

Journal of the House

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

At ten o'clock in the forenoon the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Pastor Laura Cadmus of the United Church of Cabot, VT.

Pledge of Allegiance

Page Elysia Manriquez of Barre led the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Message from the Senate No. 32

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

Mr. Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has on its part passed Senate bills of the following titles:

- S. 93.** An act relating to labeling maple products.
- S. 114.** An act relating to the size of accessory dwelling units.
- S. 211.** An act relating to securing propane tanks in natural disasters.
- S. 215.** An act relating to evaluating net costs of government purchasing.
- S. 252.** An act relating to the repeal or revision of reporting requirements.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

The Senate has considered the report of the Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon House bill of the following title:

H. 630. An act relating to reforming Vermont's mental health system.

And has accepted and adopted the same on its part.

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

H.C.R. 304. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2012 Essex High School Division I and Northern Vermont Athletic Conference championship cheerleading team.

H.C.R. 305. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Essex High School Hornets 2012 Division I championship girls' ice hockey team.

H.C.R. 306. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Williamstown High School Blue Devils 2012 Division III championship boys' basketball team.

H.C.R. 307. House concurrent resolution congratulating Sophia Hadeka of Fair Haven on being named Miss Vermont's Outstanding Teen 2011.

H.C.R. 308. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Essex High School Hornets on winning the 2012 state gymnastics championship.

H.C.R. 309. House concurrent resolution in memory of Alan D. Overton.

H.C.R. 310. House concurrent resolution designating March 21 as Vermont Energy Independence Day.

H.C.R. 311. House concurrent resolution congratulating the U-32 Raiders 2012 Lake Division championship boys' ice hockey team.

H.C.R. 312. House concurrent resolution honoring Alice Hafner of Danville for her outstanding public service on behalf of the Vermont criminal justice system.

H.C.R. 313. House concurrent resolution congratulating Middlebury Union Middle School students Ronan Howlett and Meigan Clark on their success at the 2012 Vermont Spelling Bee.

H.C.R. 314. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Mt. Mansfield Union High School Cougars 2012 Division I championship boys' basketball team.

H.C.R. 315. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Mt. Mansfield Union High School Cougars 2012 Division I championship boys' Nordic skiing team.

H.C.R. 316. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Mt. Mansfield Union High School Cougars 2012 Division I girls' alpine state championship team.

H.C.R. 317. House concurrent resolution honoring the federal TRIO programs in Vermont.

H.C.R. 318. House concurrent resolution congratulating Vermont Railway on its selection as the 2012 Shortline Railroad of the Year.

Senate Bills Referred

Senate bills of the following titles were severally taken up, read the first time and referred as follows:

S. 93

Senate bill, entitled
An act relating to labeling maple products;
To the committee on Agriculture.

S. 114

Senate bill, entitled
An act relating to the size of accessory dwelling units;
To the committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs.

S. 211

Senate bill, entitled
An act relating to securing propane tanks in natural disasters;
To the committee on Fish, Wildlife & Water Resources.

S. 215

Senate bill, entitled
An act relating to evaluating net costs of government purchasing;
To the committee on Government Operations.

S. 252

Senate bill, entitled
An act relating to the repeal or revision of reporting requirements;
To the committee on Government Operations.

Joint Resolution Adopted**J.R.H. 33**

Joint resolution authorizing the state of Vermont to accept a reprint of an engraving of Thaddeus Stevens for the state house art collection

Offered by: Representative Toll of Danville

Whereas, Thaddeus Stevens was born in Danville in 1792 and attended the University of Vermont and Dartmouth College, from which he graduated in 1814, and

Whereas, a lawyer by profession, he was sworn into the Pennsylvania Bar and in 1816 started a law practice in the town of Gettysburg, which would become intimately associated with the Civil War and the abolishment of slavery, a matter of passionate concern for Thaddeus Stevens, and

Whereas, he served in the Pennsylvania legislature and later in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1849 to 1853 and returned for a second tenure of enormous historical significance from 1859 until his death in 1868, and

Whereas, as a Radical Republican, Thaddeus Stevens was one of the first members of Congress to propose, during the Civil War, that slaves be emancipated, and

Whereas, after the Civil War, he advocated strict federal supervision of the former confederacy states to assure that the newly freed slaves were assured their rights, and

Whereas, legislation he sponsored would eventually become the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution enshrining the rights of the newly freed slaves, and

Whereas, the Vermont state house has lacked a portrait of this distinguished native son, statesman, and unyielding abolitionist, and

Whereas, at the urging of Civil War historian Howard Coffin, the Danville Historical Society and the Danville Chamber of Commerce endeavored to locate and acquire a suitable portrait of Thaddeus Stevens for permanent display in our state's capitol, and

Whereas, the search led to a 2002 reprint of a middle 19th century engraving of Thaddeus Stevens, which will officially be presented to the state of Vermont for inclusion in the state house art collection on Wednesday, March 28, 2012 at a ceremony in the Cedar Creek Room, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly authorizes the state of Vermont to accept a reprint of an engraving of Thaddeus Stevens for inclusion in the state house art collection, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the office of the state curator, the Danville Historical Society, and the Danville Chamber of Commerce.

Was taken up and adopted on the part of the House.

Message from the Senate No. 33

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

Mr. Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has on its part passed Senate bills of the following titles:

S. 202. An act relating to regulation of flood hazard areas, river corridors, and stream alteration.

S. 214. An act relating to customer rights regarding smart meters.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

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

J.R.S. 53. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

Bill Read Second Time; Consideration Interrupted by Recess

H. 782

Rep. Ancel of Calais spoke for the committee on Ways and Means.

House bill entitled

An act relating to miscellaneous tax changes for 2012

Having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up and read the second time. Pending the question, Shall the bill be read the third time?

Recess

At ten o'clock and forty-five minutes in the forenoon, the Speaker declared a recess until the fall of the gavel.

At twelve o'clock and forty minutes in the afternoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Consideration Resumed; Bill Amended and Third Reading Ordered

H. 782

Consideration resumed on House bill entitled

An act relating to miscellaneous tax changes for 2012;

Pending the question, Shall the bill be read the third time? **Rep. Eckhardt of Chittenden** moved to amend the bill as follows:

By adding a Sec. 37a to read as follows:

Sec. 37a. 24 V.S.A. § 138(g) is added to read:

(g) If the legislative body of a municipality by a majority vote recommends, or by petition of ten percent of the voters of a municipality, the voters of a municipality may, at an annual or special meeting warned for that purpose, by a majority vote of those present and voting, rescind any or all of the local option taxes assessed under subsection (b) of this section.

Which was agreed to and third reading was ordered.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

H. 785

Rep. Emmons of Springfield spoke for the committee on Corrections and Institutions.

Rep. Winters of Williamstown, for the committee on Appropriations, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to capital construction and state bonding budget adjustment

Reported in favor of its passage when amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 3, amending Sec. 2 of No. 40 of the Acts of 2011, in subdivision (c)(4), BGS engineering costs, by striking the second sentence in its entirety and by striking the period in the lead-in and inserting in lieu thereof a colon

Second: In Sec. 8, amending Sec. 12 of No. 40 of the Acts of 2011, in subdivision (b)(1)(E), ANR water pollution control administrative costs, by striking the second sentence in its entirety and by striking the period in the lead-in and inserting in lieu thereof a colon

Third: In Sec. 8, amending Sec. 12 of No. 40 of the Acts of 2011, in subdivision (b)(2)(B), ANR engineering and project management, by striking the second sentence in its entirety and by striking the period in the lead-in and inserting in lieu thereof a colon

Fourth: In Sec. 9, amending No. 40 of the Acts of 2011, in subdivision (f), public safety study, in the second sentence, by striking “Shaftsbury,”

Fifth: By inserting a new Sec. 41 to read

Sec. 41. ENGINEERING COSTS

The joint fiscal office shall study during the 2012 interim how best to allocate engineering costs between the capital and general funds.

and by renumbering the remaining sections to be numerically correct

and that when so amended the bill ought to pass

The bill, having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up, read the second time, report of the committee on Appropriations agreed to.

