

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs to which was  
3 referred House Bill No. 791 entitled “An act relating to the Housing First  
4 Study Committee” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and  
5 recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting  
6 clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

8 The General Assembly finds:

9 (1) Housing First is an alternative to the current system of emergency  
10 shelter-transitional housing-permanent supportive housing, which tends to  
11 prolong the length of time that people remain homeless. The “housing first”  
12 approach is premised on the belief that homeless and at-risk people are more  
13 responsive to interventions and social services support after they are in their  
14 own housing, rather than while living in temporary or transitional housing  
15 programs. The “housing first” approach stresses the immediate return to  
16 independent living.

17 (2) Interest in the Housing First model has grown recently with the  
18 success of the “Utah” model. The Housing First program may not be  
19 appropriate for every homeless person.

20 (3) There is a program in Vermont that has developed a rural model and  
21 has been considered successful by social and financial measures. The State of

1 Vermont and other states have developed supportive housing programs that  
2 may provide similar services for individuals and families whose living  
3 conditions are unstable and transitional.

4 Sec. 2. HOUSING FIRST STUDY COMMITTEE; REPORT

5 (a) Creation. There is created a committee to evaluate and investigate the  
6 causes and conditions of chronic homelessness, as defined by the federal  
7 HEARTH Act of 2009, 42 U.S.C. § 11360, throughout Vermont, and to  
8 propose solutions that will provide stable and safe housing that individuals may  
9 afford.

10 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following  
11 members:

12 (1) two members from the House of Representatives, who shall be  
13 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

14 (2) two members from the Senate, who shall be appointed by the  
15 Committee on Committees;

16 (3) a representative of the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition;

17 (4) a representative of the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness;

18 (5) the Executive Director of the Vermont State Housing Authority or  
19 designee;

20 (6) the Director of Housing for the Agency of Human Services or  
21 designee;

1           (7) a representative from the Vermont Apartment Owners Association;

2           (8) the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency or  
3 designee;

4           (9) the Commissioner of Mental Health or designee;

5           (10) the Commissioner of Corrections or designee;

6           (11) the Executive Director of Pathways Vermont or designee.

7           (12) the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation  
8 Board or designee; and

9           (13) a member of the public who has experienced homelessness, who  
10 shall be appointed, following the appointment of the Chair of the Committee,  
11 by the Chair of the Committee at the first Committee meeting.

12           (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall:

13           (1) evaluate and investigate the causes and conditions of chronic  
14 homelessness in Vermont, and propose solutions to providing stable and safe  
15 housing that individuals may afford;

16           (2) evaluate and investigate the experience and results of existing  
17 programs that currently address the needs of individuals who are or have been  
18 chronically homeless; and

19           (3) conduct an analysis of supportive housing programs including:

20           (A) the service costs of one or more service providers;

1           (B) the costs associated with creating additional housing units  
2           dedicated for these models;

3           (C) the outcomes **to be** measured to determine whether the clients  
4           served will be better off; and

5           (D) the costs associated with providing rental subsidies.

6           (d)(1) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,  
7           and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council and the Joint Fiscal  
8           Office.

9           (2) The Joint Fiscal Office, in consultation with the Agency of Human  
10          Services and other agencies represented on the Committee, shall prepare an  
11          analysis of any projected savings or costs attributed to programs that address  
12          chronic homelessness, which shall be presented at the first meeting of the  
13          Committee.

14          (e) Report. On or before December 15, 2014, the Committee shall submit  
15          a written report to the General Assembly with its findings and any  
16          recommendations for legislative action.

17          (f) Meetings.

18          (1) The members representing the House and Senate shall jointly call the  
19          first meeting of the Housing First Study Committee to occur on or before  
20          August 1, 2014.

1           (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at its  
2           first meeting.

3           (3)(A) A majority of the members of the Committee shall be physically  
4           present at the same location to constitute a quorum.

5           (B) A member may vote only if physically present at the meeting  
6           location.

7           (C) Action shall be taken only if there is both a quorum and a  
8           majority vote of the members physically present and voting.

9           (4) The Committee shall meet no more than six times.

10          (5) The Committee shall cease to exist on December 31, 2014.

11          (g) Reimbursement.

12           (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General  
13           Assembly, legislative members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem  
14           compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for  
15           no more than six meetings.

16           (2) Other members of the Committee who are not employees of the State  
17           of Vermont and who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed for their  
18           attendance shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of  
19           expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for no more than six meetings.

1        (h) Appropriation. The General Assembly shall appropriate \$6,500.00  
2        from the fiscal year 2015 General Fund to members of the Committee for per  
3        diem compensation and expenses reimbursement.

4        Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

5        This act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.

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8        (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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\_\_\_\_\_

Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE