

S.138

Introduced by Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General
Affairs

Date: March 17, 2015

Subject: Commerce and trade; economic development

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to promote economic development through provisions relating to the Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI) program, education and workforce training, tourism and marketing, targeted tax credits for motion picture production, angel investors, millennial enterprise zones, first-time homebuyer down payment assistance, manufacturing and energy rates, land use and economic development planning, and business growth and access to capital.

An act relating to promoting economic development

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

~~*** Vermont Employment Growth Incentive ***~~

Sec. 1. 32 V.S.A. § 5930a(c)(2) is amended to read:

(2) The new jobs should make a net positive contribution to employment in the area, and meet or exceed the ~~prevailing compensation level including wages and benefits, for the particular employment sector~~ livable wage at the time of application, as calculated pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 505(a)(2). The new

1 ~~jobs should offer benefits and opportunities for advancement and professional~~
2 ~~growth consistent with the employment sector~~

3 ~~Sec. 1. [Deleted.]~~

4 ~~Sec. 2. 32 V.S.A. § 5930b is amended to read:~~

5 § 5930b. VERMONT EMPLOYMENT GROWTH INCENTIVE

6 (a) Definitions. As used in this section:

7 (1) "Application base number of jobs" means the total number of
8 full-time Vermont jobs, on an annualized basis, held by nonowners at the time
9 of application, including employees that have been laid off or otherwise
10 terminated within six months of the date of application.

11 (2) "Application base payroll" means the total Vermont gross wages and
12 salaries paid to full-time, nonowner employees on an annualized basis at the
13 time of application, including employees who have been laid off or otherwise
14 terminated within six months prior to the date of application.

15 (3) "Authorized award amount" means the amount of the incentive
16 award as determined by the Vermont Economic Progress Council pursuant to
17 this section.

18 (4) "Award period" means the consecutive five years during which a
19 business may add qualifying jobs and qualifying capital investments eligible
20 ~~for employment growth incentives under this section~~

1 ~~(5) "Base number of jobs" means the total number of full-time Vermont~~
2 jobs held by nonowners on an annualized basis.

3 (6) "Base payroll" means the total Vermont gross wages and salaries
4 actually paid to full-time, nonowner employees.

5 (7) "But-for" means the determination of whether, in the absence of the
6 economic incentive sought, the proposed economic development would not
7 occur or would occur in a significantly different and significantly less desirable
8 manner.

9 (8) "Capital investment target" means qualifying capital investment in
10 an award period year as represented on the Vermont employment growth
11 incentive application.

12 (9) "Full-time job" means a permanent position filled by an employee
13 who works at least 35 hours each week.

14 (10) "Incentive percentage" means the percentage applied to qualifying
15 payroll in order to calculate earned incentives.

16 (11) "Incentive ratio," set at 80 percent, is the percentage applied to the
17 preincentive net fiscal benefit in order to calculate the maximum award that
18 may be authorized under this section.

19 ~~(12) [Repealed.]~~

1 ~~(13) "Jobs target" means the projected number of new qualifying jobs in~~
2 ~~an award period year as reported on the Vermont employment growth~~
3 ~~incentive application.~~

4 (14) "Net fiscal benefit" means the excess of the present value
5 benefit to the State over the present value cost to the State as calculated by the
6 cost-benefit model.

7 (15) "Nonowner" means an employee with no more than 10 percent
8 ownership interest, including attribution of ownership interests of the
9 employee's spouse, parents, spouse's parents, siblings, and children.

10 (16) "Payroll target" means the projected Vermont gross wages and
11 salaries for qualifying jobs in an award period year as reported on the Vermont
12 employment growth incentive application.

13 (17) "Payroll threshold" means expected average industry payroll
14 growth as determined by the cost-benefit model.

15 (18) "Projected average wage" means the total payroll targets divided by
16 the total jobs targets.

17 (19) "Qualifying capital investment" means projected investments in
18 Vermont in new facilities, machinery, and equipment, the value of which is an
19 input to the cost-benefit model in evaluating applications.

20 (20) "Qualifying jobs" means new, full-time Vermont jobs held by
21 ~~nonowners that meet the wage threshold~~

1 ~~(21) "Qualifying payroll" means annualized Vermont gross wages and~~
2 salaries paid for qualifying jobs created in or carried forward to the award
3 period year, provided that:

4 (A) award period year base payroll; minus

5 (B) Vermont gross wages and salaries paid for new qualifying jobs
6 created in or carried forward to the award period year; equals or exceeds

7 (C) prior-year base payroll minus any carry-forward of qualifying
8 payroll under subdivision (c)(4) of this section, plus award-year payroll
9 threshold.

10 (22) "Utilization period" means the period during which incentives can
11 be claimed, and includes each year of the award period plus the four years
12 immediately following each year of the award period.

13 (23) "Vermont gross wages and salaries" means Medicare wages as
14 reported on Federal Tax Form W2 to the extent those wages are Vermont
15 wages, excluding income from nonstatutory stock options.

16 (24) "Wage threshold" means the minimum annualized Vermont gross
17 wages and salaries paid, as determined by the Council, but not less than
18 ~~60 percent above the minimum wage at the time of application, in order for a~~
19 ~~new job to be a qualifying job under this section~~ the livable wage at the time of
20 application, as calculated pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 505(a)(3).

21 ~~(b) Authorization process~~

1 ~~(1) A business may apply to the Vermont Economic Progress Council~~
2 for approval of a performance-based employment growth incentive to be paid
3 out of the business's withholding account upon approval by the Department of
4 Taxes pursuant to the conditions set forth in this section. Businesses shall not
5 be permitted to deduct approved incentives from withholding liability
6 payments otherwise due. In addition to any other information that the Council
7 may require in order to fulfill its obligations under section 5930a of this title,
8 an employment growth incentive application shall include all the following
9 information:

- 10 (A) application base number of jobs;
- 11 (B) total jobs at time of application;
- 12 (C) application base payroll;
- 13 (D) total payroll at time of application;
- 14 (E) jobs target for each year in the award period;
- 15 (F) payroll target for each year in the award period;
- 16 (G) capital investment target for each year in the award period; and
- 17 (H) a statement signed by the president or chief executive officer or
18 equivalent acknowledging that to the extent the applicant fails to meet the
19 minimum capital investment by the end of the award period, any incentives
20 ~~remaining to be earned shall be limited, and any incentives taken shall be~~

1 ~~subject to complete or partial reversal, pursuant to subdivisions (c)(10) and~~
2 (11) of this section.

3 (2) The Council shall review each application in accordance with
4 section 5930a of this title, except that the Council may provide for an initial
5 approval pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection 5930a(c), followed
6 by a final approval at a later date, before December 31 of the calendar year in
7 which the economic activity commences.

8 (3) Except as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection, the value of
9 the incentives will be dependent upon the net fiscal benefit resulting from
10 projected qualifying payroll and qualifying capital investment. An incentive
11 ratio shall be applied to the net fiscal benefit generated by the cost-benefit
12 model in order to determine the maximum award the Council may authorize
13 for each application it approves. The Council may establish a threshold for
14 wages in excess of, but not less than, the wage threshold, as defined in
15 subsection (a) of this section for individual applications the Council wishes to
16 approve. The Council shall calculate an incentive percentage for each
17 approved application as follows:

18
$$\text{Authorized award amount} \div \text{the five-year sum of all payroll targets}$$

19 (4) An approval shall specify: the application base jobs at the time of the
20 application; total jobs at time of application; the application base payroll; total
21 ~~payroll at time of application; the incentive percentage; the wage threshold; the~~

1 ~~payroll thresholds; a job target for each year of the award period; a payroll~~
2 target for each year of the award period; a capital investment target for each
3 year of the award period and description sufficient for application of
4 subdivisions (c)(10) and (11) of this section of the nature of qualifying capital
5 investment over the award period upon which approval shall be conditioned;
6 and the amount of the total award. The Council shall provide a copy of each
7 approval to the Department of Taxes along with a copy of the application
8 submitted by that applicant.

9 (5) Notwithstanding subdivision (3) of this subsection, the Council may
10 authorize incentives in excess of net fiscal benefit multiplied by the incentive
11 ratio ~~not to exceed an annual authorization established by law~~ for awards to
12 businesses located in a labor market area of this State in which the rate of
13 unemployment is greater than the average for the State or in which the average
14 annual wage is below the average annual wage for the State. As used in this
15 subdivision, a "labor market area" shall be as determined by the Department of
16 Labor.

17 (c) Claiming an employment growth incentive.

18 * * *

19 (6)(A) A business whose application is approved and, in the first,
20 second, or third year of the award period, fails to meet or exceed its payroll
21 ~~target and one out of two of its jobs and capital investment targets may not~~

1 ~~claim incentives in that year. To the extent such business reaches its first,~~
2 second, or third year award period targets within the succeeding two calendar
3 year reporting periods immediately succeeding year one, two, or three of the
4 award period, or within the extended period if an extension is granted under
5 subdivision (B) of this subdivision (6), whichever is applicable, such business
6 may claim incentives in five-year installments as provided in subdivisions (1)
7 through (4) of this subsection. A business which fails to meet or exceed its
8 payroll target and one of its two jobs and capital investment targets within this
9 time frame shall forfeit all authority under this section to earn and claim
10 incentives for award period year one, two, or three, as applicable, and any
11 future award period years. The Department of Taxes shall notify the Vermont
12 Economic Progress Council that the first, second, or third year award period
13 targets have not been met within the prescribed period, and the Council shall
14 rescind authority for the business to earn incentives for the activity in year one,
15 two, or three, as applicable, and any future award period years.

