

(11) An attorney licensed in Vermont and practicing in or knowledgeable about both federal tax law and real estate law, including land conservation, appointed by the Vermont Bar Association.

(12) A representative from a farming organization who is knowledgeable about agricultural conservation, appointed by the governor.

(13) A representative of the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, designated by its board.

(c) Structure; decision-making. The working group shall elect a chair from its membership. The provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 172 (joint authority to three or more) shall apply to the meetings and decision-making of the working group.

(d) Issues. The working group shall:

(1) Investigate the options for conservation easement amendment approval laid out in S.179 and H.553 of 2012 and during the course of consideration of those bills in the relevant standing committees of the general assembly, including the following options:

(A) creating an easement amendment panel within the natural resources board to provide administrative oversight and approval for the amendment of conservation easements;

(B) requiring the housing and conservation board, in conjunction with the agency of agriculture, food and markets, to provide administrative oversight and approval for the amendment of conservation easement amendments;

(C) requiring all qualified holders to individually run a transparent public process for the approval of conservation easement amendments and to issue a written decision. Under this option, the working group should consider whether the decision should be revocable or appealable, and if so, by whom;

(D) requiring all qualified holders to get court approval for amendments that may have a significant effect on the conservation values protected by the easement.

(2) Investigate any other options for conservation easement amendment approval that the working group believes are relevant.

(3) Consider any other issues it identifies as relevant to the amendment of perpetual conservation easements.

(4) develop a proposal setting out a transparent process or processes for the amendment of perpetual conservation easements held by land trusts, state agencies, and other entities qualified to hold perpetual conservation easements in Vermont.

(5) Develop proposed statutory provisions setting out criteria to be used by an administrative body, a court, or an easement holder in approving proposed amendments to perpetual conservation easements, which will ensure that conservation values protected by easement are protected in perpetuity, and that conservation easement holders in Vermont are in compliance with federal law.

(e) Report. On or before January 15, 2013, the working group shall submit to the general assembly its findings, recommendations, and proposed statutory revisions regarding the issues identified in subsection (d) of this section.

(f) Assistance. For the purpose of its study of the issues identified in subsection (d) of this section and the preparation of its recommendations pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, the working group shall have the administrative and technical assistance of the housing and conservation board.

(g) Meetings. The member from the housing and conservation board shall convene the first meeting of the working group no later than July 15, 2012.

(h) Appointments. Within 30 days of the effective date of this section, each entity required to submit a list of names to the governor pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall make such submission. Within 60 days of this section's effective date, the appointing or designating authority shall appoint or designate each member of the working group under subsection (b) of this section and shall report the member so appointed or designated to the housing and conservation board.

Sec. 10. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 9 of this act and this section shall take effect on passage.

(b) All remaining sections of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2012.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

S. 183.

An act relating to the testing of potable water supplies.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Brock for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The general assembly finds and declares that:

(1) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Vermont department of health estimate that 40 percent of Vermont residents obtain drinking water from groundwater sources.

(2) Property owners currently are not required to test groundwater sources that are a potable water supply serving one single-family residence.

(3) In adults and especially in children, consumption of contaminated groundwater can cause serious health effects, such as digestive problems, kidney problems, blue baby syndrome, and brain damage.

(4) The state lacks a comprehensive database or map identifying where groundwater contamination is prevalent in the state.

(5) To help mitigate the potential health effects of consumption of contaminated groundwater, the state should conduct education and outreach regarding the need for property owners to test the water quality of groundwater used as a potable water supply.

(6) The state should utilize tests of groundwater sources to identify groundwater contamination in the state so that the department of health can recommend treatment options to property owners in certain parts of the state.

Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. 1396 is amended to read:

§ 1396. RECORDS AND REPORTS

(a) Each licensee shall keep accurate records and file a report with the department and well owner on each water well constructed or serviced, including but not limited to the name of the owner, location, depth, character of rocks or earth formations and fluids encountered, and other reasonable and appropriate information the department may, by rule, require.

(b) The reports required to be filed under subsection (a) of this section shall be on forms provided by the department as follows:

(1) Each licensee classified as a water well driller shall submit a well completion report within 90 days after completing the construction of a water well.

(2) Each licensee classified as a monitoring well driller shall submit a monitoring well completion or closure report or approved equivalent within 90 days after completing the construction or closure of a monitoring well. Reporting on the construction of a monitoring well shall be limited to information obtained at the time of construction and need not include the work products of others. The filing of a monitoring well completion or closure report shall be delayed for one or more six-month periods from the date of construction upon the filing of a request form provided by the department which is signed by both the licensee and well owner.

(3), (4) [Repealed.]

(c) No report shall be required to be filed with the department if the well is hand driven or is dug by use of a hand auger or other manual means.

(d) On or after January 1, 2013, a licensee drilling or developing a new water well for use as a potable water supply, as that term is defined in subdivision 1972(6) of this title, shall provide the owner of the property to be served by the groundwater source informational materials developed by the department of health regarding:

(1) the potential health effects of the consumption of contaminated groundwater; and

(2) recommended tests for specific contaminants.

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 501b is amended to read:

§ 501b. CERTIFICATION OF LABORATORIES

(a) The commissioner may certify a laboratory to perform the testing and monitoring required under 10 V.S.A. chapter 56 and the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, and of water supplies from a potable water supply, as that term is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 1972(6), if such laboratory meets the standards currently in effect of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference and is accredited by an approved National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program accrediting authority or its equivalent.

(b)(1) The commissioner may by order suspend or revoke a certificate granted under this section, after notice and opportunity to be heard, if the commissioner finds that the certificate holder has:

(A) submitted materially false or materially inaccurate information; or

(B) violated any material requirement, restriction or condition of the certificate; or

(C) violated any statute, rule or order relating to this title.

(2) The order shall set forth what steps, if any, may be taken by the certificate holder to relieve the holder of the suspension or enable the certificate holder to reapply for certification if a previous certificate has been revoked.

(c) A person may appeal the suspension or revocation of the certificate to the board under section 128 of this title.

* * *

(f) A laboratory accredited to conduct testing of water supplies from a potable water supply, as that term is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 1972(6), shall submit the results of groundwater analyses to the department of health and the agency of natural resources in a format required by the department of health.

Sec. 4. 27 V.S.A. § 616 is added to read:

§ 616. GROUNDWATER SOURCE TESTING; DISCLOSURE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

(a) Disclosure of potable water supply. Prior to the time of a purchase and sale agreement for residential housing property executed on or after January 1, 2013, the seller shall provide the buyer with a disclosure form provided by the department of health indicating whether the property has a potable water supply, as that term is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 1972(6), that is used as the primary drinking water source for the residential housing on the property.

(b) Disclosure of health effects. The disclosure form required by subsection (a) of this section shall include informational materials regarding the potential health effects of the consumption of contaminated groundwater.

(c) Disclosure of opportunity to test. The disclosure form required by subsection (a) of this section shall include a statement regarding the buyer's opportunity under the purchase and sale agreement to test the potable water supply. The disclosure form shall also indicate that the buyer may obtain test kits from the department of the health.

(d) Marketability of title. Noncompliance with the requirements of this section shall not affect the marketability of title of a property.

Sec. 5. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ON SAFE DRINKING WATER

The department of health, after consultation with the agency of natural resources, shall revise and update its education and outreach materials regarding the potential health effects of contaminants in groundwater sources of drinking water in order to improve citizen access to such materials and to increase awareness of the need to conduct testing of groundwater sources. In revising and updating its education and outreach materials, the department shall update the online safe water resource guide by incorporating the most current information on the health effects of contaminants, treatment of contaminants, and causes of contamination and by directly linking users to the department of health contaminant fact sheets.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on January 1, 2013.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

S. 209.

An act relating to naturopathic physicians.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Miller for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 8 V.S.A. § 4088d(a) is amended to read:

(a) A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for medically necessary health care services covered by the plan when provided by a naturopathic physician licensed in this state for treatment within the scope of practice described in ~~chapter 81 of Title 26 V.S.A. chapter 81~~ and shall recognize naturopathic physicians who practice primary care to be primary care physicians. Health care services provided by naturopathic physicians may be subject to reasonable deductibles, co-payment and co-insurance amounts, and fee or benefit limits; consistent with those applicable to other primary care physicians under the plan, as well as practice parameters, cost-effectiveness and clinical efficacy standards, and utilization review consistent with any applicable regulations published by the department of banking, insurance, securities, and health care administration. Any amounts, limits, standards, and review shall not function to direct treatment in a manner unfairly discriminative against naturopathic care, and collectively shall be no more restrictive than those applicable under the same policy to care or services provided by other primary care physicians, but may allow for the management of the benefit consistent with variations in practice patterns and treatment modalities among different types of health care providers. A health insurance plan may require that the naturopathic physician's services be provided by a licensed naturopathic physician under contract with the insurer or shall be covered in a manner consistent with out-of-network provider reimbursement practices for primary care physicians; however, this shall not relieve a health insurance plan from compliance with the applicable Rule ~~40 H-2009-3~~ network adequacy requirements adopted by the commissioner. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as impeding or preventing either the provision or the coverage of health care services by licensed naturopathic physicians, within the lawful scope of naturopathic practice, in hospital facilities on a staff or employee basis.

