

1 H.474

2 Introduced by Representative Olsen of Londonderry

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Domestic relations; divorce; mediation

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require  
7 mediation in all divorce proceedings.

8 An act relating to mandatory mediation in divorce proceedings

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

10 Sec. 1. 15 V.S.A. § 595 is added to read:

11 § 595. MANDATORY MEDIATION

12 (a) Upon receiving a divorce complaint, the Court shall refer the parties to  
13 the Vermont Superior Court Family Mediation Program.

14 (b) A party may file a motion with the Court seeking an exemption from  
15 mediation in cases where there a high degree of conflict or a court has issued  
16 an abuse prevention order or an order against stalking or sexual assault  
17 concerning the parties to the divorce. The Court may grant the exemption or  
18 require the parties to participate in mediation under certain conditions.

19 (c) The mediator shall report to the Court if he or she deems the parties  
20 unwilling participants in the mediation.

1        (d) The number of mediation sessions may be determined on an individual  
2        basis by the mediator, but shall not exceed six sessions without approval of the  
3        Court.

4        (e) The costs of mediation shall be paid by the Judiciary.

5        (f) The Judiciary shall promulgate rules to implement this section.

6        Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

7        This act shall take effect on September 1, 2015.