16 (B) Notwithstanding subdivision (A) of this subdivision (6), upon
17 notification by the Department of Taxes that a business has not reached its first
18 or second year award period targets within the succeeding two calendar year
19 reporting periods, the Vermont Economic Progress Council may review the
20 circumstances that caused the business to fail to meet the targets within the
21 ~~required time period. If the Council determines that there is a reasonable~~

1 ~~likelihood that the business will meet the award period targets, the Council~~
2 ~~may extend the period to meet the targets for another two reporting periods,~~
3 ~~reviewed annually, for award year one, and one reporting period for award~~
4 ~~year two.~~

5 * * *

6 (h) Enhanced training incentive. Notwithstanding any provision of law to
7 the contrary, the Council may award an enhanced training incentive as follows:

8 (1) A business whose incentive application is approved may elect to
9 claim an enhanced training incentive at any time during the award period by:

10 (A) notifying the Council of its intent to pursue an enhanced training
11 incentive and dedicate its incentive funds to training through the Vermont
12 Training Program or a Workforce Education and Training Fund program; and

13 (B) applying for a grant from the Vermont Training Program or the
14 Workforce Education and Training Fund to perform training for new
15 employees who hold qualifying jobs.

16 (2) If the business successfully completes new employee training
17 pursuant to the terms of its training grant and uses incentive funds to cover a
18 25 percent share of the training costs, the Agency of Commerce and
19 Community Development, or the Department of Labor, as applicable, shall

20 ~~disburse grant funds for on-the-job training of not more than 75 percent of~~

1 ~~wages for each employee in training, or not more than 75 percent of trainer~~
2 expense upon successful completion of training hours.

3 (3) The Department of Taxes shall reimburse the Agency or the
4 Department for 25 percent of the wages or trainer expense incurred by the
5 Vermont Training Program or the Workforce Education and Training Fund
6 pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection.

7 (4) If the business successfully completes its training and meets or
8 exceeds its payroll target and either its jobs target or capital investment target,
9 the Council shall approve the enhanced training incentive and notify the
10 Department of Taxes.

11 (5) Upon notification by the Council, the Department of Taxes shall
12 disburse the full remaining value of the business's incentive, less the value of
13 the reimbursement to the Vermont Training Program or the Workforce
14 Education and Training Fund for training expenses pursuant to subdivision (3)
15 of this subsection.

16 (6)(A) If, during the utilization period for the incentive paid pursuant to
17 this subsection (h), the business fails to maintain the qualifying jobs or
18 qualifying payroll established in the award year, or does not reestablish
19 qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll to 100 percent of the award year level, the
20 Department of Taxes shall recapture the enhanced incentive pursuant to
21 subsection (d) of this section.

1 ~~(B) The amount of recapture shall equal the sum of the installments~~
2 ~~that the Department would have disbursed if it had paid the incentive in~~
3 ~~five-year installments pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section for the~~
4 ~~years during the utilization period that the qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll~~
5 ~~were not maintained.~~

6 (i) Employment growth incentive for value-added business.

7 (1) As used in this subsection, a “value-added business” means a person
8 that is subject to income taxation in Vermont and whose current or prospective
9 economic activity in Vermont for which incentives are sought under this
10 section is certified by the Secretary of Commerce and Community
11 Development to be primarily in one or more of the following sectors:

12 (A) production of tangible products, other than real estate; or

13 (B) information processing or information management services,
14 including:

15 (i) computer hardware or software, and information and
16 communication technologies, such as high-level software languages, graphics
17 hardware and software, speech and optical character recognition, high-volume
18 information storage and retrieval, and data compression;

19 (ii) technological applications that use biological systems, living
20 organisms or derivatives thereof, to make or modify products or processes for
21 specific use;

1 ~~(iii) custom computer programming services, such as writing,~~
2 ~~modifying, testing, and supporting software to meet the needs of a particular~~
3 ~~customer;~~

4 ~~(iv) computer systems design services such as planning and~~
5 ~~designing computer systems that integrate computer hardware, software, and~~
6 ~~communication technologies;~~

7 ~~(v) computer facilities management services, such as providing~~
8 ~~on-site management and operation of clients' computer systems and/or data~~
9 ~~processing facilities.~~

10 ~~(2) Any application for a Vermont employment growth incentive under~~
11 ~~this section for a value-added business shall be considered and administered~~
12 ~~pursuant to all provisions of this section, except that:~~

13 ~~(A) the "incentive ratio" pursuant to subdivision (a)(11) of this~~
14 ~~section shall be set at 90 percent; and~~

15 ~~(B) the "payroll threshold" pursuant to subdivision (a)(17) of this~~
16 ~~section shall be deemed to be 20 percent of the expected average industry~~
17 ~~payroll growth as determined by the cost-benefit model.~~

18 ~~(j) Overall gross cap on total employment growth incentive and education~~
19 ~~tax incentive authorizations.~~

20 ~~(1) For any calendar year, the total amount of employment growth~~
21 ~~incentives the Vermont Economic Progress Council is authorized to approve~~

1 ~~under this section and property tax stabilizations under 32 V.S.A. § 5404a(a)~~
2 ~~shall not exceed \$10,000,000.00 from the General Fund and Education Fund~~
3 ~~combined each year.~~

4 ~~(2) This maximum annual amount may be exceeded by the Vermont~~
5 ~~Economic Progress Council upon application to and approval by the~~
6 ~~Emergency Board.~~

7 ~~Sec. 2. [Deleted.]~~

8 ~~Sec. 3. 2006 Acts and Resolves No. 184, Sec. 11 is amended to read:~~

9 ~~Sec. 11. VEGI; ANNUAL CALENDAR YEAR CAPS~~

10 ~~(a) Net negative awards cap. Notwithstanding any other provision of law,~~
11 ~~in any calendar year, the annual authorization for the total net fiscal cost of~~
12 ~~Vermont employment growth incentives that the Vermont economic progress~~
13 ~~council or the economic incentive review board may approve under 32 V.S.A.~~
14 ~~§ 5930b(b)(5) shall not exceed \$1,000,000.00 from the general fund.~~

15 ~~(b) Restrictions to labor market area. Employment growth incentives within~~
16 ~~the annual authorization amount in subsection (a) of this section shall be~~
17 ~~granted solely for awards to businesses located in a labor market area of this~~
18 ~~state in which the rate of unemployment is greater than the average for the~~
19 ~~state or in which the average annual wage is below the average annual wage~~
20 ~~for the state. For the purposes of this section, a "labor market area" shall be as~~
21 ~~determined by the department of labor.~~

1 ~~(e) Overall gross cap on total employment growth incentive and education~~
2 ~~tax incentive authorizations. For any calendar year, the total amount of~~
3 ~~employment growth incentives the Vermont economic progress council or the~~
4 ~~economic incentive review board is authorized to approve under 32 V.S.A.~~
5 ~~§ 5930b and property tax stabilizations and allocations under 32 V.S.A.~~
6 ~~§ 5404a(a) and (e) shall not exceed \$10,000,000.00 from the general fund and~~
7 ~~education fund combined each year. This maximum annual amount may be~~
8 ~~exceeded by the Vermont economic progress council upon application to and~~
9 ~~approval by the Emergency Board. [Repealed.]~~

10 ~~Sec. 3. [Deleted.]~~

11 ~~Sec. 4. 10 V.S.A. § 531(d) is amended to read:~~

12 (d) In order to avoid duplication of programs or services and to provide the
13 greatest return on investment from training provided under this section, the
14 Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall:

15 (1) consult with the Commissioner of Labor regarding whether the
16 grantee has accessed, or is eligible to access, other workforce education and
17 training resources;

18 (2) disburse grant funds only for training hours that have been
19 successfully completed by employees; provided that, except for an award
20 under an enhanced training incentive as provided in 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(h), a
21 ~~grant for on the job training shall either provide not more than 50 percent of~~

1 ~~wages for each employee in training, or not more than 50 percent of trainer~~
2 expense, but not both, and further provided that training shall be performed in
3 accordance with a training plan that defines the subject of the training, the
4 number of training hours, and how the effectiveness of the training will be
5 evaluated; and

6 (3) use funds under this section only to supplement training efforts of
7 employers and not to replace or supplant training efforts of employers.

8 ~~Sec. 4. [Deleted.]~~

9 ~~Secs. 5-9. [Reserved]~~

10 * * * Education and Workforce Training * * *

11 Sec. 10. VERMONT STRONG SCHOLARS LOAN FORGIVENESS

12 FINDINGS; INTENT

13 The General Assembly finds that the fundamental fairness, integrity, and
14 success of the Vermont Strong Scholars loan forgiveness program under
15 Sec. 11 of this act, whereby graduating high school students will be counseled
16 and encouraged to apply to Vermont schools, take certain courses, graduate
17 and then take certain Vermont jobs, in exchange for student loan forgiveness,
18 is critically dependent on the State providing reliable, sustainable, and
19 adequate funding for the loan forgiveness.

20 ~~Sec. 11. 16 V.S.A. § 2888 is amended to read.~~

1 ~~§ 2888. VERMONT STRONG SCHOLARS AND INTERNSHIP~~

2 INITIATIVE

3 (a) Creation.