Sec. 2. 8 V.S.A. § 4080f is amended to read:

§ 4080f. CATAMOUNT HEALTH

(a) As used in this section:

* * *

(8) “Primary care” means health services provided by health care professionals, including naturopathic physicians licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 81, who are specifically trained for and skilled in first-contact and continuing care for individuals with signs, symptoms, or health concerns, not limited by problem origin, organ system, or diagnosis, and shall include prenatal care and the treatment of mental illness.

* * *

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 704 is amended to read:

§ 704. MEDICAL HOME

(a) Consistent with federal law to ensure federal financial participation, a health care professional providing a patient’s medical home shall:

* * *

(b) A naturopathic physician licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 81 may serve as a patient’s medical home.

Sec. 4. 18 V.S.A. § 706(c) is amended to read:

(c)(1) The Blueprint payment reform methodologies shall include per-person per-month payments to medical home practices by each health insurer and Medicaid for their attributed patients and for contributions to the shared costs of operating the community health teams. Per-person per-month payments to practices shall be based on the official National Committee for Quality Assurance’s Physician Practice Connections - Patient Centered Medical Home (NCQA PPC-PCMH) score to the extent practicable and shall be in addition to their normal fee-for-service or other payments.

(2) Consistent with the recommendation of the Blueprint expansion design and evaluation committee, the director of the Blueprint may implement changes to the payment amounts or to the payment reform methodologies described in subdivision (1) of this subsection, including by providing for enhanced payment to health care professional practices which operate as a medical home, including primary care naturopathic physicians’ practices; payment toward the shared costs for community health teams; or other payment methodologies required by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for participation by Medicaid or Medicare.

* * *

Sec. 5. 26 V.S.A. § 4131 is added to read:

§ 4131. SUPERVISION

A naturopathic physician licensed pursuant to this chapter shall be authorized to work independently and shall not require supervision by any

other health care professional; provided, however, that this section shall not be construed to limit the regulatory authority of the director or office of professional regulation.

Sec. 6. 33 V.S.A. § 1823 is amended to read:

§ 1823. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this subchapter:

* * *

(10) “Primary care” means health services provided by health care professionals, including naturopathic physicians licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 81, who are specifically trained for and skilled in first-contact and continuing care for individuals with signs, symptoms, or health concerns, not limited by problem origin, organ system, or diagnosis, and shall include family planning, prenatal care, and mental health and substance abuse treatment.

* * *

Sec. 7. HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Vermont’s health information technology coordinator shall actively seek to secure electronic health record funding opportunities and incentives for naturopathic physician practices comparable to those available to other health care practitioners.

Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. 1 and 2 (insurance provisions) of this act shall take effect on October 1, 2012, and shall apply to all health benefit plans on and after October 1, 2012 on such date as a health insurer offers, issues, or renews the health benefit plan, but in no event later than October 1, 2013.

(b) The remaining sections of this act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

Reported favorably by Senator McCormack for the Committee on Finance.

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

S. 222.

An act relating to cost-sharing for employer-sponsored insurance assistance plans.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Fox for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 1974(c)(3) is amended to read:

(3) The premium assistance program under this subsection shall provide a subsidy of premiums or cost-sharing amounts based on the household income of the eligible individual, with greater amounts of financial assistance provided to eligible individuals with lower household income and lesser amounts of assistance provided to eligible individuals with higher household income. Until an approved employer-sponsored plan is required to meet the standard in subdivision (4)(B)(ii) of this subsection, the subsidy shall include premium assistance and assistance to cover cost-sharing amounts for chronic care health services covered by the Vermont health access plan that are related to evidence-based guidelines for ongoing prevention and clinical management of the chronic condition specified in the ~~blueprint~~ Blueprint for health Health in 18 V.S.A. § 702, and until an employer-sponsored plan meets the standard in subdivision (4)(A) of this subsection, the subsidy shall include supplemental prescription drug coverage equivalent to the benefits offered by the Vermont health access plan. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, when an individual is enrolled in Catamount Health solely under the high deductible standard outlined in 8 V.S.A. § 4080f(a)(9), the individual shall not be eligible for premium assistance for the 12-month period following the date of enrollment in Catamount Health.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2012.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

Reported favorably by Senator Kitchel for the Committee on Appropriations.

(Committee vote: 4-0-3)

S. 238.

An act relating to establishing the Vermont farm guest worker program.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Baruth for the Committee on Agriculture.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 23 V.S.A. § 603 is amended to read:

§ 603. APPLICATION FOR AND ISSUANCE OF LICENSE

* * *

(d) In addition to any other requirement of law or rule, a citizen of a foreign country shall produce his or her passport and visa, alien registration receipt card (green card), or other proof of legal presence for inspection and copying as a part of the application process for an operator license, junior operator license, or learner permit. Notwithstanding any other law or rule to the contrary, an operator license, junior operator license, or learner permit issued to a citizen of a foreign country shall expire coincidentally with his or her authorized duration of stay.

(e) Notwithstanding subsection (d) of this section:

(1) a citizen of Mexico, Guatemala, or such other country as the secretary determines meets or exceeds the security standards and protocols adopted by Mexico and Guatemala for issuing identification documents, may submit as a part of the application process for an operator license, junior operator license, or learner permit:

(A) a valid passport and consular identification card issued by the government of the country of which the applicant is a citizen; and

(B) proof of continuous residence in Vermont for the six month period immediately preceding the date of application, which shall include:

(i) two pieces of mail with the applicant's current name and address;

(ii) two of the following that show the applicant's current name and address:

(I) utility bill;

(II) property tax bill with physical location;

(III) lease;

(IV) Vermont EBT card or AIM identification card;

(V) a homeowners or renters insurance policy or proof of claim;

(VI) if the applicant resides with another Vermont resident and gets no mail at his or her street address, a signed statement from the Vermont resident with whom he or she resides and two residency documents permitted by this subdivision demonstrating the legal residence of the Vermont resident;
or

(iii) such other documentation as the secretary shall allow by rule;

(2) an applicant who submits documentation that meets the requirements of this subsection shall not be required to produce his or her passport and visa.

alien registration receipt card (green card), or other proof of legal presence pursuant to subsection (d) of this section; and

(3) an operator license, junior operator license, or learner permit issued pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to the standards for the expiration and renewal of licenses in section 601 of this title.

Sec. 2. REPEAL; EFFECT OF REPEAL

(a) 23 V.S.A. § 603(e) shall be repealed on the date on which the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security requires the State of Vermont to be in full compliance with the provisions of the Real ID Act of 2005.

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a driver's license issued pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 603(e) shall become invalid upon repeal of this Sec. 2.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect January 15, 2013.

The Committee further recommends that after passage of the bill the title be amended to read as follows:

An act relating to expanding access to driving privileges in Vermont.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Mazza for the Committee on Transportation.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. STUDY COMMITTEE ON MIGRANT WORKER ACCESS TO DRIVER'S LICENSES AND NON-DRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARDS

(a) Findings. The general assembly finds that migrant workers in Vermont face significant challenges based on their current inability to apply for Vermont driver's licenses and non-driver identification cards, including the inability to travel and access services, medical care, and purchase basic necessities, to officially identify themselves or be identified, and to fulfill typical responsibilities of their employment that require them to legally drive.

(b) Creation of committee; composition. There is created a study committee on migrant worker access to driver's licenses and non-driver identification cards, composed of the following seven members:

(1) One member of the senate, who shall serve as chair, appointed by the senate committee on committees.