Pending third reading of the bill, **Rep. Emmons of Springfield** moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 3, amending Sec. 2 of No. 40 of the Acts of 2011, by striking subdivision (c)(9)(B) in its entirety and replacing in lieu thereof the following:

(B) For planning, design, site acquisition, leasing, and architectural and engineering costs for schematic design development or renovation related to the relocation or replacement of services previously provided at Vermont State Hospital, including the establishment of a 14-bed unit and a six-bed unit, respectively, at a hospital in southeastern Vermont and a hospital in southwestern Vermont; a new 25-bed hospital owned and operated by the state in central Vermont and proximate to an existing hospital; a secure seven-bed residential facility owned and operated by the state; or the provision of acute inpatient services at temporary locations: 5,000,000

Second: In Sec. 3, amending Sec. 2 of No. 40 of the Acts of 2011, in subdivision (g)(1)(C), off-session meetings of the house committee on corrections and institutions and the senate committee on institutions, following the first sentence, by adding a new second sentence to read: “The committees shall notify the commissioner of buildings and general services prior to holding a meeting pursuant to this subdivision.”

Third: In Sec. 21, amending 29 V.S.A. § 165, in subdivision (c)(2), by striking the term “six-year” and inserting in lieu thereof the term “three-year”

Fourth: In Sec. 36, public approval, out-of-state issuers, by striking the first word of the first sentence and inserting in lieu thereof the following: “Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in Title 9, the”

Which was agreed to and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

H. 535

Rep. Lippert of Hinesburg, for the committee on Judiciary, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to racial disparities in the Vermont criminal justice system

Reported in favor of its passage when amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS

The general assembly finds that:

(1) In 2010, the United States Census counted a total Vermont population of 625,741, of which 95.3 percent were white, 1.0 percent African-American, 1.5 percent Hispanic/Latino, 1.3 percent Asian, 0.4 percent American Indian, 0.3 percent other and 1.7 percent reporting that they were of two or more undisclosed races.

(2) The Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) reported in its *Facts and Figures: FY2010* that by November 2010, African-Americans made up 10.3 percent of Vermont inmates—more than ten times the rate that African-Americans appear in the general population of Vermont. In the same report, DOC reported that on June 1, 2001, 5.1 percent of Vermont inmates were identified as African-American. DOC data show that the percentage of African-Americans incarcerated in Vermont has been steadily increasing since 1993, far surpassing the growth rate for any other racial group.

(3) A 2003 study by the Vermont Center for Justice Research (“the Center”), *Exploring the Dynamics of Race and Crime Using Vermont NIBRS Data* by Bill Clements, using arrest data from 1993–2000, found that African-Americans experienced a significantly higher arrest rate than whites, Asians, or Native Americans. In that study, regression analysis suggested that as a result of race, African-American males were 1.5 times and African-American females were 2.6 times more likely to be arrested than their white counterparts.

(4) A 2007 Center study, *Felony Sentencing in Vermont: 2001–2006* by Robin Adler, found that nonwhite felony defendants were more likely to be sentenced to incarceration than white defendants even after controlling for all other variables.

(5) Discretionary decision-making by a variety of criminal justice professionals may result in racial disparities in criminal justice systems. In every step of the criminal justice process, persons exercise discretion, including:

- (A) the initial investigation by law enforcement;
- (B) the decision to lodge or release on citation;
- (C) the decision by prosecutors to file a particular charge;
- (D) the prosecutor’s bail recommendation;
- (E) the judge’s bail decision;
- (F) the plea negotiation process;

(G) the defendant's decision whether to exercise the right to a trial by jury;

(H) the prosecutor's sentencing recommendation;

(I) the judge's sentencing decision as to a jail or probationary sentence;

(J) the department of corrections' programming decision, supervision practices, and its recommendation to release on parole; and

(K) the parole board's decision whether to grant parole.

(6) Vermont has become, and will continue to become, more racially diverse.

(7) Tolerance and concern for all people regardless of race, color, or national origin has long been part of the legacy of Vermont, the first state to prohibit slavery by constitutional protection and a leader in prohibiting discrimination in public accommodation, employment, banking and insurance, education, and housing.

(8) It is critically important that officials from all three branches of government have access to the data and the analysis of that data to be able to investigate and assess the extent of racial and ethnic disparities in Vermont's criminal justice system. This assessment is necessary to identify practices of criminal justice professionals that have a disparate impact on racial and ethnic minorities, so that remedies can be fashioned to address such practices promptly and effectively.

(9) The supreme court of Vermont, pursuant to its constitutional responsibilities, has adopted a Code of Conduct and Employee Discipline governing all employees of the judiciary, providing that behavior based on bias will not be condoned or tolerated.

(10) The office of the state court administrator, through its comprehensive judicial education program for judicial officers and its educational programs for court managers and court staff, regularly conducts and supports programs focused on diversity issues, implicit bias, cultural awareness, and the requirements of the relevant codes of conduct.

(11) The Uncommon Alliance of Chittenden County, which included members of the communities of color as well as representatives of the police departments of Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski, the University of Vermont, and Vermont civil rights organizations, are commended for their work, in particular, opening dialogue and initiating the voluntary collection and analysis of roadside-stop race data for the first time by law enforcement agencies in Vermont.

(12) The Vermont State Police are further commended for extending the voluntary collection and analysis of roadside-stop race data statewide.

Sec. 2. STUDY; APPROPRIATION

(a) Research regarding sentencing practices routinely concludes that two variables drive sentencing decisions—the seriousness of the offense and the defendant’s risk to reoffend. The Vermont Center for Justice Research (“the Center”) shall examine the effect of these and other variables, including the race of the defendant on sentencing decisions in Vermont for a five-year period. The Center shall use data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Interstate Identification Index, department of motor vehicles, Vermont criminal information center, department of corrections, and the Vermont courts to explain if the disparities are based on legal or nonlegal factors. The Center’s research shall focus on the following:

(1) How do the sentences of people of particular census categories, in the aggregate and by national incident-based reporting system race data fields (NIBRS), which currently include white, black, Asian, Native American or Alaskan Native, and Hispanic, compare to the sentences of white defendants with respect to sentence type, length of sentence, and level of restriction?

(2) How does the actual time spent by people of particular census categories, in the aggregate and by NIBRS race data fields under department of corrections’ supervision (and the degree of restriction) compare to the time spent by (and the degree of restriction of) white defendants?

(3) If disparate sentencing patterns or disparate service patterns exist for people of particular census categories, in the aggregate and by NIBRS race data fields, what variables included in the study design explain the disparity?

(b) On or before December 15, 2012, results of the study shall be reported to the house and senate committees on judiciary, the court administrator, and to each organization or entity represented on the governor’s criminal justice cabinet.

(c) The general assembly appropriates \$20,000.00 to the Vermont Center for Justice Research to support this data collection, analysis, and report.

Sec. 3. 20 V.S.A. § 2366 is added to read:

§ 2366. LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES; BIAS-FREE

POLICING POLICY; RACE DATA COLLECTION

(a) No later than January 1, 2013, every state, local, county, and municipal law enforcement agency that employs one or more certified law enforcement officers shall adopt a bias-free policing policy. The policy shall contain the

essential elements of such a policy as determined by the Law Enforcement Advisory Board after its review of the current Vermont State Police Policy and the most current model policy issued by the office of the attorney general.

(b) The policy shall encourage ongoing bias-free law enforcement training for state, local, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies.

(c) State, local, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies that employ one or more certified law enforcement officers are encouraged to work with the Vermont association of chiefs of police to extend the collection of roadside-stop race data uniformly throughout state law enforcement agencies, with the goal of obtaining uniform roadside-stop race data for analysis.

Sec. 4. 20 V.S.A. § 2358 is amended to read:

§ 2358. MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS

* * *

(e) The council shall include, as part of the criteria for all minimum training standards under this section, anti-bias training approved by the Vermont criminal justice training council.

Sec. 5. 24 V.S.A. § 1939 is amended as follows:

§ 1939. LAW ENFORCEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

* * *

(e) The board shall examine how individuals make complaints to law enforcement and suggest, on or before December 15, 2012, to the senate and house committees on judiciary what procedures should exist to file a complaint with law enforcement and the human rights commission.

Sec. 6. CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES; BIAS-FREE CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY

The general assembly encourages all criminal justice entities through their professional rules of conduct to ensure that all actions taken are done in a manner that is free of bias.

Rep. Keenan of St. Albans City, for the committee on Appropriations, recommended that the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the committee on Judiciary.

The bill, having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up, read the second time, report of the committees on Judiciary and Appropriationis agreed to and third reading ordered.

Report of Committee of Conference Adopted

H. 630

The Speaker placed before the House the following Committee of Conference report:

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The Committee of Conference to which were referred the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon Senate Committee bill, entitled

An act relating to reforming Vermont's mental health system

Respectfully reports that it has met and considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

(a) It is the intent of the general assembly to strengthen Vermont's existing mental health care system by offering a continuum of community and peer services, as well as a range of acute inpatient beds throughout the state. This system of care shall be designed to provide flexible and recovery-oriented treatment opportunities and to ensure that the mental health needs of Vermonters are served.