4 (1) There is created a postsecondary loan forgiveness and internship
5 initiative designed to forgive a portion of Vermont Student Assistance
6 Corporation loans of students employed in ~~economic sectors~~ occupations
7 identified as important to Vermont's economy and to build internship
8 opportunities for students to gain work experience with Vermont employers.

9 (2) The initiative shall be known as the Vermont Strong Scholars and
10 Internship Initiative and is designed to:

11 (A) encourage students to:

12 (i) consider ~~jobs in economic sectors~~ occupations that are critical
13 to the Vermont economy;

14 (ii) enroll and remain enrolled in a Vermont postsecondary
15 institution; and

16 (iii) live and work in Vermont upon graduation;

17 (B) reduce student loan debt for postsecondary ~~education in targeted~~
18 fields degrees involving a course of study related to, and resulting in,
19 employment in target occupations;

20 (C) provide experiential learning through internship opportunities
21 with Vermont employers; and

1 ~~(D) support a pipeline steady stream of qualified talent for~~
2 ~~employment with~~ Vermont's employers.

3 (b) Vermont Strong Loan Forgiveness Program.

4 (1) ~~Economic sectors~~ Occupations; projections.

5 (A) Annually, on or before November 15, the Secretary of Commerce
6 and Community Development and the Commissioner of Labor, in consultation
7 with the Vermont State Colleges, the University of Vermont, the Association
8 of Vermont Independent Colleges, the Vermont Student Assistance
9 Corporation, the Secretary of Human Services, and the Secretary of Education,
10 shall identify ~~economic sectors~~ occupations, projecting at least four years into
11 the future, that are or will be critical to the Vermont economy.

12 (B) Based upon the identified ~~economic sectors~~ occupations and the
13 number of students anticipated to qualify for loan forgiveness under this
14 section, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall
15 annually provide the General Assembly with the estimated cost of the Vermont
16 Student Assistance Corporation's loan forgiveness awards under the Loan
17 Forgiveness Program during the then-current fiscal year and each of the four
18 following fiscal years.

19 (2) Eligibility. A graduate of a public or private Vermont postsecondary
20 institution shall be eligible for forgiveness of a portion of his or her Vermont

1 ~~Student Assistance Corporation postsecondary education loans under this~~

2 section if he or she:

3 (A) was a Vermont resident, as defined in subdivision 2822(7) of this
4 title, at the time he or she was graduated;

5 (B) enrolled in his or her first year of study at a postsecondary
6 institution on or after July 1, 2015 and completed an associate's degree within
7 three years, or a bachelor's degree within six years of his or her enrollment
8 date;

9 (C) becomes employed on a full-time basis in Vermont within
10 12 months of graduation in an ~~economic sector~~ occupation identified by the
11 Secretary and Commissioner under subdivision (1) of this subsection;

12 (D) remains employed on a full-time basis in Vermont throughout the
13 period of loan forgiveness in an ~~economic sector~~ occupation identified by the
14 Secretary and Commissioner under subdivision (1) of this subsection; and

15 (E) remains a Vermont resident throughout the period of loan
16 forgiveness.

17 (3) Loan forgiveness. An eligible individual shall have a portion of his
18 or her Vermont Student Assistance Corporation loan forgiven as follows:

19 (A) ~~For~~ for an individual awarded an associate's degree, in an
20 amount equal to the comprehensive in-state tuition rate for 15 credits at the

1 ~~Vermont State Colleges during the individual's final semester of enrollment, to~~
2 be prorated over the three years following graduation;

3 (B) ~~For~~ for an individual awarded a bachelor's degree, in an amount
4 equal to the comprehensive in-state tuition rate for 30 credits at the Vermont
5 State Colleges during the individual's final year of enrollment, to be prorated
6 over the five years following graduation;

7 (C) ~~Loan~~ loan forgiveness may be awarded on a prorated basis to an
8 otherwise eligible Vermont resident who transfers to ~~and is graduated from a~~
9 Vermont postsecondary institution and graduates after July 1, 2017, with an
10 associate's degree or after July 1, 2019, with a bachelor's degree.

11 (4) Management.

12 (A) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall
13 develop all organizational details of the Loan Forgiveness Program consistent
14 with the purposes and requirements of this section.

15 (B) The Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding
16 with the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for management of the Loan
17 Forgiveness Program.

18 (C) The Secretary may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25
19 necessary to implement the Program.

20 (c) Vermont Strong Internship Program.

21 (1) Internship Program management.

1 ~~(A) The Commissioner of Labor and the Secretary of Commerce and~~
2 Community Development shall jointly develop and implement the
3 organizational details of the Internship Program consistent with the purposes
4 and requirements of this section and may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A.
5 chapter 25 necessary to implement the Internship Program.

6 (B) The Commissioner, in consultation with the Secretary, shall issue
7 a request for proposals for a person to serve as an Internship Program
8 Intermediary, who shall perform the duties and responsibilities pursuant to the
9 terms of a performance contract negotiated by the Commissioner and the
10 Intermediary.

11 (C) The Department of Labor, the Agency of Commerce and
12 Community Development, the regional development corporations, and the
13 Intermediary, shall have responsibility for building connections within the
14 business community to ensure broad private sector participation in the
15 Internship Program.

16 (D) The Program Intermediary shall:

17 (i) identify and foster postsecondary internships that are rigorous,
18 productive, well-managed, and mentored;

19 (ii) cultivate relationships with employers, employer-focused
20 organizations, and State and regional government bodies;

- 1 ~~(iii) build relationships with Vermont postsecondary institutions~~
2 and facilitate recruitment of students to apply for available internships;
3 (iv) create and maintain a registry of participating employers and
4 associated internship opportunities;
5 (v) coordinate and provide support to the participating student, the
6 employer, and the student's postsecondary institution;
7 (vi) develop and oversee a participation contract between each
8 student and employer, including terms governing the expectations for the
9 internship, a work plan, mentoring and supervision of the student, reporting by
10 the employer and student, and compensation terms; and
11 (vii) carry out any additional activities and duties as directed by
12 the Commissioner.
- 13 (2) Qualifying internships.
- 14 (A) Criteria. To qualify for participation in the Internship Program
15 an internship shall at minimum:
- 16 (i) be with a Vermont employer as approved by the Intermediary
17 in consultation with the Commissioner and Secretary;
- 18 (ii) pay compensation to an intern of at least the prevailing
19 minimum wage; and
20 (iii) meet the quality standards and expectations as established by
21 the Intermediary.

1 ~~(B) Employment of interns. Interns shall be employed by the~~
2 sponsoring employer except, with the approval of the Commissioner on a
3 case-by-case basis, interns may be employed by the Intermediary and assigned
4 to work with a participating Vermont employer, in which case the sponsoring
5 employer shall contribute funds as determined by the Commissioner.

6 (3) Student eligibility. To participate in the Internship Program, an
7 individual shall be:

8 (A) a Vermont resident enrolled in a postsecondary institution in or
9 outside Vermont;

10 (B) a student who graduated from a postsecondary institution within
11 24 months of entering the program who was classified as a Vermont resident
12 during that schooling or who is a student who attended a postsecondary
13 institution in Vermont; or

14 (C) a student enrolled in a Vermont postsecondary institution.

15 (d) Funding.

16 (1) Loan Forgiveness Program.

17 (A) Loan forgiveness; State funding.

18 (i) There is created a special fund to be known as the Vermont
19 Strong Scholars Fund pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5 which
20 shall be used and administered by the Secretary of Commerce and Community

1 ~~Development solely for the purposes of loan forgiveness pursuant to this~~
2 section.

3 (ii) The Fund shall consist of sums to be identified by the
4 Secretary from any source accepted for the benefit of the Fund and interest
5 earned from the investment of Fund balances.

6 (iii) Any interest earned and any remaining balance at the end of
7 the fiscal year shall be carried forward in the Fund.

8 (iv) The availability and payment of loan forgiveness awards
9 under this ~~subdivision~~ chapter is subject to State funding available for the
10 awards.

11 (B) Loan forgiveness; Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. The
12 Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall have the authority to grant loan
13 forgiveness pursuant to this section by using the private loan forgiveness
14 capacity associated with bonds issued by the Corporation to raise funds for
15 private loans that are eligible for forgiveness under this section, if available.

16 (2) Internship Program. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the
17 contrary, the Commissioner of Labor shall have the authority to use funds
18 allocated to the Workforce Education and Training Fund established in
19 10 V.S.A. § 543 to implement the Internship Program created in this section.