(2) One member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker.

(3) The commissioner of motor vehicles or designee.

(4) The secretary of agriculture, food and markets or designee.

(5) The commissioner of public safety or designee.

(6) One member appointed by Migrant Justice.

(7) One member appointed by the Vermont human rights commission.

(c) Powers and duties.

(1) The committee shall review current procedures of the department of motor vehicles to recommend legislation that will enable access to Vermont driver's licenses and non-driver identification cards for Vermont residents without Social Security numbers. The committee shall specifically consider the following:

(A) The statutory language proposed by the senate committee on agriculture amending 23 V.S.A. § 603 and creating a contingent repeal based on the implementation of the federal REAL ID Act.

(B) The current licensing and identification framework and procedures utilized in other states.

(C) The comparative costs and benefits, including potential conflicts with federal law, of adopting one or more licensing and identification frameworks in Vermont.

(2) On or before January 15, 2013, the committee shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the house and senate committees on transportation and on agriculture.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage, and shall be repealed on January 15, 2013.

After passage, the title of the bill is to be amended to read:

An act relating to expanding access to driving privileges in Vermont.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Starr for the Committee on Appropriations.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Transportation with further amendment as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, by adding a subsection (d) to read:

(d) Number of meetings; term of committee; reimbursement. The committee may meet no more than four times, and shall cease to exist on January 15, 2013.

Second: In Sec. 2, by striking out the following: “, and shall be repealed on January 15, 2013”

(Committee vote: 4-0-3)

Resolutions for Action

J.R.S. 52.

Joint resolution relating to the issuance of a commemorative United States postage stamp in honor of former United States Senator George D. Aiken.

(For text of resolution, see Senate Journal of March 21, 2012, page 401.)

NEW BUSINESS

Third Reading

S. 115.

An act relating to malpractice claims against public defender contract attorneys.

S. 138.

An act relating to the record keeping of search warrants.

AMENDMENT TO S. 138 TO BE OFFERED BY SENATOR LYONS, BENNING AND McCORMACK BEFORE THIRD READING

Senators Lyons, Benning and McCormack move that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 5 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 5 to read as follows:

Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 4216 is amended to read:

§ 4216. AUTHORIZED POSSESSION BY INDIVIDUALS

(a) A person to whom or for whose use any regulated drug has been prescribed, sold or dispensed, and the owner of any animal for which any such drug has been prescribed, sold or dispensed, may lawfully possess the same on the condition that such drug was prescribed, sold or dispensed by a physician, dentist, pharmacist, or veterinarian licensed under this chapter or under the laws of another state or country wherein such person has his or her practice; and further that all amounts of. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this subsection, the drug are may be retained for personal use in the lawful any container in which it was delivered to him by the person selling or

~~dispensing the same, provided however, that for the purposes of this section an amount of regulated drugs of not more than two days' individual prescribed dosage may be possessed by a patient for his personal use.~~

(b) A person to whom or for whose use a schedule IV drug has been prescribed, sold, or dispensed may retain for personal use in any container an amount of the drug of not more than 14 days' individual prescribed dosage.

Second Reading

Favorable with Recommendation of Amendment

S. 89.

An act relating to Medicaid for Working Persons with Disabilities.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Ayer for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. ANALYSIS OF COSTS AND SAVINGS

(a) The agency of human services, in consultation with the legislative joint fiscal office, shall analyze the costs or savings associated with the following options:

(1) Entering into an agreement with the Social Security Administration in which the state pays the Medicare Part B premium for individuals enrolled in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program.

(2) Increasing or eliminating the income limits or asset limits or both for eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program.

(3) Disregarding spousal income or spousal assets or both when determining eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program.

(4) Disregarding the income of a spouse enrolled in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program when determining the other spouse's eligibility to receive Medicaid benefits.

(5) Permitting an individual receiving Medicaid pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 1901(b) immediately preceding a hospitalization or period of temporary unemployment to maintain his or her Medicaid eligibility during that period, as long as the period of hospitalization or unemployment does not exceed 90 days.

(6) Allowing an individual's enrollment in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program to establish his or her eligibility for services

under Vermont's developmental services waiver, provided that the individual must meet clinical eligibility and funding priority criteria in order to receive services pursuant to the waiver.

(7) Using benefits counselors at public and nonprofit organizations to increase public awareness of the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program and other work incentives for individuals with disabilities.

(b) No later than January 15, 2013, the secretary of human services shall report to the house committees on human services and on appropriations and the senate committees on health and welfare and on appropriations the results of the analysis conducted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, as well as recommendations about whether and how to pursue any or all of the options described in subdivisions (a)(1) through (7) of this section.

Sec. 2. STATE PLAN AMENDMENT; SPOUSAL INCOME DISREGARD;
RULEMAKING

(a) If supported by the analysis performed pursuant to Sec. 1 of this act, the secretary of human services shall apply to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an amendment to the state Medicaid plan pursuant to 42 CFR § 430.12 to specify that the income of an individual receiving Medicaid pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 1902(b) shall be disregarded in determining the eligibility of such person's spouse to receive medical assistance pursuant to Title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act.

(b) The secretary shall apply for a state plan amendment pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in a timely manner in order to ensure that the income disregard will be in place as soon as practicable when the new Medicaid eligibility and enrollment system is operational.

(c) Upon approval of the state plan amendment pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the secretary of human services shall adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 necessary to implement the income disregard.

Sec. 3. STATE PLAN AMENDMENT; DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
WAIVER

(a) If supported by the analysis performed pursuant to Sec. 1 of this act, the secretary of human services shall apply to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an amendment to the state Medicaid plan pursuant to 42 CFR § 430.12 to specify that an individual's enrollment in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program establishes his or her financial eligibility for services under the state's developmental services waiver; provided that the individual shall still be required to meet clinical eligibility and funding priority criteria in order to receive services pursuant to the waiver.

(b) The secretary shall apply for a state plan amendment pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in a timely manner in order to ensure that the financial eligibility criteria will be in place as soon as practicable when the new Medicaid eligibility and enrollment system is operational.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Sears for the Committee on Appropriations.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. ANALYSIS OF COSTS AND SAVINGS

(a) The agency of human services, in consultation with the legislative joint fiscal office, shall analyze the costs or savings associated with the following options:

(1) Entering into an agreement with the Social Security Administration in which the state pays the Medicare Part B premium for individuals enrolled in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program.

(2) Increasing or eliminating the income limits or asset limits or both for eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program.

(3) Disregarding spousal income or spousal assets or both when determining eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program.

(4) Disregarding the income of a spouse enrolled in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program when determining the other spouse's eligibility to receive Medicaid benefits.

(5) Permitting an individual receiving Medicaid pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 1902(b) immediately preceding a hospitalization or period of temporary unemployment to maintain his or her Medicaid eligibility during that period, as long as the period of hospitalization or unemployment does not exceed 90 days.

(6) Allowing an individual's enrollment in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program to establish his or her eligibility for developmental disability services under Vermont's Global Commitment to Health waiver.

(7) Using benefits counselors at public and nonprofit organizations to increase public awareness of the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program and other work incentives for individuals with disabilities.

(b) No later than January 15, 2013, the secretary of human services shall report to the house committees on human services and on appropriations and the senate committees on health and welfare and on appropriations the results of the analysis conducted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, as well as recommendations about whether and how to pursue any or all of the options described in subdivisions (a)(1) through (7) of this section.

Sec. 2. STATE PLAN AMENDMENT; SPOUSAL INCOME DISREGARD;
RULEMAKING

(a) If the general assembly is not in session upon completion of the analysis required pursuant to subdivision (a)(4) of Sec. 1 of this act and if the agency's cost-benefit analysis supports implementation of the spousal income disregard, the secretary of human services shall request approval from the joint fiscal committee to apply to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an amendment to the state Medicaid plan pursuant to 42 CFR § 430.12 to specify that the income of an individual receiving Medicaid pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 1902(b) shall be disregarded in determining the eligibility of such person's spouse to receive medical assistance pursuant to Title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act.

(b) Upon approval by the joint fiscal committee, the secretary shall apply for a state plan amendment pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in a timely manner in order to ensure that the income disregard will be in place as soon as practicable when the new Medicaid eligibility and enrollment system is operational.