(b) It is also the intent of the general assembly that the agency of human services fully integrate all mental health services with all substance abuse, public health, and health care reform initiatives, consistent with the goals of parity.

Sec. 1a. 18 V.S.A. chapter 174 is added to read:

CHAPTER 174. MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF CARE

§ 7251. PRINCIPLES FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE REFORM

The general assembly adopts the following principles as a framework for reforming the mental health care system in Vermont:

(1) The state of Vermont shall meet the needs of individuals with mental health conditions, including the needs of individuals in the custody of the commissioner of corrections, and the state's mental health system shall reflect excellence, best practices, and the highest standards of care.

(2) Long-term planning shall look beyond the foreseeable future and present needs of the mental health community. Programs shall be designed to be responsive to changes over time in levels and types of needs, service delivery practices, and sources of funding.

(3) Vermont's mental health system shall provide a coordinated continuum of care by the departments of mental health and of corrections.

designated hospitals, designated agencies, and community and peer partners to ensure that individuals with mental health conditions receive care in the most integrated and least restrictive settings available. Individuals' treatment choices shall be honored to the extent possible.

(4) The mental health system shall be integrated into the overall health care system.

(5) Vermont's mental health system shall be geographically and financially accessible. Resources shall be distributed based on demographics and geography to increase the likelihood of treatment as close to the patient's home as possible. All ranges of services shall be available to individuals who need them, regardless of individuals' ability to pay.

(6) The state's mental health system shall ensure that the legal rights of individuals with mental health conditions are protected.

(7) Oversight and accountability shall be built into all aspects of the mental health system.

(8) Vermont's mental health system shall be adequately funded and financially sustainable to the same degree as other health services.

(9) Individuals with a mental health condition who are in the custody of the commissioner of mental health and who receive treatment in an acute inpatient hospital, intensive residential recovery facility, or a secure residential facility shall be afforded at least the same rights and protections as those individuals cared for at the former Vermont State Hospital.

§ 7252. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Adult outpatient services" means flexible services responsive to individuals' preferences, needs, and values that are necessary to stabilize, restore, or improve the level of social functioning and well-being of individuals with mental health conditions, including individual and group treatment, medication management, psychosocial rehabilitation, and case management services.

(2) "Designated agency" means a designated community mental health and developmental disability agency as described in subsection 8907(a) of this title.

(3) "Designated area" means the counties, cities, or towns identified by the department of mental health that are served by a designated agency.

(4) “Enhanced programming” means targeted, structured, and specific intensive mental health treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation services for individuals in individualized or group settings.

(5) “Intensive residential recovery facility” means a licensed program under contract with the department of mental health that provides a safe, therapeutic, recovery-oriented residential environment to care for individuals with one or more mental health conditions who need intensive clinical interventions to facilitate recovery in anticipation of returning to the community. This facility shall be for individuals not in need of acute inpatient care and for whom the facility is the least restrictive and most integrated setting.

(6) “Mobile support team” means professional and peer support providers who are able to respond to an individual where he or she is located during a crisis situation.

(7) “Noncategorical case management” means service planning and support activities provided for adults by a qualified mental health provider, regardless of program eligibility criteria or insurance limitations.

(8) “No refusal system” means a system of hospitals and intensive residential recovery facilities under contract with the department of mental health that provide high intensity services, in which the facilities shall admit any individual for care if the individual meets the eligibility criteria established by the commissioner in contract.

(9) “Participating hospital” means a hospital under contract with the department of mental health to participate in the no refusal system.

(10) “Peer” means an individual who has a personal experience of living with a mental health condition or psychiatric disability.

(11) “Peer services” means support services provided by trained peers or peer-managed organizations focused on helping individuals with mental health and other co-occurring conditions to support recovery.

(12) “Psychosocial rehabilitation” means a range of social, educational, occupational, behavioral, and cognitive interventions for increasing the role performance and enhancing the recovery of individuals with serious mental illness, including services that foster long-term recovery and self-sufficiency.

(13) “Recovery-oriented” means a system or services that emphasize the process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

(14) “Serious bodily injury” means the same as in section 1912 of this title.

(15) “Warm line” means a nonemergency telephone response line operated by trained peers for the purpose of active listening and assistance with problem-solving for persons in need of such support.

§ 7253. CLINICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

The commissioner of mental health, in consultation with health care providers as defined in section 9432 of this title, including designated hospitals, designated agencies, individuals with mental health conditions, and other stakeholders, shall design and implement a clinical resource management system that ensures the highest quality of care and facilitates long-term, sustained recovery for individuals in the custody of the commissioner.

(1) For the purpose of coordinating the movement of individuals across the continuum of care to the most appropriate services, the clinical resource management system shall:

(A) ensure that all individuals in the care and custody of the commissioner receive the highest quality and least restrictive care necessary;

(B) develop a process for receiving direct patient input on treatment opportunities and the location of services;

(C) use state-employed clinical resource management coordinators to work collaboratively with community partners, including designated agencies, hospitals, individuals with mental health conditions, and peer groups, to ensure access to services for individuals in need. Clinical resource management coordinators or their designees shall be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to assist emergency service clinicians in the field to access necessary services;

(D) use an electronic, web-based bed board to track in real time the availability of bed resources across the continuum of care;

(E) use specific level-of-care descriptions, including admission, continuing stay, and discharge criteria, and a mechanism for ongoing assessment of service needs at all levels of care;

(F) specify protocols for medical clearance, bed location, transportation, information sharing, census management, and discharge or transition planning;

(G) coordinate transportation resources so that individuals may access the least restrictive mode of transport consistent with safety needs;

(H) ensure that to the extent patients’ protected health information pertaining to any identifiable person that is otherwise confidential by state or federal law is used within the clinical resource management system, the health

information exchange privacy standards and protocols as described in subsection 9351(e) of this title shall be followed;

(I) review the options for the use of ambulance transport, with security as needed, as the least restrictive mode of transport consistent with safety needs required pursuant to section 7511 of this title; and

(J) ensure that individuals under the custody of the commissioner being served in designated hospitals, intensive residential recovery facilities, and the secure residential recovery facility shall have access to a mental health patient representative. The patient representative shall advocate for patients and shall also foster communication between patients and health care providers. The department of mental health shall contract with an independent, peer-run organization to staff the full-time equivalent of a patient representative.

(2) For the purpose of maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the clinical resource management system, the department of mental health shall:

(A) require a designated team of clinical staff to review the treatment received and clinical progress made by individuals within the commissioner's custody;

(B) coordinate care across the mental and physical health care systems as well as ensure coordination within the agency of human services, particularly the department of corrections, the department of health's alcohol and drug abuse programs, and the department of disabilities, aging, and independent living;

(C) coordinate service delivery with Vermont's Blueprint for Health and health care reform initiatives, including the health information exchange as defined in section 9352 of this title and the health benefit exchange as defined in 33 V.S.A. § 1803;

(D) use quality indicators, manageable data requirements, and quality improvement processes to monitor, evaluate, and continually improve the outcomes for individuals and the performance of the clinical resource management system;

(E) actively engage stakeholders and providers in oversight processes; and

(F) provide mechanisms for dispute resolution.

§ 7254. INTEGRATION OF THE TREATMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

(a) The director of health care reform and the commissioners of mental health, of health, and of Vermont health access and the Green Mountain Care board or designees shall ensure that the redesign of the mental health delivery system established in this act is an integral component of the health care reform efforts established in 3 V.S.A. § 2222a. Specifically, the director, commissioners, and board shall confer on planning efforts necessary to ensure that the following initiatives are coordinated and advanced:

- (1) any health information technology projects;
- (2) the integration of health insurance benefits in the Vermont health benefit exchange to the extent feasible under federal law;
- (3) the integration of coverage under Green Mountain Care;
- (4) the Blueprint for Health;
- (5) the reformation of payment systems for health services to the extent allowable under federal law or under federal waivers; and
- (6) other initiatives as necessary.

(b) The department of banking, insurance, securities, and health care administration shall ensure that private payers are educated about their obligation to reimburse providers for less restrictive and less expensive alternatives to hospitalization.