~~Sec. 12. ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND INFORMATION~~

~~TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS; ANALYSIS~~

~~The Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Agency of Education, and the Department of Labor shall conduct an analysis of the workforce education and training programs in manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, and information technology that currently exist in Vermont for mechanical and technical skills, machinist training, web and graphic development, coding, health care technology services, and other high-demand positions in Vermont. The State agencies and department shall collaborate to support the advancement of programs and initiatives, including providing financial resources as appropriate from their program funds.~~

Sec. 13. 21 V.S.A. § 497a is amended to read:

§ 497a. COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED

There is hereby established a permanent committee to be known as the Vermont ~~governor's committee on employment of people with disabilities~~ Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, to consist of ~~21~~ 22 members, including a one representative of ~~each from~~ the Vermont ~~employment service division~~ Department of Labor's Workforce Development Career Services Division and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program, one representative of ~~from~~ the ~~vocational rehabilitation division of the department of disabilities, aging, and independent living~~ Department of Disabilities, Aging

1 ~~and Independent Living Vocational Rehabilitation Division and one from the~~
2 Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, one representative of the
3 ~~veterans' administration, one representative of the veterans' employment~~
4 ~~service~~ Veterans' Administration, and 17 members to be appointed by the
5 ~~governor~~ Governor. The appointive members shall hold office for the term
6 specified or until their successors are named by the ~~governor~~ Governor. The
7 members shall receive no salary for their services as such, but the necessary
8 expenses of the ~~committee~~ Committee shall be paid by the ~~state~~ State. ~~Those~~
9 ~~persons acting as said committee on June 29, 1963 shall continue as such until~~
10 ~~their successors are appointed as herein provided.~~

11 ~~Secs. 14-19. [Reserved]~~

12 ~~*** Tax Credits ***~~

13 Sec. 20. 32 V.S.A. chapter 245 is added to read:

14 CHAPTER 245: TAX CREDITS

15 § 11001. ANGEL INVESTOR TAX CREDIT

16 (a) A qualified taxpayer who makes an eligible venture capital investment:

17 (1) may claim a credit against his or her income tax liability imposed
18 under chapter 151 of this title for 40 percent of the value of each eligible
19 venture capital investment per qualifying business made during a taxable year;

20 (2) may claim credit in increments of 25 percent of the total credit over
21 four years; provided that the amount of the credit allowed under this section for

~~any one taxable year may not exceed 50 percent of the taxpayer's income tax~~

liability for the taxable year before application of the credit; and

(3) may carry forward for up to 10 years the value of credit that the taxpayer could not claim due to the limitations in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(b)(1) The maximum aggregate investment in any one qualifying business for which a single qualified investor may receive tax credit under this section is limited to \$500,000.00 in any three consecutive years.

(2) The maximum aggregate investment in any one qualified business for which all qualified investors may receive tax credit under this section is limited to \$5,000,000.00.

(c)(1) To claim a credit pursuant to this section, a qualified taxpayer shall submit to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development documentation and any additional information requested by the Agency necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this section.

(2) The Agency, upon review and confirmation of the qualified taxpayer's eligibility for a credit, shall issue a credit certificate to the taxpayer, who shall file the certificate with the Department of Taxes with his or her State income tax return for the applicable year.

~~(d) In this section:~~

1 ~~(1) "At risk debt" means debt which is not secured, is not guaranteed by~~
2 ~~a substantial owner of the business, will not be repaid for at least five years, or~~
3 ~~bears a reasonable rate of interest.~~

4 (2) "Eligible venture capital investment" means up to \$500,000.00 of
5 total investment by one person, which is equity or at-risk debt investment in
6 one qualified business, for expenditure by the qualified business on the plant,
7 equipment, research, and development, or as working capital in Vermont.

8 (3) "Qualified business" means a business that:

9 (A) has its principal place of business in this State;

10 (B) had in the year preceding the investment annual gross sales of
11 \$3,000,000.00 or less; and

12 (C)(i) is a manufacturer;

13 (ii) is engaged in the development or application of advanced
14 technologies;

15 (iii) provides a service that is sold or rendered, or is projected to
16 be sold or rendered, predominantly outside of the State;

17 (iv) brings capital into the State, as determined by the Agency of
18 Commerce and Community Development; or

19 (v) is a visual media production company, as determined by the
20 Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

1 (4) “Qualified taxpayer” means a taxpayer who is not a substantial
2 owner of the qualified business.

3 (5) “Substantial owner” means a person who, after the investment, has
4 greater than 20 percent ownership interest in the qualified business, including
5 attribution of ownership interests of the individual’s spouse, parents, spouse’s
6 parents, siblings, and children; or is a person who is controlled by, or has
7 actual control of, the qualified business through any combination of ownership
8 and management

9 § 11002. MILLENNIAL ENTERPRISE ZONE TAX CREDIT

10 (a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to create incentives through tax
11 credits for:

12 (1) creating new, high-paying jobs in information technology and
13 related fields, including digital networks, robotics, and virtual worlds; and

14 (2) investing capital in research, design, and facilities in these sectors.

15 (b) Designation. The Secretary of Commerce and Community
16 Development shall have the authority to declare a millennial enterprise zone,
17 which may be a virtual space or geographical area, or both, where one or more
18 persons are investing human, intellectual, physical, or economic capital in
19 building a business in information technology or related fields, including
20 digital networks, robotics, and virtual worlds.

1 ~~(c) Eligibility criteria. To be eligible for a credit under this section a~~
2 person shall:

3 (1) be engaged in a business in a qualifying sector and creating new,
4 full-time jobs in Vermont; and

5 (2) pay gross wages and benefits to its employees that average at least
6 150 percent of the Vermont minimum wage.

7 (d) Tax credit.

8 (1) A person shall be eligible for a credit against his or her income tax
9 liability imposed under chapter 151 of this title for job creation or investment
10 within a designated millennial enterprise zone in a tax year as follows:

11 (A) five percent of the value of the gross wages and benefits of each
12 new, full-time job created and maintained for 12 months;

13 (B) 50 percent of the value of capital investment in real or personal
14 property of the business; and

15 (C) 10 percent of the value of the business's investment in research
16 and development.

17 (2) The amount of total credit available pursuant to this section shall not
18 exceed 50 percent of a person's tax liability per taxable year.

19 (3) A person who is eligible for credit but unable to claim the full
20 amount because of the cap under subdivision (2) of this subsection may carry
21 ~~forward the value of any unused credit for up to 10 years.~~

1 ~~(4) Upon application and demonstration that a person meets the criteria~~
2 ~~to qualify for credit under this section, the Secretary of Commerce and~~
3 ~~Community Development shall issue a tax certificate to the person, who shall~~
4 ~~file the certificate with his or her tax return in each year he or she wishes to~~
5 ~~claim available credit.~~

6 ~~(e) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall have~~
7 ~~the authority to adopt rules and procedures to implement the provisions of this~~
8 ~~section.~~

9 ~~Sec. 20. [Deleted.]~~

10 ~~Sec. 21. 32 V.S.A. § 5930a is amended to read:~~

11 § 5930a. TAX CREDIT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

12 (a) As used in this section:

13 (1) “Affordable housing project” or “project” means:

14 (A) a rental housing project identified in 26 U.S.C. § 42(g); or

15 (B) owner-occupied housing identified in 26 U.S.C. § 143(e) and (f)

16 and eligible (c)(1) or that qualifies under the Vermont Housing Finance
17 Agency allocation plan criteria governing owner-occupied housing.

18 (2) “Affordable housing tax credits” means the tax credit provided by
19 this subchapter.

20 ~~(3) “Allocating agency” means the Vermont Housing Finance Agency.~~

1 ~~(4) "Committee" means the Joint Committee on Tax Credits consisting~~
2 of five members; a representative from the Department of Housing and
3 Community Affairs, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the
4 Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the Vermont State Housing Authority, and
5 the Office of the Governor.

6 (5) "Credit certificate" means a certificate issued by the allocating
7 agency to a taxpayer that specifies the amount of affordable housing tax credits
8 that can be applied against the taxpayer's individual or corporate income tax or
9 franchise or insurance premium tax liability as provided in this subchapter.

10 (6) "Eligible applicant" means any municipality, private sector
11 developer, ~~department of state government as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6302(a),~~
12 State agency as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6301a, the Vermont Housing Finance
13 Agency, or a nonprofit organization qualifying under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3), or
14 cooperative housing organization, the purpose of which is the creation and
15 retention of to create and retain affordable housing for lower income
16 Vermonters, with lower income and the which has in its bylaws that require a
17 requirement that housing to the housing the organization creates be maintained
18 as affordable housing for lower income Vermonters with lower income on a
19 perpetual basis.

20 (7) "Eligible cash contribution" means an amount of cash contributed to
21 ~~the owner, developer, or sponsor of an affordable housing project and~~

1 ~~determined by the allocating agency as eligible for affordable housing tax~~

2 credits.

3 (8) "Section 42 credits" means tax credit provided by 26 U.S.C.

4 §§ 38 and 42.

5 (9) "Allocation plan" means the plan recommended by the Committee
6 and approved by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, which sets forth the
7 eligibility requirements and process for selection of eligible housing projects to
8 receive affordable housing tax credits under this section. The allocation plan
9 shall include:

10 (A) requirements for creation and retention of affordable housing for
11 ~~low income~~ persons; with low income, and

12 (B) requirements to ensure that eligible housing is maintained as
13 affordable by subsidy covenant, as defined in 27 V.S.A. § 610 on a perpetual
14 basis, and meets all other requirements of the Vermont Housing Finance
15 Agency related to affordable housing.

16 (b) Eligible tax credit allocations.

17 (1) Affordable housing credit allocation.