(c) Upon approval of the state plan amendment pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the secretary of human services shall adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 necessary to implement the income disregard.

Sec. 3. STATE PLAN AMENDMENT; DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
WAIVER

(a) If the general assembly is not in session upon completion of the analysis required pursuant to subdivision (a)(6) of Sec. 1 of this act and if the agency's cost-benefit analysis supports implementation of the presumptive eligibility, the secretary of human services shall request approval from the joint fiscal committee to apply to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an amendment to the state Medicaid plan pursuant to 42 CFR § 430.12 to specify that an individual's enrollment in the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program establishes his or her financial eligibility for

developmental disability services under the state's Medicaid Section 1115 Global Commitment to Health waiver.

(b) Upon approval by the joint fiscal committee, the secretary shall apply for a state plan amendment pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in a timely manner in order to ensure that the financial eligibility criteria will be in place as soon as practicable when the new Medicaid eligibility and enrollment system is operational.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 5-0-2)

NOTICE CALENDAR

Second Reading

Favorable with Recommendation of Amendment

S. 99.

An act relating to agricultural economic development.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Ashe for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

The general assembly finds:

(1) The damage resulting throughout Vermont from both the 2011 spring flooding and from Tropical Storm Irene had a devastating impact in many areas on mobile homes and mobile home parks.

(2) Given that mobile homes represent one of few available affordable housing options in the state, these storms caused significant hardship for many lower and middle income Vermonters whose homes were damaged or destroyed.

(3) Although the local, state, and federal housing and disaster relief officials have worked cooperatively throughout the recovery, questions on authority to issue condemnation letters to homeowners who could then apply for FEMA assistance may have cost some homeowners the opportunity for significant federal reimbursement for their destroyed homes.

(4) Given the economic costs endured by mobile home owners, it is appropriate at this time to exempt the purchase of mobile homes from sales and use tax, local option sales tax, and property transfer tax when such homes are purchased to replace homes destroyed by recent flooding and natural disasters.

(5) During the course of exploring the issues surrounding the impacts of these disasters, it is apparent that mobile home owners and mobile home park owners face unique economic pressures, and more assistance should be focused to facilitate the availability and ownership of modern, safe, mobile homes and the availability of suitable lots, and to facilitate the sale of parks to residents or nonprofit entities in order to preserve affordability and availability of housing.

(6) It is the purpose of this act to focus state, municipal, and private resources on assisting mobile home owners recovering from the storms, and on ensuring that in the long term, Vermonters have an adequate supply of safe, affordable housing.

Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. chapter 153 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 153. MOBILE HOME PARKS

§ 6201. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) “Mobile home” means:

(A) a structure or type of manufactured home, including the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained in the structure, that is:

(i) built on a permanent chassis and is;

(ii) designed to be used as a dwelling with or without a permanent foundation, includes plumbing, heating, cooling, and electrical systems, and is: when connected to the required utilities;

~~(A)~~(iii) transportable in one or more sections; and

~~(B)~~(iv)(I) at least eight feet wide or, 40 feet long, or when erected has at least 320 square feet; or

(II) if the structure was constructed prior to June 15, 1976, at least eight feet wide or 32 feet long; or

~~(C)~~(B) any structure that meets all the requirements of this subdivision (1) except for the size requirements, and for which the manufacturer voluntarily files a certification required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and complies with the construction and safety standards established under Title 42 of the U.S. Code.

* * *

(4) ~~“Commission” means the advisory commission on manufactured homes, established under section 6202 of this title. [Repealed.]~~

* * *

(8) ~~“Department” means the department of housing and community affairs~~ department of economic, housing and community development.

(9) “Good faith” means honesty in fact and the observance of reasonable standards and fair dealing, such that each party shall respond promptly and fairly to offers from the other party.

(10) ~~[Expired.]~~ “Lot rent” means a charge assessed on a mobile home park resident for the occupancy of a mobile home lot, but does not include charges permitted under section 6238 of this title.

(11) ~~“Commissioner” means the commissioner of housing and community affairs~~ economic, housing and community development.

* * *

§ 6231. RULES

(a) [Deleted.]

(b) The department may adopt rules to carry out the provisions ~~of sections 6236-6243~~ of this ~~title~~ chapter.

(c) A mobile home park that has been closed pursuant to section 6237a of this title and reduced to no more than two occupied leased lots, shall be required, if the number of occupied leased lots subsequently is increased to more than two, to obtain all state land use and environmental permits required for a mobile home park that has been established or expanded after May 31, 1970.

§ 6236. LEASE TERMS; MOBILE HOME PARKS

* * *

(e) All mobile home lot leases shall contain the following:

* * *

(3) Notice that the park owner shall not discriminate for reasons of race, religious creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, ~~handicap~~ disability, ~~or~~ national origin, or because a person is a recipient of public assistance.

(4) Notice that the park owner shall not discriminate based on age or the presence of one or more minor children in the household, except as permitted

under 9 V.S.A. § 4503(b) and (c). If age restrictions exist in all or part of a park, the specific restrictions and geographic sections in which restrictions apply shall be documented in the lease.

* * *

§ 6237. EVICTIONS

(a) A leaseholder may be evicted only for nonpayment of rent or for a substantial violation of the lease terms of the mobile home park, or if there is a change in use of the park land or parts thereof or a termination of the mobile home park, and only in accordance with the following procedure:

* * *

(4) A substantial violation of the lease terms, other than an uncured nonpayment of rent, will be insufficient to support a judgment of eviction unless the proceeding is commenced within 60 days of the last alleged violation. A substantial violation of the lease terms based upon criminal activity will be insufficient to support a judgment of eviction unless the proceeding is commenced no later than 60 days after arraignment.

* * *

§ 6237a. MOBILE HOME PARK CLOSURES

* * *

(b) Prior to issuing a closure notice pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, a park owner shall first ~~notify all mobile home owners of the park~~ ~~owner's~~ issue a notice of intent to sell in accordance with section 6242 of this title that discloses the potential closure of the park. However, if the park owner sends a notice of closure to the residents and leaseholders without first providing the mobile home owners with a notice of ~~sale~~ intent to sell under section 6242 that discloses the potential closure of the park, then the park owner must retain ownership of the land for five years after the date the closure notice was provided. If required, the park owner shall record the notice of the five-year restriction in the land records of the municipality in which the park is located. The park owner may apply to the commissioner for relief from the notice and holding requirements of this subsection if the commissioner determines that strict compliance is likely to cause undue hardship to the park owner or the leaseholders, or both. This relief shall not be unreasonably withheld.

* * *

(d) A park owner who gives notice of intent to sell pursuant to section 6242 of this title shall not give notice of closure until after:

- (1) At least 45 days after giving notice of intent to sell.

(2) If applicable, the commissioner receives notice from the mobile home owners and the park owner that negotiations have ended following the ~~90-day~~ 120-day negotiation period provided in subdivision 6242(c)(1) of this title.

* * *

§ 6242. MOBILE HOME OWNERS' RIGHT TO NOTIFICATION PRIOR TO PARK SALE

(a) Content of notice. A park owner shall give to each mobile home owner and to the commissioner of the department of economic, housing and community affairs development notice by certified mail of his or her intention to sell the mobile home park. Nothing herein shall be construed to restrict the price at which the park owner offers the park for sale. The notice shall state all the following:

(1) That the park owner intends to sell the park.

(2) The price, terms, and conditions under which the park owner offers the park for sale.

(3) A list of the affected mobile home owners and the number of leaseholds held by each.

(4) The status of compliance with applicable statutes, regulations and permits, to the park owner's best knowledge, and the reasons for any noncompliance.

(5) That for 45 days following the notice the park owner shall not make a final unconditional acceptance of an offer to purchase the park and that if within the 45 days the park owner receives notice pursuant to subsection (c) of this section that a majority of the mobile home owners intend to consider purchase of the park, the park owner shall not make a final unconditional acceptance of an offer to purchase the park for an additional ~~90~~ 120 days, starting from the 46th day following notice, except one from a group representing a majority of the mobile home owners or from a nonprofit corporation approved by a majority of the mobile home owners.