§ 7255. SYSTEM OF CARE

The commissioner of mental health shall coordinate a geographically diverse system and continuum of mental health care throughout the state that shall include at least the following:

- (1) comprehensive and coordinated community services, including prevention, to serve children, families, and adults at all stages of mental illness;
- (2) peer services, which may include:
 - (A) a warm line;
 - (B) peer-provided transportation services;
 - (C) peer-supported crisis services; and
 - (D) peer-supported hospital diversion services;
- (3) alternative treatment options for individuals seeking to avoid or reduce reliance on medications;

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- (4) recovery-oriented housing programs;
 - (5) intensive residential recovery facilities;
 - (6) appropriate and adequate psychiatric inpatient capacity for voluntary patients;
 - (7) appropriate and adequate psychiatric inpatient capacity for involuntary inpatient treatment services, including patients receiving treatment through court order from a civil or criminal court; and
 - (8) a secure residential recovery facility.

§ 7256. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), the department of mental health shall report annually on or before January 15 to the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committee on human services regarding the extent to which individuals with mental health conditions receive care in the most integrated and least restrictive setting available. The report shall address:

- (1) Utilization of services across the continuum of mental health services;
- (2) Adequacy of the capacity at each level of care across the continuum of mental health services;
- (3) Individual experience of care and satisfaction;
- (4) Individual recovery in terms of clinical, social, and legal outcomes; and
- (5) Performance of the state's mental health system of care as compared to nationally recognized standards of excellence.

§ 7257. REPORTABLE ADVERSE EVENTS

An acute inpatient hospital, an intensive residential recovery facility, a designated agency, or a secure residential facility shall report to the department of mental health instances of death or serious bodily injury to individuals with a mental health condition in the custody of the commissioner.

§ 7258. REVIEW OF ADVERSE COMMUNITY EVENTS

The department of mental health shall establish a system that ensures the comprehensive review of a death or serious bodily injury occurring outside an acute inpatient hospital when the individual causing or victimized by the death or serious bodily injury is in the custody of the commissioner or had been in the custody of the commissioner within six months of the event. The department shall review each event for the purpose of determining whether the death or serious bodily injury was the result of inappropriate or inadequate

services within the mental health system and, if so, how the failure shall be remedied.

Sec. 2. DELETED

Sec. 3. DELETED

Sec. 4. DELETED

Sec. 5. DELETED

Sec. 6. PEER SERVICES

The commissioner of mental health is authorized to contract for new peer services and to expand existing programs managed by peers that provide support to individuals living with or recovering from mental illness. Peer services shall be aimed at helping individuals with mental illness achieve recovery through improved physical and mental health, increased social and community connections and supports, and the avoidance of mental health crises and psychiatric hospitalizations. The commissioner of mental health shall:

(1) Establish a warm line or warm lines accessible statewide which shall be staffed at all times to ensure that individuals with a mental health condition have access to peer support;

(2) Establish new peer services focused on reducing the need for inpatient services;

(3) Improve the quality, infrastructure, and workforce development of peer services; and

(4) Develop peer-run transportation services.

Sec. 7. COMMUNITY SERVICES

To improve existing community services and to create new opportunities for community treatment, the commissioner of mental health is authorized to:

(1) Improve emergency responses, mobile support teams, noncategorical case management, adult outpatient services, and alternative residential opportunities at designated agencies.

(A) Each designated agency shall provide the scope and category of services most responsive to the needs of designated areas, as determined by the commissioner of mental health.

(B) Designated agencies shall work collaboratively with law enforcement officials, corrections, local hospitals, the department of disabilities, aging, and independent living, and peers to integrate services and

expand treatment opportunities for individuals living with or recovering from mental illness.

(2) Contract for at least four additional short-term crisis beds in designated agencies for the purpose of preventing or diverting individuals from hospitalization when clinically appropriate and for the purpose of increasing regional access to crisis beds.

(3) Contract for a voluntary five-bed residence for individuals seeking to avoid or reduce reliance on medication or having an initial episode of psychosis. The residence shall be peer supported and noncoercive, and treatment shall be focused on a nontraditional, interpersonal, and psychosocial approach, with minimal use of psychotropic medications to facilitate recovery in individuals seeking an alternative to traditional hospitalization.

(4) Provide housing subsidies to individuals living with or recovering from mental illness for the purpose of fostering stable and appropriate living conditions. If necessary to achieve successful housing outcomes, housing subsidies may be provided without an agreement to accept certain services as a condition of assistance. The department of mental health shall ensure that housing subsidies are monitored and managed in coordination with other relevant community services and supports.

Sec. 8. INTENSIVE RESIDENTIAL RECOVERY FACILITIES

(a) To support the development of intensive residential recovery facilities, the commissioner of mental health is authorized to contract for:

- (1) Fifteen beds located in northwestern Vermont;
- (2) Eight beds located in southeastern Vermont; and
- (3) Eight beds located in either central or southwestern Vermont or both.

(b) Notwithstanding 18 V.S.A. § 9435(b), all facilities contracted for under subsection (a) of this section shall be subject to the certificate of approval process, which shall take into consideration the recommendations of a panel of stakeholders appointed by the commissioner to review each proposal and conduct a public hearing.

Sec. 9. INPATIENT HOSPITAL BEDS

(a) To replace the services provided at the Vermont State Hospital, the department of mental health shall oversee the delivery of emergency examination and involuntary inpatient treatment services at four acute inpatient hospitals throughout the state:

(1) The department of mental health shall enter into contracts that meet the requirements of subdivision (2) of this subsection with a hospital in

southeastern Vermont and a hospital in southwestern Vermont for the establishment of a 14-bed unit and a six-bed unit, respectively, contingent upon receipt by the hospitals of certificates of need pursuant to 18 V.S.A. chapter 221, subchapter 5. Certificate of need applications for the 14-bed unit and the six-bed unit, whether prepared jointly by a hospital and the department or solely by a hospital, shall be reviewed by the commissioner of mental health prior to a certificate of need approval to ensure the architectural and program proposals meet industry standards for quality of care and emotional and physical safety standards and otherwise protect patients' rights.

(2) Initial contract terms for the 14-bed unit and the six-bed unit shall require participation in the no refusal system for four years and until the facility has recouped its initial investment. Contracts referenced in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall apply to participating hospitals, notwithstanding their status as designated hospitals, and shall contain the following requirements:

(A) Funding shall be based on the ability to treat patients with high acuity levels;

(B) Units shall be managed as part of a statewide no refusal system;

(C) Reimbursement by the state shall cover reasonable actual costs for enhanced programming and staffing in accordance with Sec. 33b of this act;

(D) Units shall be managed to ensure access to peer supports;

(E) Participating hospitals shall maintain a stakeholder advisory group with nonexclusionary membership to ensure high quality and appropriate levels of care;

(F) The department shall be solely responsible for responding to requests for records concerning the implementation of this contract between the department and the hospital. The hospital and its employees shall cooperate and provide reasonable assistance to the department in producing records that are within the custody of the hospital that are responsive to records requests and that are not confidential by law; and

(G) The state shall retain the option to renew the contract upon expiration of the initial four-year term.

(b)(1)(A) The department of buildings and general services, with broad involvement from the department of mental health and stakeholders, shall design a 25-bed hospital owned and operated by the state in central Vermont and proximate to an existing hospital. Applying the most expeditious methodology possible, the department of buildings and general services shall

supervise the construction of the hospital with an expressed goal of completing the project in 24 months. The operations of the hospital shall be under the jurisdiction of the commissioner of mental health.

(B)(i) The general assembly finds that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) advised the state of Vermont on March 14, 2012 that:

(I) any newly constructed hospital owned and operated by the state that exceeds 16 beds will be eligible to receive federal matching funds for services rendered at the hospital under the state's current Global Commitment waiver, which is set to expire on December 31, 2013.

(II) although CMS was unable to provide a definitive answer as to whether a new hospital owned and operated by the state with 25 beds would be eligible for federal matching funds after December 31, 2013, the state will be able to cease use of nine beds at that time and amend the hospital's license from 25 beds to 16 beds if the Global Commitment waiver is not renewed or extended and a new waiver is not granted under similar terms and conditions.

(ii) In the event the hospital owned and operated by the state loses or is no longer eligible for federal matching funds after December 31, 2013, the commissioner of mental health shall cease use of nine beds within the time frame set by CMS and reduce the hospital's license from 25 to 16 beds. At that time, the commissioner of mental health shall begin planning for an orderly transition to a 16-bed hospital that shall proceed in a manner that protects the health, safety, and integrity of individuals treated at the state owned and operated hospital. The commissioner's transition plan shall ensure the nine-bed deficit in acute inpatient beds be addressed by expanding acute inpatient capacity elsewhere in the state if necessary and that the nine decommissioned beds in the state owned and operated hospital be repurposed in a manner that does not jeopardize federal matching funds for the remaining 16 beds. If the loss or denial of federal matching funds occurs while the general assembly is in session, the commissioner shall notify and seek approval of the transition plan from the senate committees on health and welfare and on institutions and the house committees on human services and on corrections and institutions before proceeding with the transition plan. If the loss or denial of federal matching funds occurs while the general assembly is not in session, the commissioner shall notify and seek approval of the transition plan from a special committee composed of members of the joint fiscal committee and the chairs and vice chairs of the senate committees on health and welfare and on institutions and the house committees on human services and on corrections and institutions before proceeding with the

transition plan. The special committee shall be entitled to per diem and expenses as provided in 32 V.S.A. § 1010.