18 (A) An eligible applicant may apply to the allocating agency for an
19 allocation of affordable housing tax credits under this section related to an
20 affordable housing project authorized by the allocating agency under the

21 ~~allocation plan. In the case of a specific affordable rental housing project, the~~

1 ~~eligible applicant must shall also be the owner or a person having the right to~~
2 acquire ownership of the building and ~~must~~ shall apply prior to placement of
3 the affordable housing project in service. In the case of owner-occupied
4 housing units, the applicant ~~must apply prior to purchase of the unit and must~~
5 shall ensure that the allocated funds will be used to ensure that the housing
6 ~~qualifies or program funds remain as an affordable housing resource for all~~
7 future owners ~~of the housing~~. The allocating agency shall issue a letter of
8 approval if it finds that the applicant meets the priorities, criteria, and other
9 provisions of subdivision ~~(2)(B)~~ of this ~~subsection~~ subdivision (1). The burden
10 of proof shall be on the applicant.

11 ~~(2)(B)~~ Upon receipt of a completed application, the allocating agency
12 shall award an allocation of affordable housing tax credits with respect to a
13 project ~~under this section shall be granted~~ to an applicant, provided the
14 applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the ~~committee~~ allocating agency
15 all of the following:

16 ~~(A)(i)~~ The owner of the project has received from the allocating
17 agency a binding commitment for, a reservation or allocation of ~~or an~~
18 out-of-cap determination letter for, Section 42 credits, or meets the
19 requirements of the allocation plan for development or financing of units to be
20 owner-occupied;

21 ~~(B)(ii) The project has received community support.~~

1 ~~(2) Down payment assistance program.~~

2 ~~(A) The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall have the authority~~
3 ~~to allocate affordable housing tax credits to finance down payment assistance~~
4 ~~loans that meet the following requirements:~~

5 ~~(i) the loan is made in connection with a mortgage through an~~
6 ~~Agency program;~~

7 ~~(ii) the borrower is a first-time homebuyer of an owner-occupied~~
8 ~~primary residence; and~~

9 ~~(iii) the borrower uses the loan for the borrower's down payment,~~
10 ~~or closing costs, or both.~~

11 ~~(B) The Agency shall require the borrower to repay the loan upon the~~
12 ~~sale or refinance of the residence.~~

13 ~~(C) The Agency shall use the proceeds of loans made under the~~
14 ~~program for future down payment assistance.~~

15 (c) Amount of credit. A taxpayer who makes an eligible cash contribution
16 shall be entitled to claim against the taxpayer's individual income, corporate,
17 franchise, or insurance premium tax liability a credit in an amount specified on
18 the taxpayer's credit certificate. The first-year allocation of a credit amount to
19 a taxpayer shall also be deemed an allocation of the same amount in each of
20 ~~the following four years.~~

1 ~~(d) Availability of credit. The amount of affordable housing tax credit~~
2 allocated with respect to a project shall be available to the taxpayer every year
3 for five consecutive tax years, beginning with the tax year in which the eligible
4 cash contribution is made. Total tax credits available to the taxpayer shall be
5 the amount of the first-year allocation plus the succeeding four years' deemed
6 allocations.

7 (e) Claim for credit. A taxpayer claiming affordable housing tax credits
8 shall submit with each return on which such credit is claimed a copy of the
9 allocating agency's credit allocation to the affordable housing project and the
10 taxpayer's credit certificate. Any unused affordable housing tax credit may be
11 carried forward to reduce the taxpayer's tax liability for no more than 14
12 succeeding tax years, following the first year the affordable housing tax credit
13 is allowed.

14 (f) ~~[Deleted.]~~ [Repealed.]

15 (g)(1) In any fiscal year, the allocating agency may award up to:

16 (A) \$400,000.00 in total first-year credit allocations to all applicants
17 for rental housing projects, for a total aggregate limit of \$2,000,000.00 over
18 any given five-year period that credits are available under this subdivision; and
19 ~~may award up to~~

20 (B) \$300,000.00 per year for owner-occupied unit applicants

21 ~~financing or down payment loans consistent with the allocation plan, including~~

1 ~~for new construction and manufactured housing, for a total aggregate limit of~~
2 ~~\$1,500,000.00 over any given five-year period that credits are available under~~
3 ~~this subdivision.~~

4 ~~(2) In fiscal years 2016 through 2020, the allocating agency may award~~
5 ~~up to \$125,000.00 per year for loans through the down payment assistance~~
6 ~~program created in subdivision (b)(2) of this section for a total aggregate limit~~
7 ~~of \$625,000.00 over the five-year period that credits are available under this~~
8 ~~subdivision.~~

9 ~~(h) In any fiscal year, total first-year allocations plus succeeding-year~~
10 ~~deemed allocations shall not exceed \$3,500,000.00. The aggregate limit for all~~
11 ~~credit allocations available under this section in any fiscal year is~~
12 ~~\$4,125,000.00.~~

13 ~~Sec. 21. [Deleted.]~~

14 ~~Secs. 22-29. [Reserved]~~

15 * * * Land Use; Economic Development Planning * * *

16 Sec. 30. 24 V.S.A. § 2793b(b) is amended to read:

17 (b) Within 45 days of receipt of a completed application, the State Board
18 shall designate a new town center development district if the State Board finds,
19 with respect to that district, the municipality has:

20 (1) A confirmed planning process under section 4350 of this title,
21 ~~developed a municipal center plan, and adopted bylaws and ordinances that~~

1 ~~implement the plan, including an official map, and a design review district~~
2 created under this title or other regulations that adequately control the physical
3 form and scale of development.

4 (2) Provided a community investment agreement that has been executed
5 by authorized representatives of the municipal government, businesses, and
6 property owners within the District, and community groups with an articulated
7 purpose of supporting downtown interests, and contains the following:

8 * * *

9 (F) Evidence that civic and public buildings, or publicly owned
10 structures or facilities devoted to community use do exist, or will exist in the
11 center, as shown by the capital improvement plan or the capital budget and
12 program, and the official map.

13 * * *

~~Sec. 30. [Deleted.]~~

14 ~~Sec. 31. 10 V.S.A. § 6081(w) is added to read:~~

15 (w) Improvements to be constructed within an industrial park that was in
16 existence as of January 1, 2010 and subject to an “umbrella permit” issued
17 under this chapter shall not be required to obtain a permit or permit amendment
18 if each of the following applies:

19 (1) The improvements will comply with those specific conditions of the
20 umbrella permit included to resolve issues critical to issuance of the permit.

1 ~~Such conditions shall not include any requirement under the umbrella permit to~~
2 ~~obtain a permit amendment.~~

3 ~~(2) The municipality in which the improvements will be located has in~~
4 ~~effect a land use plan and zoning and subdivisions bylaws under 24 V.S.A.~~
5 ~~chapter 117.~~

6 ~~(3) The municipality has issued a municipal land use permit for the~~
7 ~~improvements under that chapter.~~

8 ~~(4) The Agency of Natural Resources has issued those permits and~~
9 ~~approvals that its enabling statutes require for the improvements.~~

~~Sec. 31. [Deleted.]~~

10 ~~Sec. 32. 24 V.S.A. § 2787 is added to read:~~

11 ~~§ 2787. ENTERPRISE ZONES~~

12 ~~(a) After consultation with the regional planning commission and the~~
13 ~~planning commission of each affected municipality, a regional development~~
14 ~~corporation may propose an enterprise zone consisting of a list of properties~~
15 ~~contiguous or adjacent to each other to serve as locations for new or expanded~~
16 ~~manufacturing.~~

17 ~~(b) The regional development corporation shall provide notice and~~
18 ~~opportunity to submit written comment and request a public hearing on each~~
19 ~~proposal for an enterprise zone.~~

20 ~~(1) The corporation shall provide notice of the proposal on its web page~~
21 ~~and directly to each affected regional planning commission, the legislative~~

1 ~~body and planning commission of each affected municipality, and the~~
2 ~~landowners of record in the proposed enterprise zone.~~

3 ~~(2) The corporation may hold a public hearing on request or on its own~~
4 ~~motion and shall hold a public hearing if requested by an affected regional~~
5 ~~planning commission, the legislative body or planning commission of an~~
6 ~~affected municipality, or a group consisting of or representing 25 or more~~
7 ~~persons within an affected region or municipality.~~

8 ~~(3) The contested case provisions of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 shall not apply~~
9 ~~to the designation of an enterprise zone.~~

10 ~~(c) After providing the notice and opportunity required by subsection (b) of~~
11 ~~this section, the regional development corporation may designate an enterprise~~
12 ~~zone if it finds that each property included in the zone is a suitable and~~
13 ~~commercially viable location on which to site manufacturing and will be~~
14 ~~supported by transportation, water, wastewater, and other necessary~~
15 ~~infrastructure in sufficient capacity to support manufacturing. The~~
16 ~~corporation's decision on the enterprise zone shall respond to each comment~~
17 ~~received.~~

18 ~~(d) On designation of an enterprise zone under this section:~~

19 ~~(1) The Agency of Natural Resources shall issue a decision on an~~
20 ~~application for each permit or approval that its enabling statutes require for~~
21 ~~development in the zone within 45 days of the date of application.~~

1 ~~(2) The regional development corporation or municipality in which the~~
2 ~~zone is located may apply for and receive a “master plan” permit or partial~~
3 ~~findings, or both, for the zone under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 and the rules~~
4 ~~adopted under that chapter. If a master plan permit is issued, then subsequent~~
5 ~~development within the zone shall require no further permits or permit~~
6 ~~amendments under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151, notwithstanding any provision of~~
7 ~~that chapter to the contrary.~~

~~Sec. 32. [Deleted.]~~

8 ~~Sec. 33. ACT 250, GUIDANCE ON SETTLEMENT PATTERNS~~

9 CRITERION

10 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

11 (1) 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 147, Sec. 2 amended 10 V.S.A.
12 § 6086(a)(9)(L) (Criterion 9L) to become a settlement patterns criterion. The
13 purpose of the amendment was to promote new development that is consistent
14 with Vermont’s historic development pattern of compact centers surrounded by
15 working lands; to encourage the efficient use of land, roads, utilities and other
16 infrastructure; and to promote development within existing settlements.