(b) Resident intent to negotiate; timetable. The mobile home owners shall have 45 days following notice under subsection (a) of this section in which to determine whether they intend to consider purchase of the park through a group representing a majority of the mobile home owners or a nonprofit corporation approved by a majority of the mobile home owners. A majority of the mobile home owners shall be determined by one vote per leasehold and no mobile home owner shall have more than three votes or 30 percent of the aggregate park vote, whichever is less. During this 45-day period, the park owner shall not accept a final unconditional offer to purchase the park.

(c) Response to notice; required action. If the park owner receives no notice from the mobile home owners during the 45-day period or if the mobile home owners notify the park owner that they do not intend to consider purchase of the park, the park owner has no further restrictions regarding sale of the park pursuant to this section. If during the 45-day period, the park owner receives notice in writing that a majority of the mobile home owners intend to consider purchase of the park then the park owner shall do all the following:

(1) Not accept a final unconditional offer to purchase from a party other than leaseholders for ~~90~~ 120 days following the 45-day period, a total of ~~135~~ 165 days following the notice from the leaseholders.

(2) Negotiate in good faith with the group representing a majority of the mobile home owners or a nonprofit corporation approved by a majority of the mobile home owners concerning purchase of the park.

(3) Consider any offer to purchase from a group representing a majority of the mobile home owners or from a nonprofit corporation approved by a majority of the mobile home owners.

* * *

(f) Relief from additional notice requirement. ~~No additional notice pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be required if the sale is in compliance with either of the following~~ A notice of intent to sell issued pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be valid for a period of one year from the expiration of the 45-day period following the date of the notice, and a new notice shall not be required under subsection (a) if:

(1) The park owner completes a sale of the park within one year from the expiration of the 45-day period following the date of the notice and the sale price is either of the following:

(A) ~~No less than~~ more than five percent below the price for which the park was offered for sale pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

(B) ~~Substantially higher than~~ More than five percent above the final written offer from a group representing a majority of the mobile home owners or a nonprofit corporation approved by a majority of the mobile home owners.

(2) The park owner has not completed a sale of the park but has entered into a binding purchase and sale agreement with a group representing a majority of the mobile home owners or a nonprofit corporation approved by a majority of the mobile home owners ~~with a closing date later than one year from~~ within one year from the expiration of the 45-day period following the date of the notice.

* * *

§ 6245. ILLEGAL EVICTIONS

(a) No park owner may ~~wilfully~~ willfully cause, directly or indirectly, the interruption or termination of any utility service to a mobile home except for temporary interruptions for necessary repairs.

(b) No park owner may directly or indirectly deny a leaseholder access to and possession of ~~a mobile home~~ the leaseholder's leased premises, except through proper judicial process.

(c) No park owner may directly or indirectly deny a leaseholder access to and possession of the leaseholder's ~~rented or leased~~ mobile home and personal property, except through proper judicial process.

* * *

§ 6251. MOBILE HOME LOT RENT INCREASE; NOTICE; MEETING

(a) A mobile home park owner shall provide written notification on a form provided by the department to the commissioner and all the affected mobile home park leaseholders of any lot rent increase no later than 60 days before the effective date of the proposed increase. The notice shall include all the following:

(1) The amount of the proposed lot rent increase, including any amount of the increase that is attributable to a surcharge for any capital improvements of the mobile home park pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the estimated cost, ~~which includes interest~~, of the capital improvements, and the proposed duration of the surcharge prorated in 12-month increments sufficient to recover the estimated cost of the capital improvements.

(2) The effective date of the increase.

(3) A copy of the mobile home park leaseholder's rights pursuant to this section and sections 6252 and 6253 of this title.

(4) ~~{Deleted.}~~ The percentage of increase from the current base lot rent.

* * *

§ 6254. REGISTRATION OF MOBILE HOME PARKS; REPORT

(a) No later than September 1 each year, each park owner shall register with the department on a form provided by the department. The form shall include the following information:

* * *

(8) The lot rent to be charged for each lot as of the preceding scheduled for October 1 of that year, and the effective date of that lot rent charge.

* * *

* * * Affordable Housing Tax Credit * * *

Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 5930u(g) is amended to read:

(g) In any fiscal year, the allocating agency may award up to \$400,000.00 in total first-year credit allocations to all applicants for rental housing projects; and may award up to ~~\$100,000.00~~ \$300,000.00 per year for owner-occupied unit applicants. In any fiscal year, total first-year allocations plus succeeding-year deemed allocations shall not exceed ~~\$2,500,000.00~~ \$3,500,000.00.

* * * DEHCD Study and Planning * * *

Sec. 4. DEHCD STUDIES; LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR THE VIABILITY AND DISASTER RESILIENCY OF MOBILE HOME OWNERSHIP AND PARKS

(a) The department of economic, housing and community development shall, in collaboration with other organizations and interested stakeholders, develop a plan for the future viability and disaster resiliency of mobile home ownership and parks.

(b) The plan shall:

(1) With input from the agency of natural resources, identify parks vulnerable to natural hazards such as flooding and develop a strategy for improving their safety and resiliency through education, emergency planning, mitigation measures, reconfiguration, and relocation.

(2) Identify barriers to mobile home ownership including the availability of financing and mortgage insurance and recommend methods for the state to assist, including coordinating with USDA Rural Development to extend its pilot program under the section 502 direct loan and guarantee loan programs and working with public, private, and nonprofit entities to develop solutions.

(3) Address the potential loss of mobile home parks and affordability due to sale, closure, or natural disaster by recommending actions to encourage resident or nonprofit purchase and ownership and the creation of new mobile home parks or lots through technical assistance and planning guidance to municipalities and developers.

(4) Assess other housing designs as alternatives to mobile homes that are affordable when all related costs, such as siting, water and sewer, and energy use are taken into consideration.

Sec. 5. 20 V.S.A. § 2731(k) is added to read:

(k) Building codes. Pursuant to his or her authority under this section, the commissioner of public safety shall:

(1) Develop and maintain on the department website a graphic chart or grid depicting categories of construction, including new construction, major rehabilitation, change of use, and additions, and the respective building codes that apply to each category.

(2) Whenever practicable and appropriate, offer the opportunity to construction and design professionals to participate in division of fire safety staff training.

(3) Update building codes on three-year cycles, consistent with codes developed by code-writing authorities, to keep pace with technology, products, and design.

(4) Create a publicly accessible database of decisions that are decided on appeal to the commissioner.

(5) Apply the International Building Code (IBC) to new construction.

Sec. 6. 9 V.S.A. § 2461b(h) is added to read:

(h)(1) The owner of a propane storage tank shall anchor the tank or affix the tank to a structure or other fixture to ensure the safety of persons and property in the event of a flood or other natural disaster.

(2) In the event a propane storage tank becomes unsecured due to flood or other natural disaster, the owner of the tank shall be responsible for the recovery and, if applicable, appropriate disposal of the tank and its contents.

Sec. 7. 9 V.S.A. § 4503 is amended to read:

§ 4503. UNFAIR HOUSING PRACTICES

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person:

* * *

(12) To discriminate in land use decisions or in the permitting of housing because of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, religious creed, color, national origin, disability, the presence of one or more minor children, income, or except as otherwise provided by law.

* * *

Sec. 8. 24 V.S.A. § 4412 is amended to read:

§ 4412. REQUIRED PROVISIONS AND PROHIBITED EFFECTS

Notwithstanding any existing bylaw, the following land development provisions shall apply in every municipality:

(1) Equal treatment of housing and required provisions for affordable housing.

(A) No bylaw nor its application by an appropriate municipal panel under this chapter shall have the effect of excluding housing that meets the needs of the population as determined in the housing element of its municipal plan as required under subdivision 4382(a)(10) of this title or the effect of discriminating in the permitting of housing as specified in 9 V.S.A. § 4503.

* * *

* * * Allocation of Rental Housing Subsidies by State Entities (VSHA) * * *

Sec. 9. ADMINISTRATION OF RENTAL HOUSING SUBSIDIES;
FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

The general assembly finds:

(1) Administration of rental housing subsidies in Vermont, including federal housing funds, is a public and essential governmental function to be focused primarily on assuring safe and decent housing for low and moderate income persons without undue regard for the generation of profit or surplus.

(2) In recent years, private entities, including nominally private entities controlled by public jurisdictions from other states, have sought contracts to administer allocations of federal rental subsidies throughout the United States.

(3) To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, it is the purpose of Sec. 10 of this act to limit the administrative control of federal rental subsidies to state of Vermont public bodies.