(2) To foster coordination between the judiciary and mental health systems, the hospital owned and operated by the state shall contain:

(A) adequate capacity to accept individuals receiving a court order of hospitalization pursuant to 18 V.S.A. chapter 181; and

(B) a private room used and outfitted for the purpose of judicial proceedings.

(3) The commissioner of buildings and general services may purchase, lease for a period of up to 99 years plus any contracted for renewal options, or enter into a lease-purchase agreement for property in central Vermont for the purpose described in this subsection.

(4) The commissioner of buildings and general services shall inform the chairs and vice chairs of the senate committee on institutions and house committee on corrections and institutions prior to entering into an agreement pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection, upon substantial completion of a design pursuant to this section, prior to the commencement of construction, and when any other substantial step is taken in furtherance of this section.

(c)(1) The commissioner is authorized to contract for seven to 12 involuntary acute inpatient beds at Fletcher Allen Health Care until the hospital owned and operated by the state described in subsection (b) of this section is operational, to cover the increased cost of care; and

(2)(A) If a viable setting is identified by the commissioner and licensed by the department of health, the commissioner is authorized to provide acute inpatient services at a temporary hospital and shall discontinue services at that hospital when the hospital owned and operated by the state described in subsection (b) of this section is operational. The department shall pursue Medicare and Medicaid certification for any such temporary hospital.

(B) If the temporary hospital identified under subdivision (2)(A) of this subsection (c) is located in Morrisville, acute inpatient services shall be discontinued at the facility when the hospital owned and operated by the state described in subsection (b) of this section is operational, but no later than September 1, 2015. At that time, the temporary hospital shall revert to prior permitted uses. The temporary hospital shall be initially licensed for eight acute inpatient beds. Before an expansion of the number of beds at the temporary Morrisville hospital may occur, the department shall confer with the host community to seek permission for such expansion.

(d) To the extent amounts of potential funding from various sources are not clear upon passage of this act, the legislative intent for funding the capital costs of this section to the extent practicable is first through insurance funds that may be available for these purposes; second through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds that may be available for these purposes and any required state match; third, in the case of the 14-bed unit and the six-bed unit, through a rate payment with clearly defined terms of services; and last with state capital or general funds. It is also the intent of the general assembly that, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. §§ 134 and 135, any capital funds expended for projects described in this act that are reimbursed at a later date by insurance or FEMA shall be reallocated to fund capital projects in a future act relating to capital construction and state bonding.

Sec. 10. SECURE RESIDENTIAL RECOVERY PROGRAM

(a) The commissioner of mental health is authorized to establish and oversee a secure seven-bed residential facility owned and operated by the state for individuals no longer requiring acute inpatient care, but who remain in need of treatment within a secure setting for an extended period of time. The program shall be the least restrictive and most integrated setting for each of the individual residents.

(b) The opening of the facility described in subsection (a) of this section is contingent upon the passage of necessary statutory amendments authorizing judicial orders for commitment to such a facility, which shall parallel or be included in 18 V.S.A. § 7620 (related to applications for continuation of involuntary treatment), and shall include the same level of statutory protections for the legal rights of the residents as provided for individuals at inpatient facilities.

* * * Vermont Employees Retirement System * * *

Sec. 11. 3 V.S.A. § 455 is amended to read:

§ 455. DEFINITIONS

(a) Unless a different meaning is plainly required by the context, the following words and phrases as used in this subchapter shall have the following meanings:

* * *

(28) “Successor in interest” means the mental health hospital owned and operated by the state that provides acute inpatient care and replaces the Vermont State Hospital.

Sec. 12. 3 V.S.A. § 459(d)(2)A) is amended to read:

(2)(A) Upon early retirement, a group F member, except facility employees of the department of corrections and department of corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community and Woodside facility employees, shall receive an early retirement allowance which shall be equal to the normal retirement allowance reduced by one-half of one percent for each month the member is under age 62 at the time of early retirement. Group F members who have 20 years of service as facility employees of the department of corrections, as department of corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community or as Woodside facility employees or as Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital employees, or as employees of its successor in interest, who provide direct patient care shall receive an early retirement allowance which shall be equal to the normal retirement allowance at age 55 without reduction; provided the 20 years of service occurred in one or more of the following capacities as an employee of the department of corrections, Woodside facility~~}, or the Vermont state hospital}~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest: facility employee, community service center employee, or court and reparative service unit employee.

* * * Executive: Human Services * * *

Sec. 13. 3 V.S.A. § 3089 is amended to read:

§ 3089. DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

The department of mental health is created within the agency of human services as the successor to and the continuation of the division of mental health services of the department of health. The department of mental health shall be responsible for the operation of the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest as defined in subdivision 455(28) of this title.

* * * Crimes and Criminal Procedure: Escape * * *

Sec. 14. 13 V.S.A. § 1501 is amended to read:

§ 1501. ESCAPE AND ATTEMPTS TO ESCAPE

* * *

(b) A person who, while in lawful custody:

* * *

(4) escapes or attempts to escape from the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest or a participating hospital, when confined

by court order pursuant to chapter 157 of ~~Title 13 or chapter 199 of Title 18~~ this title, or when transferred there pursuant to ~~section 28 V.S.A. § 703 of Title 28~~ and while still serving a sentence, shall be imprisoned for not more than five years or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

* * *

(d) As used in this section:

(1) “No refusal system” means a system of hospitals and intensive residential recovery facilities under contract with the department of mental health that provides high intensity services, in which the facilities shall admit any individual for care if the individual meets the eligibility criteria established by the commissioner in contract.

(2) “Participating hospital” means a hospital under contract with the department of mental health to participate in the no refusal system.

(3) “Successor in interest” shall mean the mental health hospital owned and operated by the state that provides acute inpatient care and replaces the Vermont State Hospital.

* * * Crimes and Criminal Procedure: Insanity as a Defense * * *

Sec. 15. 13 V.S.A. § 4815 is amended to read:

§ 4815. PLACE OF EXAMINATION; TEMPORARY COMMITMENT

* * *

(b) The order for examination may provide for an examination at any jail or correctional center, or at the state hospital, or at its successor in interest, or at such other place as the court shall determine, after hearing a recommendation by the commissioner of mental health.

* * *

(g)(1) Inpatient examination at the ~~state hospital~~ Vermont State Hospital, or its successor in interest, or a designated hospital. The court shall not order an inpatient examination unless the designated mental health professional determines that the defendant is a person in need of treatment as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 7101(17).

* * *

(3) An order for inpatient examination shall provide for placement of the defendant in the custody and care of the commissioner of mental health.

(A) If a Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital psychiatrist, or a psychiatrist of its successor in interest, or a designated hospital psychiatrist determines that the defendant is not in need of inpatient hospitalization prior to

admission, the commissioner shall release the defendant pursuant to the terms governing the defendant's release from the commissioner's custody as ordered by the court. The commissioner of mental health shall ensure that all individuals who are determined not to be in need of inpatient hospitalization receive appropriate referrals for outpatient mental health services.

(B) If a Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital psychiatrist, or a psychiatrist of its successor in interest, or designated hospital psychiatrist determines that the defendant is in need of inpatient hospitalization:

(i) The commissioner shall obtain an appropriate inpatient placement for the defendant at the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest, or a designated hospital and, based on the defendant's clinical needs, may transfer the defendant between hospitals at any time while the order is in effect. A transfer to a designated hospital outside the no refusal system is subject to acceptance of the patient for admission by that hospital.

(ii) The defendant shall be returned to court for further appearance on the following business day if the defendant is no longer in need of inpatient hospitalization, unless the terms established by the court pursuant to subdivision (2) of this section permit the defendant to be released from custody.

* * *

(i) As used in this section:

(1) "No refusal system" means a system of hospitals and intensive residential recovery facilities under contract with the department of mental health that provides high intensity services, in which the facilities shall admit any individual for care if the individual meets the eligibility criteria established by the commissioner in contract.

(2) "Successor in interest" shall mean the mental health hospital owned and operated by the state that provides acute inpatient care and replaces the Vermont State Hospital.