17 (2) Since that amendment, the Natural Resource Board (the Board) has
18 worked with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development
19 (ACCD), the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and others to provide
20 training and guidance to State agencies, regional planning commissions, trade

1 ~~associations, municipal planners, development consultants, attorneys and~~
2 others about this change to Criterion 9L.

3 (3) Effective October 17, 2014, the Board adopted a procedure to
4 implement Criterion 9L (the Criterion 9L Procedure).

5 (b) The General Assembly determines that more education and improved
6 guidance would be beneficial in implementing Criterion 9L. Procedures and
7 guidance issued on Criterion 9L shall be consistent with the purpose stated in
8 subdivision (a)(1) of this section.

9 (1) The Board shall revise the Criterion 9L Procedure in full
10 collaboration with ACCD and ANR.

11 (A) Prior to completing this revision, the Board shall solicit input
12 from affected parties and the public including planners, developers,
13 municipalities, and environmental advocacy organizations.

14 (B) The Board shall adopt the revision in the form of a procedure
15 under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 or as a guidance document, or may include some of
16 the subject matter in a procedure and some in a guidance document.

17 (2) Following the Board's revision of the Criterion 9L procedure,
18 ACCD shall work with the NRB and ANR to develop outreach material
19 including illustrative examples and implement a training plan on Criterion 9L
20 for local elected officials, municipal boards, State and regional organizations
21 ~~and associations, environmental groups, consultants, and developers.~~

~~Sec. 33. ACT 250; IMPLEMENTATION OF SETTLEMENT PATTERNS
CRITERION~~

~~(a) The General Assembly finds that:~~

~~(1) 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 147, Sec. 2 amended 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(9)(L) (Criterion 9L) to become a settlement patterns criterion. The purpose of the amendment was to guide and accomplish coordinated, efficient, and economic development in the State that is consistent with Vermont's historic settlement pattern of compact centers separated by rural countryside.~~

~~(2) Effective on October 17, 2014, the Natural Resources Board (NRB) adopted a procedure to implement Criterion 9L (the Criterion 9L Procedure).~~

~~(b) The General Assembly determines that additional opportunity for public comment on the Criterion 9L Procedure, as well as additional education and improved guidance, would be beneficial in implementing the criterion.~~

~~(1) The NRB shall review the Criterion 9L Procedure in full collaboration with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) and the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR).~~

~~(A) As part of this review, the NRB shall solicit input from affected parties and the public, including planners, developers, municipalities, environmental advocacy organizations, regional planning commissions, regional development corporations, and business advocacy organizations such as State and regional chambers of commerce.~~

~~(B) Based on this review, the NRB shall adopt revisions in the form of a procedure under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25.~~

~~(2) ACCD shall work with the NRB and ANR to develop outreach material on Criterion 9L, including illustrative examples of appropriate development design, and implement a training plan on the criterion for local elected officials, municipal boards, State and regional organizations and associations, environmental groups, consultants, and developers.~~

1 ~~Sec. 34. 10 V.S.A. § 6081(p) is amended to read:~~

2 (p) No permit or permit amendment is required for any change to a project
3 that is located entirely within a downtown development district designated
4 pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2793 or a growth center designated pursuant to
5 ~~24 V.S.A. § 2793c, if the change consists exclusively of any combination of~~

1 ~~mixed use and mixed income housing, and the cumulative changes within any~~
2 continuous period of five years, commencing on or after the effective date of
3 this subsection, remain below the jurisdictional threshold applicable to the
4 municipality specified in subdivision 6001(3)(B) subdivisions
5 6001(3)(A)(I)(aa) through (ff) of this title. Notwithstanding any contrary
6 provision of this chapter, mixed use that is exempt under this subsection may
7 include small scale, low impact manufacturing.

~~Sec. 34. [Deleted.]~~

~~Sec. 35. 24 V.S.A. § 4471(e) is amended to read:~~

~~(e) Vermont—neighborhood Neighborhood development area. Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a determination by an appropriate municipal panel shall not be subject to appeal if the determination is that a proposed residential development within a designated downtown development district, designated growth center, ~~or~~ designated Vermont neighborhood, or designated neighborhood development area seeking conditional use approval will not result in an undue adverse effect on the character of the area affected ~~as provided in~~ under subdivision 4414(3)(A)(ii) of this title.~~

~~Sec. 36. 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(9)(B) is amended to read:~~

~~(B) Primary agricultural soils. A permit will be granted for the development or subdivision of primary agricultural soils only when it is demonstrated by the applicant that, in addition to all other applicable criteria, either, the subdivision or development will not result in any reduction in the agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils; or:~~

~~(i) the development or subdivision will not significantly interfere with or jeopardize the continuation of agriculture or forestry on adjoining lands or reduce their agricultural or forestry potential; and~~

~~(ii) except in the case of an application for a project located in a designated ~~growth center~~ area listed in subdivision 6093(a)(1) of this title, there are no lands other than primary agricultural soils owned or controlled by the applicant which are reasonably suited to the purpose of the development or subdivision; and~~

~~(iii) except in the case of an application for a project located in a designated growth center area listed in subdivision 6093(a)(1) of this title, the subdivision or development has been planned to minimize the reduction of agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils through innovative land use design resulting in compact development patterns, so that the remaining primary agricultural soils on the project tract are capable of supporting or contributing to an economic or commercial agricultural operation; and~~

~~(iv) suitable mitigation will be provided for any reduction in the agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils caused by the development or subdivision, in accordance with section 6093 of this title and rules adopted by the Natural Resources Board.~~

~~Sec. 37. 10 V.S.A. § 6310 is added to read:~~

~~§ 6310. CONSERVATION EASEMENT HOLDER; NONMERGER~~

~~If a holder of a conservation easement is or becomes the owner in fee simple of property subject to the easement, the easement shall continue in effect and shall not be extinguished.~~

1 ~~Sec. 35-39. [Reserved]~~

~~Secs. 38-39. [Reserved]~~

2 * * * Business Growth; Access to Capital;

3 Tourism and Marketing * * *

4 Sec. 40. TOURISM AND MARKETING INITIATIVE

5 (a) Of the amount by which the meals and rooms tax revenue for fiscal year

6 2016 projected at the January 20, 2015 Emergency Board meeting exceeds the

7 fiscal year 2016 projection for the meals and rooms tax at the July 24, 2014,

8 Emergency Board meeting, up to 15 percent, but not more than \$750,000.00, is

9 appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to

10 promote economic development strategies targeted to prospective employers

11 ~~and employees outside the State;~~

1 ~~(1) to emphasize Vermont's long history of innovation, including~~
2 ~~agricultural, business, and technical innovation, product design, and~~
3 ~~entrepreneurship; and~~

4 ~~(2) to promote Vermont as both a great place to live and a great place to~~
5 ~~do business.~~

6 ~~(b) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development may contract~~
7 ~~with a private marketing firm located in Vermont to carry out the brand~~
8 ~~initiative pursuant to this section~~

9 ~~Sec. 40. [Deleted.]~~

10 Sec. 41. 6 V.S.A. chapter 207 is amended to read:

11 CHAPTER 207 PROMOTION AND MARKETING OF VERMONT FOODS

12 AND PRODUCTS

13 * * *

14 Subchapter 3. Agricultural Exports

15 § 4621. DOMESTIC EXPORT PROGRAM

16 (a) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in collaboration with
17 the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the Chief
18 Marketing Officer, shall have the authority to create a Domestic Export
19 Program, the purpose of which may include:

20 (1) connecting Vermont producers with brokers, buyers, and distributors
21 in other U.S. state and regional markets;

1 ~~(2) providing technical and marketing assistance to Vermont producers~~
2 to convert these connections into increased sales and sustainable commercial
3 relationships; and

4 (3) providing one-time matching grants to attend trade shows and
5 similar events to expand producers' market presence in other U.S. states,
6 subject to available funding.

7 (b) The Secretary shall collect data on the activities and outcomes of the
8 program authorized under this section and submit his or her findings and
9 recommendations in a report on or before January 15 of each year to the House
10 Committees on Agriculture and Forest Products and on Commerce and
11 Economic Development and to the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on
12 Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

13 Sec. 42. IMPLEMENTATION; DOMESTIC EXPORT PROGRAM

14 The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall pursue grants and
15 other funding, and shall seek to identify operational efficiencies within the
16 Agency, in order to adequately sustain the creation and implementation of
17 activities under the domestic export program authorized in 6 V.S.A. § 4621.