Sec. 10. 24 V.S.A. § 4005(e) is added to read:

(e) Notwithstanding any provision of law, no person, domestic or foreign, shall be authorized to administer allocations of money under 42 U.S.C.A. § 1437a or 1437f or other federal statute authorizing rental subsidies for the benefit of persons of low or moderate income, except:

(1) a subcontractor of the state authority; or

(2) a state public body authorized by law to administer such allocations.

* * * Expedited Removal of Mobile Home by Municipality * * *

Sec. 11. 9 V.S.A. § 2608 is added to read:

§ 2608. MUNICIPAL ACTION FOR SALE OF ABANDONED MOBILE HOME

(a) In the alternative to the process for foreclosure of a tax lien on a mobile home pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 133, a municipality shall have the authority to commence an action to sell at public auction an abandoned mobile home located within the municipality pursuant to this section.

(b) A municipality shall file a verified complaint in the civil division of the superior court for the county in which the municipality is located, which shall be entitled “In re: Abandoned Mobile Home of [name of owner],” and shall include the following information:

(1) The physical location and address of the mobile home.

(2) The name and last known mailing address of the owner of the mobile home.

(3) A description of the mobile home, including make, model, and serial number, if available.

(4) The names and addresses of creditors, holders of housing subsidy covenants, or others having an interest in the mobile home based on liens or notices of record in the municipality offices or the office of the secretary of state.

(5) The facts supporting the claim that the mobile home has been abandoned.

(6) The name of a person disinterested in the mobile home or of a municipality employee who will be responsible for the sale of the mobile home at a public auction.

(7) A statement of the amount of taxes, fees, and other charges due or which will become due to the municipality.

(8) If the mobile home is located on leased land, the name and address of the landowner.

(c) A municipality may request an order approving transfer of a mobile home which is unfit for human habitation to the municipality without a public sale by filing a verified complaint containing the information required in subsection (a) of this section and the facts supporting the claim that the mobile home is unfit for human habitation.

(d) When a verified complaint is filed under this section, the clerk of the civil division of the superior court shall set a hearing to be held at least 15 days but no later than 30 days after the filing of the complaint.

(e) Within five days after filing the verified complaint, the municipality shall post a copy of the verified complaint and order for hearing on the mobile home and send a copy of the verified complaint and order for hearing by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the mobile home owner’s last known mailing address, to the landowner if the mobile home is located on leased land, and to all lien-holders of record.

(f) The municipality shall publish the verified complaint and order for hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality where the

mobile home is located. The notice shall be published no later than five calendar days before the date of hearing.

(g) If prior to or at the hearing any lien-holder certifies to the court that the lien-holder has paid to the municipality all taxes, charges, and fees due the municipality and will commence or has commenced proceedings to enforce the lien and will continue to pay municipal taxes, charges, and fees during the proceedings under this section, the court shall, upon confirmation of the representations of the lien-holder, stay the action under this section pending completion of the lien-holder's action.

(h) At the hearing, the municipality shall prove ownership of the mobile home; abandonment of the mobile home; the amount of taxes, fees, and other charges due the municipality; and the amount of attorney fees claimed. The municipality shall also prove compliance with the notice requirements of subsections (e) and (f) of this section. Whether a mobile home is abandoned shall be a question of fact determined by the court.

(i) If the court finds that the municipality has complied with subsection (h) of this section, the court shall enter an order approving the sale of the mobile home at a public auction to be held within 15 days of the date of the order. The municipality shall send the order by first-class mail to the mobile home owner, to the landowner if the mobile home is located on leased land, and to all lien-holders of record. The order shall require all the following:

(1) That the sale shall be conducted by the person identified in the verified complaint or some other person approved by the court.

(2) That notice of the sale shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality where the mobile home is located and sent by first-class mail to the mobile home owner, to the landowner if the mobile home is located on leased land, and to all lien-holders of record. The notice of sale shall be published two times, at least five days apart with the second publication being no later than three calendar days before the date of sale.

(3) That the terms of sale provide for conveyance of the mobile home by real estate deed or by uniform mobile home bill of sale, as appropriate under this chapter, executed on behalf of the mobile home owner pursuant to the order of the court by the person authorized by the court, in "as is" condition, and free and clear of all liens and other encumbrances of record.

(4) A minimum bid established by the court sufficient to cover the total costs listed in subdivisions (7)(A)-(D) of this subsection. The mobile home shall be sold to the highest bidder over the minimum bid set by the court; provided, however, that if no bid meets or exceeds the minimum bid set by the court, the court shall order transfer of the mobile home to the municipality upon payment of costs due to the person who conducted the sale.

(5) The successful bidder, if other than the municipality:

(A) shall make full payment at the auction if the bid does not exceed \$2,000.00; or

(B) if the bid exceeds \$2,000.00, shall provide a nonrefundable deposit at the time of the auction of at least \$2,000.00 or 25 percent of the bid, whichever is greater, and shall make full payment within three working days after the auction.

(6) A successful bidder, if other than the municipality, shall remove the mobile home from its current location within five working days after the auction unless the municipality permits the mobile home to remain on the site or permits removal of the mobile home at a later date. If the mobile home is located on leased land, the mobile home shall be removed within five days unless the landowner grants permission to the successful bidder, including the municipality, for the mobile home to remain on the leased land.

(7) The person who conducted the public sale shall report to the court the results of the sale, the proposed distribution of the proceeds of the sale, and the bank in which any excess proceeds are deposited and shall send a copy of the report to the mobile home owner, the municipality, the landowner if the mobile home is located on leased land, and all lien-holders of record by certified mail, return receipt requested, within three working days after the sale. Anyone claiming impropriety in the conduct of the sale may file an objection with the court within seven days after the sale. The filing of an objection shall not invalidate the sale or delay transfer of ownership of the abandoned mobile home. If an objection is filed and if the court finds impropriety in the conduct of the sale, the court may order distribution of the proceeds of the sale as is fair, taking into account the impropriety. If no objection is filed with the court, on the eighth day after the sale, the proceeds shall be distributed as follows:

(A) To the person conducting the sale for costs of the sale.

(B) To the municipality for court costs, publication and mailing costs, and attorney fees incurred in connection with the action in an amount approved by the court.

(C) To the municipality for taxes, penalties, and interest owed in an amount approved by the court.

(D) To the landowner for unpaid lot rent if the mobile home is located on leased land.

(E) The balance to a bank account in the name of the mobile home municipality as trustee, for the benefit of the mobile home owner and lien-holders of record, to be distributed pursuant to further order of the court.

(j) Notwithstanding provisions of this section and 10 V.S.A. § 6249 (sale of abandoned mobile home by park owner) to the contrary, if an action is commenced by a municipality pursuant to this section and by a mobile home park owner pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 6249 for the sale of the same abandoned mobile home within 30 days of one another, the court shall consolidate the cases and shall distribute the proceeds of a sale as follows:

(1) To the person conducting the sale for costs of the sale.

(2) To the municipality and the park owner equitably in the discretion of the court:

(A) for court costs, publication and mailing costs, and attorney fees incurred in connection with the action in an amount approved by the court;

(B) for taxes, penalties, and interest owed the municipality in an amount approved by the court; and

(C) for rent and other charges owed to the park owner in an amount approved by the court.

(3) The balance to a bank account in the name of the mobile home municipality as trustee for the benefit of the mobile home owner and lien-holders of record, to be distributed pursuant to further order of the court.

(k) If a municipality requests an order approving transfer of a mobile home to the municipality without a public sale, the court shall approve that order if it finds that the municipality has complied with subsection (h) of this section and has proved that the mobile home is unfit for human habitation. In determining whether a mobile home is unfit for human habitation, the court shall consider whether the mobile home:

(1) contains functioning appliances and plumbing fixtures;

(2) contains safe and functioning electrical fixtures and wiring;

(3) contains a safe and functioning heating system;

(4) contains a weather-tight exterior closure;

(5) is structurally sound;

(6) is reasonably free of trash, debris, filth, and pests.

Sec. 12. 9 V.S.A. § 4462 is amended to read:

§ 4462. ABANDONMENT; UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

* * *

(d) Any personal property remaining in the dwelling unit or leased premises after the tenant has vacated may be disposed of by the landlord

without notice or liability to the tenant or owner of the personal property, provided that one of the following has occurred:

(1) The tenant provided actual notice to the landlord that the tenant has vacated the dwelling unit or, leased premises, or mobile home lot.