Sec. 15a. 13 V.S.A. § 4822(c) is amended to read:

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, at least 10 days prior to the proposed discharge of any person committed under this section the commissioner of ~~developmental and mental health services~~ shall give notice thereof to the committing court and state's attorney of the county where the prosecution originated. In all cases requiring a hearing prior to discharge of a person found incompetent to stand trial under section 4817 of this title, the hearing shall be conducted by the committing court issuing the order under that section. In all other cases, when the committing court orders a

hearing under subsection (a) of this section or when, in the discretion of the commissioner of ~~developmental and~~ mental health services, a hearing should be held prior to the discharge, the hearing shall be held in the ~~criminal~~ family division of the superior court, ~~Waterbury circuit~~ to determine if the committed person is no longer a person in need of treatment or a patient in need of further treatment as set forth in subsection (a) of this section. Notice of the hearing shall be given to the commissioner, the state's attorney of the county where the prosecution originated, the committed person and the person's attorney. Prior to the hearing, the state's attorney may enter an appearance in the proceedings and may request examination of the patient by an independent psychiatrist, who may testify at the hearing.

Sec. 16. DELETED

* * * General Provisions (Pertaining to Mental Health) * * *

Sec. 17. 18 V.S.A. § 7101 is amended to read:

§ 7101. DEFINITIONS

As used in this part of this title, the following words, unless the context otherwise requires, shall have the following meanings:

* * *

(26) "No refusal system" means a system of hospitals and intensive residential recovery facilities under contract with the department of mental health that provides high intensity services, in which the facilities shall admit any individual for care if the individual meets the eligibility criteria established by the commissioner in contract.

(27) "Participating hospital" means a hospital under contract with the department of mental health to participate in the no refusal system.

(28) "Successor in interest" means the mental health hospital owned and operated by the state that provides acute inpatient care and replaces the Vermont State Hospital.

Sec. 18. 18 V.S.A. § 7108 is amended to read:

§ 7108. CANTEENS

The ~~superintendents~~ chief executive officer of the Vermont State Hospital ~~and the Training School~~, or its successor in interest, may conduct a canteen or commissary, which shall be accessible to patients, ~~students~~, employees, and visitors of the ~~state hospital and training school~~ Vermont State Hospital, or its successor in interest, at designated hours and shall be operated by employees of the hospital ~~and the school~~. A revolving fund for this purpose is authorized. The salary of an employee of the hospital ~~or training school~~ shall be charged

against the canteen fund. Proceeds from sales may be used for operation of the canteen and the benefit of the patients, ~~students~~ and employees of the hospital ~~or training school~~ under the direction of the ~~superintendents~~ chief executive officer and subject to the approval of the commissioner. All balances of such funds remaining at the end of any fiscal year shall remain in such fund for use during the succeeding fiscal year. An annual report of the status of the funds shall be submitted to the commissioner.

Sec. 19. 18 V.S.A. § 7110 is amended to read:

§ 7110. CERTIFICATION OF MENTAL ILLNESS

A certification of mental illness by a licensed physician required by section 7504 of this title shall be made by a board eligible psychiatrist, a board certified psychiatrist or a resident in psychiatry, under penalty of perjury. In areas of the state where board eligible psychiatrists, board certified psychiatrists or residents in psychiatry are not available to complete admission certifications to the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest, the commissioner may designate other licensed physicians as appropriate to complete certification for purposes of section 7504 of this title.

* * * The Department of Mental Health * * *

Sec. 20. 18 V.S.A. § 7205 is amended to read:

§ 7205. SUPERVISION OF INSTITUTIONS

(a) The department of mental health shall operate the Vermont State Hospital, or its successor in interest, and shall be responsible for patients receiving involuntary treatment ~~at a hospital designated by the department of mental health~~.

(b) The commissioner of the department of mental health, in consultation with the secretary, shall appoint a chief executive officer of the Vermont State Hospital, or its successor in interest, to oversee the operations of the hospital. The chief executive officer position shall be an exempt position.

Sec. 21. DELETED

Sec. 22. DELETED

* * * The Commissioner of Mental Health * * *

Sec. 23. 18 V.S.A. § 7401 is amended to read:

§ 7401. POWERS AND DUTIES

Except insofar as this part of this title specifically confers certain powers, duties, and functions upon others, the commissioner shall be charged with its administration. The commissioner may:

* * *

(5) supervise the care and treatment of ~~patients at the Retreat in the same manner and with the same authority that he supervises patients at the Vermont State Hospital~~ individuals within his or her custody;

* * *

(16) contract with accredited educational or health care institutions for psychiatric services at the Vermont State Hospital, or its successor in interest;

* * *

* * * Admission Procedures * * *

Sec. 24. 18 V.S.A. § 7511 is amended to read:

§ 7511. TRANSPORTATION

(a) The commissioner shall ensure that all reasonable and appropriate measures consistent with public safety are made to transport or escort a person subject to this chapter to and from any inpatient setting, including escorts within a designated hospital or the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest, or otherwise being transported under the jurisdiction of the commissioner in any manner which:

(1) prevents physical and psychological trauma;

(2) respects the privacy of the individual; and

(3) represents the least restrictive means necessary for the safety of the patient.

(b) The commissioner shall have the authority to designate the professionals or law enforcement officers who may authorize the method of transport of patients under the commissioner's care and custody.

(c) When a professional or law enforcement officer designated pursuant to subsection (b) of this section decides an individual is in need of secure transport with mechanical restraints, the reasons for such determination shall be documented in writing.

* * *

* * * Care and Treatment * * *

Sec. 25. 18 V.S.A. § 7703 is amended to read:

§ 7703. TREATMENT

(a) Outpatient or partial hospitalization shall be preferred to inpatient treatment. Emergency involuntary treatment shall be undertaken only when

clearly necessary. Involuntary treatment shall be utilized only if voluntary treatment is not possible.

(b) The department shall establish minimum standards for adequate treatment as provided in this section, including requirements that, when possible, psychiatric unit staff be used as the primary source to implement emergency involuntary procedures such as seclusion and restraint.

* * * Transfer of Patients * * *

Sec. 26. 18 V.S.A. § 7901 is amended to read:

§ 7901. INTRASTATE TRANSFERS

The commissioner may authorize the transfer of patients between the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest, and designated hospitals if the commissioner determines that it would be consistent with the medical needs of the patient to do so. Whenever a patient is transferred, written notice shall be given to the patient's ~~attorney~~, legal guardian or agent, if any, ~~spouse, parent, or parents, or, if none be known, to any other interested party in that order, and any other person with the consent of the patient.~~ In all such transfers, due consideration shall be given to the relationship of the patient to his or her family, legal guardian, or friends, so as to maintain relationships and encourage visits beneficial to the patient. Due consideration shall also be given to the separation of functions and to the divergent purposes of the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest, and designated hospitals. No patient may be transferred to a correctional institution without the order of a court of competent jurisdiction. No patient may be transferred to a designated hospital outside the no refusal system unless the head of the hospital or his or her designee first accepts the patient.

* * * Support and Expense * * *

Sec. 27. 18 V.S.A. § 8101(b) is amended to read:

(b) The commissioner shall promulgate, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 ~~of Title 3~~, regulations which set forth in detail the levels of income, resources, expenses, and family size at which persons are deemed able to pay given amounts for the care and treatment of a patient, and the circumstances, if any, under which the rates of payment so established may be waived or modified. A copy of the payment schedule so promulgated shall be made available in the admissions office ~~and in the office of each supervisor at the state hospital~~ Vermont State Hospital, or its successor in interest.

Sec. 28. 18 V.S.A. § 8105 is amended to read:

§ 8105. COMPUTATION OF CHARGE FOR CARE AND TREATMENT

The charge for the care and treatment of a patient at the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest, shall be established at least annually by the commissioner. The charge shall reflect the current cost of the care and treatment, including depreciation and overhead, for the Vermont ~~state hospital~~ State Hospital, or its successor in interest. Depreciation shall include but not be limited to costs for the use of the plant and permanent improvements, and overhead shall include but not be limited to costs incurred by other departments and agencies for the operation of the hospital. Accounting principles and practices generally accepted for hospitals shall be followed by the commissioner in establishing the charges.