18 Sec. 43. 10 V.S.A. § 280bb is amended to read:

19 § 280bb. VERMONT ENTREPRENEURIAL LENDING PROGRAM

20 (a) There is created the Vermont Entrepreneurial Lending Program to be
21 administered by the Vermont Economic Development Authority. The Program

1 ~~shall seek to meet the working capital and capital asset financing needs of~~
2 Vermont-based businesses in seed, start-up, and growth stages. The Program
3 shall specifically seek to fulfill capital requirement needs that are unmet in
4 Vermont, including:

5 (1) ~~loans up to \$100,000.00~~ to manufacturing businesses and software
6 developers with innovative products that typically reflect long-term, organic
7 growth;

8 (2) ~~loans up to \$1,000,000.00~~ in growth-stage companies that do not
9 meet the underwriting criteria of other public and private entrepreneurial
10 financing sources; and

11 (3) ~~loans to businesses that are unable to access adequate capital~~
12 ~~resources because the primary assets of these businesses are typically~~
13 ~~intellectual property or similar nontangible assets.~~

14 * * *

15 Sec. 44. PEER-TO-PEER LENDING; STUDY; REPORT

16 (a) The Department of Financial Regulation, in collaboration with the
17 Agency of Commerce and Community Development, shall conduct a study and
18 analysis of models for peer-to-peer lending and investment that will enable
19 established entrepreneurs to connect with emerging entrepreneurs and
20 increased lending, equity investment, and business mentoring while preserving
21 adequate regulatory oversight and business consumer protection.

1 ~~(b) The Department and the Agency shall report its findings and any~~
2 ~~recommendations for legislation on or before December 1, 2015, to the House~~
3 ~~Committee on Commerce and Community Development and to the Senate~~
4 ~~Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.~~

5 Sec. 45. MEDIA PRODUCTION DATABASE

6 (a) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall create
7 and maintain a current media production database, which it shall make
8 available to the public through its website and other appropriate sources, of
9 production resources that are in the State.

10 (b) The database shall be a searchable directory of media production
11 professionals, including location scouts, lighting resources, animation, studios,
12 equipment rental, sites, editing equipment, independent contractors who work
13 in production, acting, and photographers.

14 (c) The Agency shall seek to partner with one or more Vermont colleges,
15 universities, or other internship programs to support the creation and
16 maintenance of the database pursuant to this section.

17 Sec. 46. Sec. 25 of Act 199 of 2014 (sunset of Treasurer's credit facility for
18 local investments and Treasurer's local investment advisory committee) is
19 amended to read:

20 Sec. 25. SUNSET

21 Secs. 23–24 of this act shall be repealed on July 1, ~~2015~~ 2016.

1 ~~Secs. 47-49. [Reserved]~~

2 * * * Fortified Wines * * *

3 Sec. 50. 7 V.S.A. § 2 is amended to read:

4 § 2. DEFINITIONS

5 The following words as used in this title, unless a contrary meaning is
6 required by the context, shall have the following meaning:

7 * * *

8 (10) "First-class license": a license granted by the control
9 commissioners permitting the licensee to sell malt or vinous beverages, except
10 fortified wines, to the public for consumption only on the premises for which
11 the license is granted.

12 * * *

13 (19) "Second-class license": a license granted by the control
14 commissioners permitting the licensee to export malt or vinous beverages and
15 to sell malt or vinous beverages to the public for consumption off the premises
16 for which the license is granted. The Liquor Control Board may grant a
17 second-class licensee a fortified wine permit that permits the licensee to export
18 and to sell fortified wines to the public for consumption off the licensed
19 premises.

20 (20) "Spirits" or "spirituous liquors": beverages that contain more than
21 one percent of alcohol obtained by distillation, by chemical synthesis, or

1 ~~through concentration by freezing; and vinous beverages containing more than~~
2 ~~16 23 percent of alcohol; and all vermouths of any alcohol content; malt~~
3 ~~beverages containing more than 16 percent of alcohol or more than six percent~~
4 ~~of alcohol if the terminal specific gravity thereof is less than 1.009; in each~~
5 ~~case measured by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit.~~

6 * * *

7 (22) "Third-class license": a license granted by the Liquor Control
8 Board permitting the licensee to sell ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified
9 wines for consumption only on the premises for which the license is granted.

10 (23) "Vinous beverages": all fermented beverages of any name or
11 description manufactured or obtained for sale from the natural sugar content of
12 fruits; or other agricultural product, containing sugar, the alcoholic content of
13 which is ~~not less than one percent nor more than 16 percent~~ at least one percent
14 but no more than 23 percent by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit, ~~except that~~
15 ~~all vermouths shall be purchased and retailed by and through the Liquor~~
16 ~~Control Board as authorized in chapters 5 and 7 of this title~~ including fortified
17 wines.

18 * * *

19 (28) "Fourth-class license" or "farmers' market license": the license
20 granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a manufacturer or rectifier of
21 ~~malt or vinous beverages or spirits to sell by the unopened container and~~

1 ~~distribute, by the glass, with or without charge, beverages manufactured by the~~
2 licensee. No more than a combined total of ten fourth-class and farmers'
3 market licenses may be granted to a licensed manufacturer or rectifier. At only
4 one fourth-class license location, a manufacturer or rectifier of vinous
5 beverages, malt beverages, or spirits may sell by the unopened container and
6 distribute by the glass, with or without charge, vinous beverages, malt
7 beverages, or spirits produced by no more than five additional manufacturers
8 or rectifiers, provided these beverages are purchased on invoice from the
9 manufacturer or rectifier. A manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages,
10 malt beverages, or spirits may sell its product to no more than five additional
11 manufacturers or rectifiers. A fourth-class licensee may distribute by the glass
12 no more than two ounces of malt or vinous beverage, except fortified wine,
13 with a total of eight ounces to each retail customer and no more than
14 one-quarter ounce of spirits or fortified wine with a total of one ounce to each
15 retail customer for consumption on the manufacturer's premises or at a
16 farmers' market. A farmers' market license is valid for all dates of operation
17 for a specific farmers' market location.

18 * * *

19 (38) "Fortified wines": vinous beverages, including those to which
20 ~~spirits have been added during manufacture, containing at least 16 percent~~

1 ~~alcohol but no more than 23 percent alcohol by volume at 60 degrees~~

2 Fahrenheit.

3 Sec. 51. 7 V.S.A. § 222 is amended to read:

4 § 222. FIRST- AND SECOND-CLASS LICENSES, GRANTING OF; SALE
5 TO MINORS; CONTRACTING FOR FOOD SERVICE

6 With the approval of the Liquor Control Board, the control commissioners
7 may grant the following licenses to a retail dealer for the premises where the
8 dealer carries on business ~~the following:~~

9 * * *

10 (2) Upon making application ~~and,~~ paying the license fee provided in
11 section 231 of this title, and upon satisfying the Board that such premises are
12 leased, rented, or owned by the retail dealer and are a safe, sanitary, and proper
13 place from which to sell malt and vinous beverages, a second-class license ~~for~~
14 ~~the premises where such dealer shall carry on the business,~~ which shall
15 authorize such dealer to export malt and vinous beverages, and to sell malt and
16 vinous beverages to the public from such premises for consumption off the
17 premises ~~and upon satisfying the Board that such premises are leased, rented,~~
18 ~~or owned by such retail dealers and are safe, sanitary, and a proper place from~~
19 ~~which to sell malt and vinous beverages.~~ A retail dealer carrying on business
20 in more than one place shall be required to acquire a second-class license for
21 ~~each place where he or she shall so sell the retail dealer sells malt and vinous~~

1 ~~beverages. No malt or vinous beverages shall be sold by a second class~~

2 licensee to a minor.

3 * * *

4 (5)(A) The holder of a first-class license may serve a sampler flight of
5 up to 32 ounces in the aggregate of malt beverages to a single customer at one
6 time.

7 (B) The holder of a first-class license may serve a sampler flight of
8 up to 12 ounces in the aggregate of vinous beverages, except fortified wines, to
9 a single customer at one time.

10 (C) The holder of a third-class license may serve a sampler flight of
11 up to four ounces in the aggregate of ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits or fortified wines
12 to a single customer at one time.

13 (6) The Liquor Control Board may grant a fortified wine permit to a
14 second class licensee if the licensee files an application accompanied by the
15 license fee as provided in section 231 of this title. The holder of a fortified
16 wine permit may sell fortified wines to the public from the licensed premises
17 for consumption off the premises. The Liquor Control Board shall issue no
18 ~~more than 200 fortified wine permits in any single year.~~

1 ~~Sec. 52. 7 V.S.A. § 224 is amended to read:~~

2 § 224. ~~THIRD-CLASS~~ THIRD-CLASS LICENSES; OPEN CONTAINERS

3 (a) ~~The liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board may grant to a person
4 who operates a hotel, restaurant, cabaret, or club a license of the third class if
5 the person files an application accompanied by the license fee as provided in
6 section 231 of this title for the premises in which the business of the hotel,
7 restaurant, cabaret, or club is carried on. The holder of a ~~third class~~ third-class
8 license may sell ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines for consumption
9 only on the premises covered by the license. The applicant for a ~~third class~~
10 third-class license shall satisfy the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board
11 that the applicant is the bona fide owner or lessee of the premises and that the
12 premises are operated for the purpose covered by the license.

13 * * *

14 Sec. 53. 7 V.S.A. § 225 is amended to read:

15 § 225. EDUCATIONAL SAMPLING EVENT PERMIT

16 * * *

17 (d) Taxes for the alcoholic beverages served at the event shall be paid as
18 follows:

19 (1) Malt beverages: \$0.265 per gallon served.

20 (2) Vinous beverages, except fortified wines: \$0.55 per gallon served.