(2) The tenant has vacated the dwelling unit or, leased premises, or mobile home lot at the end of the rental agreement.

(3) Fifteen days have expired following service of a writ of possession pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 153, 11 V.S.A. chapter 13, or 12 V.S.A. chapter 169.

Sec. 13. SALES AND USE TAX HOLIDAYS FOR MOBILE HOMES

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 233 and 24 V.S.A. § 138, no sales and use tax, local option sales tax, or property transfer tax shall be imposed or collected on sales to individuals for mobile homes purchased after April 1, 2011 to replace a mobile home that was damaged or destroyed as a result of flooding and storm damage that occurred after that date.

(b) Any resident of Vermont who purchased a mobile home after August 28, 2011 and prior to the effective date of this act, and the mobile home was purchased to replace a mobile home that was damaged or destroyed as a result of Tropical Storm Irene, shall be entitled to a reimbursement in the amount of any sales and use tax, local option sales tax, or property transfer tax paid.

(c) The department of taxes may establish standards and procedures necessary to implement this section. The department of taxes shall reimburse taxpayers that qualify under subsection (b) of this section.

Sec. 14. APPROPRIATIONS

(a) The amount of \$100,000.00 is appropriated from the general fund to the department of economic, housing and community development as follows:

(1) \$50,000.00 for a grant to the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity to increase its ability to provide start-up and ongoing technical assistance to mobile home park residents interested in cooperative ownership of their parks.

(2) \$50,000.00 to increase department staff for long-range planning for the preservation and replacement of mobile home parks noticed for sale or closure or damaged by flooding.

(b) The amount of \$50,000.00 is appropriated from the general fund to the Vermont housing and conservation board's project feasibility fund to conduct financial feasibility and infrastructure needs analyses of mobile home parks noticed for sale or closure or damaged by flooding.

(c) The amount of \$500,000.00 is appropriated from the settlement funds due the state under the joint state–federal settlement of claims with the five largest mortgage servicers arising from mortgage foreclosure practices to the department of economic, housing and community development to develop and implement with the Champlain Housing Trust, the Central Vermont Community Land Trust, Gilman Housing Trust, NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, and Windham & Windsor Housing Trust, and other stakeholders a program to help finance the purchase, repair, refinance, and replacement of up to 100 individual mobile homes. The department shall coordinate with the Champlain Housing Trust and other stakeholders to secure at minimum an additional \$1,800,000.00 in grant capital to help fund the program from a variety of public and private sources, including equity from the sale of Vermont affordable housing tax credits, the Vermont community development block grant program, the Vermont Community Foundation, and the Vermont disaster relief fund.

(d)(1) The amount of \$2,500,000.00 is appropriated to the department of economic, housing and community development to fund the following activities related to mobile home parks that will be maintained as affordable housing for low income Vermonters on a perpetual basis:

(A) the purchase of mobile home parks, including purchase by resident-owned cooperatives;

(B) infrastructure improvements; and

(C) disaster recovery, including relocation or replacement of mobile home parks damaged by flooding.

(2) The amount appropriated pursuant to this subsection shall come from the following sources:

(A) \$500,000.00 from the settlement funds due the state under the joint state–federal settlement of claims with the five largest mortgage servicers arising from mortgage foreclosure practices; and

(B) \$2,000,000.00 in state capital appropriations.

Sec. 15. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE LETTER OF CONDEMNATION

(a) Because repairs to homes damaged in natural disasters must be done in accordance with local codes and ordinances, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recognizes that there may be reasons for a local authority to deem a home condemned.

(b) According to FEMA policy, the letter must come from the jurisdictional authority and the condemnation notice of demolition must be disaster-related. FEMA then reviews each notice on a case-by-case basis for approval of replacement assistance up to the maximum award.

(c) Accordingly, for purposes of complying with FEMA policies and procedures, any state or local person or entity empowered to condemn property by statute, rule, regulation, ordinance, or similar legal authority shall qualify as a jurisdictional authority with all the necessary rights and powers to declare property to be condemned, provide notice of condemnation and demolition to FEMA or any other entity, and take such other steps as are necessary to ensure Vermonters are eligible for receiving the maximum amount of state and federal recovery assistance otherwise available.

Sec. 16. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 15 (authority to issue letter of condemnation) of this act shall apply retroactively to January 1, 2011.

and that when so amended the bill ought to pass, and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to supporting mobile home ownership, strengthening mobile home parks, and preserving affordable housing”

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Cummings for the Committee on Finance.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out Secs. 3, 6 and 13 in their entirety and by renumbering the remaining sections to be numerically correct

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

S. 142.

An act relating to pet merchants.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator White for the Committee on Government Operations.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 20 V.S.A. § 3681 is amended to read:

§ 3681. PERMIT

(a) ~~The owner or keeper of two or more domestic pets or wolf hybrids four months of age or older kept for sale or for breeding purposes, except for his or her own use, A person who sells, exchanges, or donates or offers to sell, exchange, or donate for monetary consideration three or more litters of domestic pets or wolf-hybrids in a calendar year~~ shall apply to the municipal clerk of the town or city in which the domestic pets or wolf-hybrids are kept for a kennel permit to be issued on forms prescribed by the commissioner and

pay the clerk a fee of ~~\$10.00~~ \$25.00 for the same. The provisions of subchapters 1, 2, and 4 of this chapter not inconsistent with this subchapter, shall apply to the permit which shall be in addition to other permits required. A kennel permit shall expire on March 31 next after issuance, and shall be displayed prominently on the premises on which the domestic pets or wolf-hybrids are kept. If the permit fee is not paid by April 1, the owner or keeper may thereafter procure a permit for that license year by paying a fee of ~~fifty~~ 50 percent in excess of that otherwise required. Municipal clerks shall maintain a record of the type of animals being kept by the permit holder.

(b) A person possessing a kennel permit issued under this section must include the permit number in any form of advertising, including Internet advertising, a brochure, or a sign that announces the availability of an animal for sale or exchange. The person's name and kennel permit number must be provided to the person purchasing or otherwise receiving an animal.

(c) The legislative body of a municipality may assess a penalty against any person who violates subsection (b) of this section.

Sec. 2. 20 V.S.A. § 3682 is amended to read:

§ 3682. INSPECTION OF PREMISES

These premises may be inspected at any ~~reasonable~~ time between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. in the presence of or with the consent of the owner by a law enforcement officer, a representative of the agency of agriculture, food and markets, or an officer or agent of ~~an~~ a Vermont incorporated humane society and a veterinarian licensed to practice in Vermont, designated by such officer, agent or agency.

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

S. 223.

An act relating to extending health insurance coverage for autism spectrum disorders.

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Pollina for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 8 V.S.A. § 4088i is amended to read:

§ 4088i. COVERAGE FOR DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF AUTISM SPECTRUM EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS

(a)(1) A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for the evidence-based diagnosis and treatment of ~~autism spectrum disorders~~ early

childhood developmental disorders, including applied behavior analysis supervised by a nationally board-certified behavior analyst, for children, beginning at 18 months of age and continuing until the child reaches age six or enters the first grade, whichever occurs first 21.

(2) Coverage provided pursuant to this section by Medicaid, the Vermont health access plan, or any other public health care assistance program shall comply with all federal requirements imposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

(3) Any benefits required by this section that exceed the essential health benefits specified under Section 1302(b) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148, as amended, shall not be required in a health insurance plan offered in the individual, small group, and large group markets on and after January 1, 2014.

(b) A health insurance plan shall not limit in any way the number of visits an individual eligible for coverage under subsection (a) of this section may have with an autism services provider. The amount, frequency, and duration of treatment described in this section shall be based on medical necessity and may be subject to a prior authorization requirement under the health insurance plan. A private health insurance plan may limit coverage for applied behavior analysis treatment to a maximum benefit of \$50,000.00 a year, but shall not apply payments for coverage unrelated to early childhood disorders to any maximum benefit established under this subsection.

(c) A health insurance plan shall not impose greater coinsurance, co-payment, deductible, or other cost-sharing requirements for coverage of the diagnosis or treatment of ~~autism spectrum~~ early childhood developmental disorders than apply to the diagnosis and treatment of any other physical or mental health condition under the plan.