Sec. 29. 18 V.S.A. § 8010 is amended to read:

§ 8010. VOLUNTARY PATIENTS; DISCHARGE; DETENTION

~~(a) If a voluntary patient gives notice in writing to the head of the hospital of a desire to leave the hospital, he or she shall promptly be released unless he or she agreed in writing at the time of his admission that his or her release could be delayed.~~

~~(b) In that event and if the head of the hospital determines that the patient is a patient in need of further treatment, the head of the hospital may detain the patient for a period not to exceed four days from receipt of the notice to leave. Before expiration of the four-day period the head of the hospital shall either release the patient or apply to the family division of the superior court in the unit in which the hospital is located for the involuntary admission of the patient. The patient shall remain in the hospital pending the court's determination of the case.~~

~~(c) If the patient is under 18 years of age, the notice to leave may be given by the patient or his or her attorney or the person who applied for admission, provided the minor consents thereto. [Repealed.]~~

* * * Municipal and County Government * * *

Sec. 29a. 24 V.S.A. § 296 is amended to read:

§ 296. TRANSPORTATION OF PRISONERS AND MENTAL PATIENTS

All commitments to a state correctional facility ~~or state mental institution~~ or to any other place named by the commissioner of corrections, ~~commissioner of mental health~~ or committing court, shall be made by any sheriff, deputy sheriff, state police officer, police officer, or constable in the state, or the commissioner of corrections or his or her authorized agent.

* * * Professions and Occupations: Nursing * * *

Sec. 30. 26 V.S.A. § 1583 is amended to read:

§ 1583. EXCEPTIONS

This chapter does not prohibit:

* * *

~~(6) The work and duties of psychiatric technicians and other care attendants employed in the Vermont state hospital at Waterbury. The agency of human services shall consult with the board regarding standards for the education of the technicians and care attendants.~~

~~(7)~~ The work and duties of attendants in attendant care services programs.

~~(8)~~⁽⁷⁾ The practice of any other occupation or profession licensed under the laws of this state.

~~(9)~~⁽⁸⁾ The providing of care for the sick in accordance with the tenets of any church or religious denomination by its adherents if the individual does not hold himself or herself out to be a registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, or licensed nursing assistant and does not engage in the practice of nursing as defined in this chapter.

* * * Public Institutions and Corrections: Juveniles * * *

Sec. 31. 28 V.S.A. § 1105 is amended to read:

§ 1105. TRANSFER OF JUVENILES TO STATE HOSPITAL

~~The transfer of any child committed to the custody of the commissioner from a facility of or supported by the department to the state hospital shall be conducted pursuant to the same procedures established for the transfer of adult inmates by sections 703-706 of this title. [Repealed.]~~

* * * Regulation of Long-Term Care Facilities * * *

Sec. 32. 33 V.S.A. § 7102 is amended to read:

§ 7102. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this chapter:

* * *

(11) “Therapeutic community residence” means a place, however named, excluding a ~~hospital~~ hospitals as defined by statute ~~or the Vermont state hospital~~ which provides, for profit or otherwise, short-term individualized

treatment to three or more residents with major life adjustment problems, such as alcoholism, drug abuse, mental illness, or delinquency.

* * *

Sec. 33. REPORTS

(a) On or before January 15, 2013, the department of mental health shall report to the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committees on human services and on judiciary on issues and protections relating to decentralizing high intensity inpatient mental health care. The commissioner of mental health shall:

(1) Recommend whether any statutory changes are needed to preserve the rights afforded to patients in the Vermont State Hospital. In so doing, the commissioner shall consider 18 V.S.A. §§ 7705 and 7707, the Vermont Hospital Patient Bill of Rights as provided in 18 V.S.A. § 1852, the settlement order in Doe, et al. v. Miller, et al., docket number S-142-82-Wnc dated May 1984, and other state and federal regulatory and accreditation requirements related to patient rights.

(2) Work with designated hospitals and stakeholders to develop a process to ensure public involvement with policy development relevant to individuals in the care and custody of the commissioner.

(3) Develop consistent definitions and measurement specifications for measures relating to seclusion and restraint and other key indicators, in collaboration with the designated hospitals. The commissioner shall prioritize the use of measures developed by national organizations such as the Joint Commission and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

(4) Report on the efficacy of the department of mental health's housing subsidies program on the status of stable housing.

(b) On or before January 15, 2013, the department of mental health shall report to the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committee on human services regarding the department's efforts to date to plan for implementation, quality improvement, and innovation of Vermont's mental health system and how the department recommends that it proceed in its efforts to improve the system. The recommendation shall be based on an assessment of outcome and financial measures focused on at least the following criteria for individuals with a mental health condition:

(1) the development of sufficient capacity for inpatient and community psychiatric services and peer supports across the continuum of care;

(2) the support of individuals in accessing the services nearest to their home;

(3) the reduction in emergency department usage and law enforcement intervention;

(4) the reduction in hospital admissions and length of inpatient stays, including any impact on readmissions;

(5) the implementation of quality assessment tools for evaluation of services at all levels, including those needed to measure the effectiveness of the care management system;

(6) the department's use of current financial data to conduct a fiscal analysis of the capital and annual operating costs associated with the plan as enacted; and

(7) individuals' satisfaction with provided services.

(c) Prior to submitting the reports required by subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the department of mental health shall solicit comments from the department's patient representative described in 18 V.S.A. § 7253, Vermont Legal Aid, and Disability Rights Vermont, and shall append any comments received to the respective report.

(d) On or before January 15, 2013, the department of mental health shall report to the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committee on human services with a plan for streamlining overlapping state and federal reporting requirements for providers in the mental health system, including recommendations for any statutory changes needed to do so.

(e) A special committee consisting of the members of the joint fiscal committee and the chairs and vice chairs of the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committee on human services, in consultation with the commissioner of mental health shall contract with an independent consultant who has expertise in the field of mental health and psychiatric hospital services to evaluate the structure, services, and financial implications of Vermont's proposed mental health system. The joint fiscal office shall administer the contract for the special committee. The department of mental health shall transfer to the joint fiscal committee one-half the cost of this contract and the joint fiscal committee is authorized to transfer one-half the cost of this contract from the legislative budget to the joint fiscal committee. The independent consultant shall submit a report to the general assembly by December 1, 2012 and shall specifically address:

(1) Whether Vermont's proposed mental health system appropriately serves the needs of individuals with mental health conditions throughout the state and, if any unmet needs are identified, how they may be addressed;

(2) The data and evaluation mechanisms necessary to manage and improve the quality of care and outcomes for individuals in Vermont with a mental health condition.

Sec. 33a. RULEMAKING

On or before September 1, 2012, the commissioner of mental health shall initiate a rulemaking process that establishes standards that meet or exceed and are consistent with standards set by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Joint Commission for the use and reporting of the emergency involuntary procedures of seclusion or restraint on individuals within the custody of the commissioner and that require the personnel performing emergency involuntary procedures to receive training and certification on the use of these procedures. Standards established by rule shall be consistent with the recommendations made pursuant to Sec. 33(a)(1) and (3) of this act.

Sec. 33b. COST-BASED REIMBURSEMENT FOR ACUTE HOSPITAL SERVICES

(a) The department of mental health shall ensure that hospitals are paid reasonable actual costs for providing necessary care to persons who otherwise would have been cared for at the Vermont State Hospital as defined by the department. The department shall contract with a third party with experience in psychiatric hospital care and expenses to conduct a comprehensive fiscal review to determine if the department's cost reimbursement methodology reflects reasonable actual costs.

(b) The department of mental health shall report to the joint fiscal committee regarding the fiscal review described in subsection (a) of this section on or before September 1, 2012.

Sec. 34. TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS

To continue the training program established in Sec. 13 of No. 80 of the Acts of the 2003 Adj. Sess. (2004) (amending Sec. 57 of No. 66 of the Acts of 2003), for assisting selected law enforcement officers during the performance of their duties in their interactions with persons exhibiting mental health conditions, \$20,000.00 of the general funds appropriated to the department of mental health for fiscal year 2012 shall be transferred to the office of the attorney general.

(1) The office of the attorney general, in consultation with the Vermont coalition for disability rights and other organizations, shall implement this training program.

(2) By January 15 of each year and until funds are fully expended, the attorney general shall submit to the secretary of administration and the house

and senate committees on appropriations a report summarizing how the funds have been used and how the trainings have progressed.

(3) Unexpended funds shall be carried forward and used for the purpose of this section in future years.

Sec. 34a. Sec. 33 of No. 43 of the Acts of 2009 (amending Sec. 124d(e) of No. 65 of the Acts of 2007) is amended to read:

(e) For purposes of this section, the council shall cease to exist when the development of the alternatives to the Vermont state hospital is completed, but no later than ~~July~~ September 1, 2012 ~~2015~~.

* * * Fiscal Year 2012 Appropriations * * *

Sec. 35. Sec. B.301 of No. 63 of the Acts of 2011 (FY12 Big Bill), as amended by Sec. 14 of H.558 of 2012 (FY12 Budget Adjustment) is amended to read:

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	1,080,785,264	<u>1,107,604,567</u>
Total	1,080,785,264	<u>1,107,604,567</u>
Source of funds		
General fund	139,267,121	135,947,833
Special funds	48,630,961	19,052,361
Tobacco fund	36,978,473	36,978,473
State health care resources fund	221,579,040	234,205,524
Catamount fund	23,948,700	25,226,979
Federal funds	639,692,834	655,505,262
Interdepartmental transfers	688,135	<u>688,135</u>
Total	1,080,785,264	<u>1,107,604,567</u>

Sec. 36. Sec. B.314 of No. 63 of the Acts of 2011 (FY12 Big Bill), as amended by Sec. 24 of H.558 of 2012 (FY12 Budget Adjustment) is amended to read:

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	5,486,339	5,482,633
Operating expenses	1,117,984	1,040,984
Grants	124,369,250	<u>139,483,645</u>
Total	130,973,573	<u>146,007,262</u>
Source of funds		
General fund	811,295	961,295
Special funds	6,836	6,836
Federal funds	6,555,971	6,552,154
Global Commitment fund	123,579,471	138,466,977

Interdepartmental transfers	<u>20,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>
Total	<u>130,973,573</u>	146,007,262

Sec. 37. Sec. B.315 of No. 63 of the Acts of 2011 (FY12 Big Bill), as amended by Sec. 25 of H.558 of 2012 (FY12 Budget Adjustment) is amended to read:

Sec. B.315 Mental health – Vermont state hospital

Personal services	<u>20,479,188</u>	20,228,969
Operating expenses	<u>2,056,312</u>	1,394,734
Grants	<u>82,335</u>	<u>82,335</u>
Total	<u>22,617,835</u>	21,706,038
Source of funds		
General fund	<u>17,016,067</u>	5,963,977
Special funds	<u>835,486</u>	0
Federal funds	<u>213,564</u>	93,117
Global Commitment fund	<u>4,252,718</u>	15,648,944
Interdepartmental transfers	<u>300,000</u>	0
Total	<u>22,617,835</u>	21,706,038

Sec. 37a. REDUCTION IN FORCE OF VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES

(a) Permanent status classified employees who were officially subjected to a reduction in force from their positions with the Vermont State Hospital on or after February 6, 2012, whose reemployment rights have not otherwise terminated and who have not been reemployed with the state during the two-year reduction in force reemployment rights period, shall be granted a continuation of their reduction in force reemployment rights, in accordance with the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement, but solely to vacant classified bargaining unit positions at any new state-owned and -operated psychiatric hospital which management intends to fill. All other contractual reduction in force reemployment terms and conditions shall apply.

(b) Permanent status classified employees employed by the Vermont State Hospital as of February 6, 2012 who are employed by the state shall, in accordance with the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement, be eligible to receive one mandatory offer of reemployment to any new state-owned and -operated psychiatric hospital, solely to the job classification that they last occupied at the Vermont State Hospital, provided management intends to fill positions within that job classification. An employee who accepts such mandatory offer of reemployment shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement. If an employee who accepts a mandatory offer of reemployment fails the associated working test period, he or she shall be

separated from employment and granted full reduction in force reemployment rights in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

(c)(1) Participating hospitals and designated agencies developing acute inpatient, secure residential, and intensive residential recovery services, as described in Secs. 8–10 of this act, shall provide the department of human resources with a description of the minimum qualifications for those open positions related to the care of individuals with mental health conditions. Participating hospitals and designated agencies shall be encouraged to hire former state employees who meet minimum requirements or have equivalent experience. The department shall use the most effective method to notify former employees of the Vermont State Hospital of these positions.

(2) The general assembly encourages the administration through its contracting process with participating hospitals and designated agencies to provide former employees of the Vermont State Hospital with the opportunity to apply for available positions.

(3) The provisions of this subsection shall not affect any existing collective bargaining agreement.

(d) Subsections (a) and (b) of this section are repealed one year after the opening of any new state-owned and -operated psychiatric hospital.

Sec. 37aa. VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCENTIVE

(a) An individual who was employed by the department of mental health as of March 1, 2012, who was employed at the Vermont State Hospital on August 28, 2011, who participates in either the defined benefit or defined contribution plan, and who does not initiate the purchase of any additional service credit after March 1, 2012 shall be eligible for the retirement incentive outlined in subsection (b) of this section if the individual has:

(1) 30 years of creditable retirement service as of April 13, 2012;

(2) five years of creditable retirement service as of April 13, 2012 and is 62 years of age or older on April 13, 2012; or

(3) 20 years of creditable retirement service as of April 13, 2012 as a facility employee who provides or who has provided direct security and treatment services as provided in 3 V.S.A. § 459(2)(A) and is 55 years of age or older on April 12, 2012.

(b) If the employee applies for retirement on or before April 13, 2012 for a retirement effective on or before May 1, 2012, the employee shall be entitled to payment by the state of at least 80 percent of the cost of the premium for health insurance coverage offered by the state of Vermont to retirees, provided that the

employee continues to meet the eligibility requirements for at least seven years following retirement unless the employee elects the premium reduction option under 3 V.S.A. § 479(e) and:

(1) \$750.00 per complete year of service if the employee has five years of creditable service or more and fewer than 15 years of creditable service; or

(2) \$1,000.00 per complete year of service if the employee has 15 years of creditable service or more.

(c) The cash incentive set forth in subsection (b) of this section shall not exceed \$15,000.00 per employee. The employee shall receive the cash portion of the incentive in two equal payments in fiscal years 2013 and 2014. The first payment shall be made within 90 days of the retirement date. The second payment shall be made within 90 days of the one-year anniversary of the retirement date. The retirement incentive shall not be paid from the Vermont state retirement fund, as outlined in 3 V.S.A. § 473.

(d) No employee who receives the incentive set forth in subsection (b) of this section may return to permanent or limited classified service with the state for at least two full fiscal years from the date of his or her retirement unless the secretary of administration expressly approves otherwise. The joint fiscal committee shall be notified of any employee who received the incentive set forth in subsection (b) of this section and returned to state employment within two years.

(e) An employee who receives the incentive set forth in subsection (b) of this section is not entitled to receive any mandatory reemployment rights to a successor state facility and will not be eligible for any rights under Sec. 37a of this act.

(f) The retirement incentive set forth in subsection (b) of this section shall be treated as a severance payment under 21 V.S.A. § 1344(a)(5)(C) and shall be a disqualifying remuneration.

Sec. 37b. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) It is the intent of the general assembly that the department of mental health contract with the Brattleboro Retreat for a 14-bed unit and with Rutland Regional Medical Center for a six-bed facility pursuant to Sec. 9(a) of this act.

(b) It is the understanding of the general assembly that the proposed temporary hospital in Sec. 9(c)(2) of this act, the Brattleboro Retreat, Rutland Regional Medical Center, and an interim secure residential facility are to temporarily meet the immediate needs of the state.

Sec. 38. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except for Sec. 34 of this act which shall take effect on July 1, 2012.

*CLAIRE D. AYER
ROBERT M. HARTWELL
KEVIN J. MULLIN*

Committee on the part of the Senate

*ANN D. PUGH
SANDY J. HAAS
ALICE M. EMMONS*

Committee on the part of the House

Which was considered and adopted on the part of the House.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

H. 780

Rep. Atkins of Winooski spoke for the committee on Government Operations.

Rep. Winters of Williamstown, for the committee on Appropriations, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to compensation for certain state employees

Reported in favor of its passage when amended as follows:

Sec. 10. PAY ACT FUNDING

The compensation provided in this act shall be funded by appropriations made in H.781 of the 2011–2012 session of the general assembly in Sec. B.1200 for fiscal year 2013 and in Sec. BB.1200 for fiscal year 2014.

The bill, having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up, read the second time, report of the committee on Appropriations agreed to and third reading ordered.

Favorable Report; Third Reading Ordered

H. 774

Rep. Zagar of Barnard spoke for the committee on Agriculture.

Rep. Branagan of Georgia, for the committee on Ways and Means, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to meat inspection, delivery of liquid fuels, dairy operations, and animal foot baths

Reported in favor of its passage. The bill, having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up, read the second time and third reading ordered.

Favorable Report; Third Reading Ordered

H. 773

Rep. Head of South Burlington spoke for the committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs.

Rep. Sharpe of Bristol, for the committee on Ways and Means, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to veterans' tax exemption

Reported in favor of its passage. The bill, having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up, read the second time and third reading ordered.

Adjournment

At two o'clock and thirty-five minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. Turner of Milton**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at one o'clock in the afternoon.