(d)(1) A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for applied behavior analysis when the services are provided or supervised by a licensed provider who is working within the scope of his or her license or who is a nationally board-certified behavior analyst.

(2) A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for services under this section delivered in the natural environment when the services are furnished by a provider working within the scope of his or her license or under the direct supervision of a licensed provider or, for applied behavior analysis, by or under the supervision of a nationally board-certified behavior analyst.

(e) Except for inpatient services, if an individual is receiving treatment for an early developmental delay, a health insurance plan may review the treatment plan for children under the age of eight no more frequently than once every six months. After the child reaches the age of eight, the health insurance

plan may require treatment plan reviews based on the needs of the individual beneficiary, consistent with reviews for other diagnostic areas and with rules established by the department of banking, insurance, securities, and health care administration.

(f) As used in this section:

(1) “Applied behavior analysis” means the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modifications using behavioral stimuli and consequences to produce socially significant improvement in human behavior. The term includes the use of direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relationship between environment and behavior.

~~(2) “Autism services provider” means any licensed or certified person providing treatment of autism spectrum disorders.~~

~~(3) “Autism spectrum disorders” means one or more pervasive developmental disorders as defined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, including autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified, and Asperger’s disorder.~~

(3) “Behavioral health treatment” means evidence-based counseling and treatment programs, including applied behavior analysis, that are:

(A) necessary to develop skills and abilities for the maximum reduction of physical or mental disability and for restoration of an individual to his or her best functional level, or to ensure that an individual under the age of 21 achieves proper growth and development;

(B) provided or supervised by a nationally board-certified behavior analyst or by a licensed provider, so long as the services performed are within the provider’s scope of practice and certifications.

~~(4) “Diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder early childhood developmental disorders” means medically necessary assessments, evaluations, ~~including neuropsychological evaluations; genetic testing; or other testing or tests~~ to determine whether an individual has ~~one or more~~ an early childhood developmental delay, including an autism spectrum disorders disorder.~~

~~(5) “Habilitative care” or “rehabilitative care” means professional counseling, guidance, services, and treatment programs, including applied behavior analysis and other behavioral health treatments, in which the covered individual makes clear, measurable progress, as determined by an autism services provider, toward attaining goals the provider has identified~~ “Early childhood developmental disorder” means a childhood mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments that results in

functional limitations in major life activities, accompanied by a diagnosis defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) or the International Classification of Disease (ICD). The term includes autism spectrum disorders, but does not include a learning disability.

(6) “Evidence-based” means the same as in 18 V.S.A. § 4621.

(7) “Health insurance plan” means Medicaid, the Vermont health access plan, and any other public health care assistance program, any individual or group health insurance policy, any hospital or medical service corporation or health maintenance organization subscriber contract, or any other health benefit plan offered, issued, or renewed for any person in this state by a health insurer, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9402. The term does not include benefit plans providing coverage for specific diseases or other limited benefit coverage.

~~(7)(8)~~ “Medically necessary” means any care, treatment, intervention, service, or item that is prescribed, provided, or ordered by a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 23 of Title 26 or by a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 55 of Title 26 if such treatment is consistent with the most recent relevant report or recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, or another professional group of similar standing describes health care services that are appropriate in terms of type, amount, frequency, level, setting, and duration to the individual’s diagnosis or condition, are informed by generally accepted medical or scientific evidence, and are consistent with generally accepted practice parameters. Such services shall be informed by the unique needs of each individual and each presenting situation, and shall include a determination that a service is needed to achieve proper growth and development or to prevent the onset or worsening of a health condition.

(9) “Natural environment” means a home or child care setting.

(10) “Pharmacy care” means medications prescribed by a licensed physician and any health-related services deemed medically necessary to determine the need for or effectiveness of a medication.

(11) “Psychiatric care” means direct or consultative services provided by a licensed physician certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Medical Specialties.

(12) “Psychological care” means direct or consultative services provided by a psychologist licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 55.

~~(8)(13)~~ “Therapeutic care” means services provided by licensed or certified speech language pathologists, therapists, occupational therapists, or physical therapists, or social workers.

~~(9)~~(14) “Treatment of disorders for early developmental disorders” means ~~the following~~ evidence-based care and related equipment prescribed, provided, or ordered for an individual diagnosed with one or more autism spectrum disorders by a licensed physician licensed pursuant to chapter 23 of Title 26 or a licensed psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 55 of Title 26 if such physician or psychologist who determines the care to be medically necessary, including:

- (A) ~~habilitative or rehabilitative care~~ behavioral health treatment;
- (B) pharmacy care;
- (C) psychiatric care;
- (D) psychological care; and
- (E) therapeutic care.

~~(e)~~(g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any obligation to provide services to an individual under an individualized family service plan, individualized education program, or individualized service plan. A health insurance plan shall not reimburse services provided under 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

Sec. 2. REPORT

It is the intent of the general assembly to accept the offer of Autism Speaks to submit a report, in consultation with the agency of human services and health insurers, to the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committee on health care on or before January 15, 2014 regarding the implementation of this act, including an assessment of whether eligible individuals are receiving evidence-based services, how such services may be improved, and the fiscal impact of these services.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This act shall take effect on July 1, 2012 and shall apply to Medicaid, the Vermont health access plan, and any other public health care assistance program on or after July 1, 2012.

(b) The provisions of this act shall apply to all other health insurance plans on or after October 1, 2012, on such date as a health insurer issues, offers, or renews the health insurance plan, but in no event later than October 1, 2013.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to health insurance coverage for early childhood developmental disorders, including autism spectrum disorders”

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

Reported favorably with recommendation of amendment by Senator Fox for the Committee on Finance.

The Committee recommends that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Health and Welfare with further amendment thereto in Sec. 1, in 8 V.S.A. § 4088i, subsection (b), by striking out the following: “A private health insurance plan may limit coverage for applied behavior analysis treatment to a maximum benefit of \$50,000.00 a year, but shall not apply payments for coverage unrelated to early childhood disorders to any maximum benefit established under this subsection”

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

Reported favorably by Senator Kitchel for the Committee on Appropriations.

(Committee vote: 4-0-3)

CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION

H.C.R. 304-318 (For text of Resolutions, see Addendum to House Calendar for March 22, 2012)

CONFIRMATIONS

The following appointments will be considered by the Senate, as a group, under suspension of the Rules, as moved by the President *pro tempore*, for confirmation together and without debate, by consent thereby given by the Senate. However, upon request of any senator, any appointment may be singled out and acted upon separately by the Senate, with consideration given to the report of the Committee to which the appointment was referred, and with full debate; and further, all appointments for the positions of Secretaries of Agencies, Commissioners of Departments, Judges, Magistrates, and members of the Public Service Board shall be fully and separately acted upon.

David Luce of Waterbury Center – Member of the Community High School of Vermont Board- By Sen. Kittell for the Committee on Education. (1/13/12)

Patrick Flood of East Calais – Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health – By Sen. Mullin for the Committee on Health and Welfare. (2/8/12)

John Snow of Charlotte – Member of the Vermont Economic Development Authority – By Sen. Fox for the Committee on Finance. (2/8/12)

Martin Maley of Colchester – Superior Court Judge – By Sen. Sears for the Committee on Judiciary. (2/9/12)

Alison Arms of South Burlington – Superior Court Judge – By Sen. Snelli8ng for the Committee on Judiciary. (2/16/12)

Robert Bishop of St. Johnsbury – Member of the State Infrastructure Bank

Board – By Sen. MacDonald for the Committee on Finance. (2/21/12)

John Valente of Rutland – Member of the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank –
By Sen. McCormack for the Committee on Finance. (2/21/12)

James Volz of Plainfield – Chair of the Public Service Board – By Sen.
Cummings for the Committee on Finance. (2/21/12)

Ed Amidon of Charlotte – Member of the Valuation Appeals Board – By
Sen. Ashe for the Committee on Finance. (2/21/12)

CROSSOVER DEADLINE

The following bill reporting deadlines are established for the 2012 session:

(1) For bills referred pursuant to Senate Rule 31, all Senate bills must be reported out of the Committees on Appropriations and Finance on or before March 23, 2012 and filed with the Secretary of the Senate.

(2) All bills to be referenced from the House not meeting the respective applicable dates shall be referred to the Senate Rules Committee.

(3) These deadlines may be waived for any bill or committee **only** by consent given by the Committee on Rules.