21 ~~(3) Spirituous liquors. \$19.80 per gallon served.~~

1 ~~(4) Fortified wines. \$19.80 per gallon served.~~

2 Sec. 54. 7 V.S.A. § 231 is amended to read:

3 § 231. FEES FOR LICENSES AND PERMITS; DISPOSITION OF FEES

4 (a) The following fees shall be paid:

5 * * *

6 (23) For a fortified wine permit, \$100.00.

7 * * *

8 Sec. 55. 7 V.S.A. § 421 is amended to read:

9 § 421. TAX ON MALT AND VINOUS BEVERAGES

10 (a) Every bottler and wholesaler shall pay to the Commissioner of Taxes
11 the sum of 26 and one-half cents per gallon for every gallon or its equivalent of
12 malt beverage containing not more than six percent of alcohol by volume at
13 60 degrees Fahrenheit sold by them to retailers in the State ~~and~~, the sum of
14 55 cents per gallon for each gallon of malt beverage containing more than six
15 percent of alcohol by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit and each gallon of
16 vinous beverages, except fortified wines, sold by them to retailers in the ~~state~~
17 and State, and the sum of \$19.80 for each gallon of fortified wine sold by them
18 to retailers in the State. Every bottler and wholesaler shall also pay to the
19 Liquor Control Board all fees for bottler's and wholesaler's licenses. A
20 manufacturer or rectifier of malt or vinous beverages shall pay the taxes
21 ~~required by this subsection to the Commissioner of Taxes for all malt and~~

1 ~~vinous beverages, including fortified wines, manufactured or rectified by them~~
2 and sold at retail.

3 * * *

4 Sec. 56. 7 V.S.A. § 422 is amended to read:

5 § 422. TAX ON SPIRITUOUS LIQUOR

6 (a) A tax is assessed on the gross revenue ~~on~~ from the retail sale of
7 spirituous liquor in the State of Vermont, ~~including fortified wine, sold by the~~
8 Liquor Control Board, or ~~sold by~~ a manufacturer or rectifier of spirituous
9 liquor, in accordance with the provisions of this title. The tax shall be at the
10 following rates based on the gross revenue of the retail sales by the seller in the
11 current year:

12 (1) if the gross revenue of the seller is \$500,000.00 or lower, the rate of
13 tax is five percent;

14 (2) if the gross revenue of the seller is between \$500,000.00 and
15 \$750,000.00, the rate of tax is \$25,000.00 plus 10 percent of the gross revenues
16 over \$500,000.00;

17 (3) if the gross revenue of the seller is ~~over~~ \$750,000.00 or more, the
18 rate of tax is 25 percent.

19 * * *

~~Sec. 57. STUDY; REPORT~~

~~(a) On or before January 15, 2018, the Commissioner of Liquor Control, in consultation with the holders of second-class licenses and fortified wine permits, shall evaluate whether the number of fortified wine permits issued pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 222 is sufficient, and how the issuance of fortified wine permits has affected the sales of fortified wines in Vermont and the variety of fortified wines available to Vermont consumers.~~

~~(b) The Commissioner of Liquor Control shall report to the House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs regarding his or her findings on or before January 15, 2018. The Commissioner's report shall include a recommendation regarding the appropriate number of fortified wine permits to be issued pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 222.~~

~~Sec. 50. 7 V.S.A. § 2 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 2. DEFINITIONS~~

~~The following words as used in this title, unless a contrary meaning is required by the context, shall have the following meaning:~~

~~* * *~~

~~(15) "Manufacturer's or rectifier's license": a license granted by the Liquor Control Board that permits the holder to manufacture or rectify ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits or fortified wines for export and sale to the Liquor Control Board, or malt beverages and vinous beverages for export and sale to bottlers or wholesale dealers. This license permits a manufacturer of vinous beverages or fortified wines to receive from another manufacturer licensed in or outside this ~~state~~ State bulk shipments of vinous beverages to rectify with the licensee's own product, ~~provided that the vinous beverages or fortified~~~~

~~wines produced by a Vermont manufacturer may contain no more than 25 percent imported vinous beverage. The Liquor Control Board may grant to a licensed manufacturer or rectifier a first-class restaurant or cabaret license or first- and third-class restaurant or cabaret license permitting the licensee to sell alcoholic beverages to the public only at the manufacturer's premises, which, for the purposes of a manufacturer of malt beverages, includes up to two licensed establishments that are located on the contiguous real estate of the holder of the manufacturer's license, provided the manufacturer owns or has direct control over those establishments. A manufacturer of malt beverages who also holds a first-class restaurant or cabaret license may serve to a customer malt beverage by the glass, not to exceed eight glasses at one time and not to exceed four ounces in each glass. The Liquor Control Board may grant to a licensed manufacturer or a rectifier of malt beverages a second-class license permitting the licensee to sell alcoholic beverages to the public anywhere on the manufacturer's or rectifier's premises. A licensed manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages may serve, with or without charge, at an event held on premises of the licensee or the vineyard property, spirits and vinous and malt beverages, provided the licensee gives the Department written notice of the event, including details required by the Department, at least five days before the event. Any beverages not manufactured by the licensee and served at the event shall be purchased on invoice from a licensed manufacturer or wholesale dealer or the Liquor Control Board.~~

~~***~~

~~(19) "Second-class license": a license granted by the control commissioners permitting the licensee to export malt or vinous beverages and to sell malt or vinous beverages to the public for consumption off the premises for which the license is granted. The Liquor Control Board may grant a second-class licensee a fortified wine permit that permits the licensee to export and to sell fortified wines to the public for consumption off the licensed premises.~~

~~(20) "Spirits" or "spirituous liquors": beverages that contain more than one percent of alcohol obtained by distillation, by chemical synthesis, or through concentration by freezing; ~~and~~ vinous beverages containing more than ~~16~~ 23 percent of alcohol; ~~and all vermouths of any alcohol content;~~ malt beverages containing more than 16 percent of alcohol or more than six percent of alcohol if the terminal specific gravity thereof is less than 1.009; in each case measured by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit.~~

~~***~~

~~(22) "Third class license": a license granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting the licensee to sell spirituous liquors spirits and fortified wines for consumption only on the premises for which the license is granted.~~

~~(23) "Vinous beverages": all fermented beverages of any name or description manufactured or obtained for sale from the natural sugar content of fruits, or other agricultural product, containing sugar, the alcoholic content of which is not less than one percent nor more than 16 percent by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit, except that all vermouths shall be purchased and retailed by and through the Liquor Control Board as authorized in chapters 5 and 7 of this title.~~

~~***~~

~~(28) "Fourth class license" or "farmers' market license": the license granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a manufacturer or rectifier of malt ~~or~~ beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or spirits to sell by the unopened container and distribute, by the glass, with or without charge, beverages manufactured by the licensee. No more than a combined total of ten fourth-class and farmers' market licenses may be granted to a licensed manufacturer or rectifier. At only one fourth-class license location, a manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits may sell by the unopened container and distribute by the glass, with or without charge, vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits produced by no more than five additional manufacturers or rectifiers, provided these beverages are purchased on invoice from the manufacturer or rectifier. A manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits may sell its product to no more than five additional manufacturers or rectifiers. A fourth-class licensee may distribute by the glass no more than two ounces of malt or vinous beverage with a total of eight ounces to each retail customer and no more than one-quarter ounce of spirits or fortified wine with a total of one ounce to each retail customer for consumption on the manufacturer's premises or at a farmers' market. A farmers' market license is valid for all dates of operation for a specific farmers' market location.~~

~~(27) "Special events permit": a permit granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a person holding a manufacturer's or rectifier's license to sell by the glass or by unopened bottle spirits, fortified wines, malt beverages, or vinous beverages manufactured or rectified by the license holder at an event open to the public that has been approved by the local licensing authority. For the purposes of tasting only, the permit holder may distribute, with or without charge, beverages manufactured by the permit holder by the glass no more than two ounces per product and eight ounces total of malt beverages or vinous beverages and no more than one ounce in total of spirits or fortified~~

~~wines to each individual. No more than 36 104 special events permits may be issued to a holder of a manufacturer's or rectifier's license during a year. A special event permit shall be valid for the duration of each public event or four days, whichever is shorter. Requests for a special events permit, accompanied by the fee as required by subdivision 231(13) of this title, shall be submitted to the Department of Liquor Control at least five days prior to the date of the event. Each manufacturer or rectifier planning to attend a single special event under this permit may be listed on a single permit. However, each attendance at a special event shall count toward the manufacturer's or rectifier's 36 104 special-event-permit limitation.~~

~~(28) "Fourth-class license" or "farmers' market license": the license granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a manufacturer or rectifier of malt ~~or beverages~~, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or spirits to sell by the unopened container and distribute; by the glass, with or without charge, beverages manufactured by the licensee. No more than a combined total of ten fourth-class and farmers' market licenses may be granted to a licensed manufacturer or rectifier. At only one fourth-class license location, a manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits may sell by the unopened container and distribute by the glass, with or without charge, vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits produced by no more than five additional manufacturers or rectifiers, provided these beverages are purchased on invoice from the manufacturer or rectifier. A manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits may sell its product to no more than five additional manufacturers or rectifiers. A fourth-class licensee may distribute by the glass no more than two ounces of malt beverages or vinous beverage with a total of eight ounces to each retail customer and no more than one-quarter ounce of spirits or fortified wine with a total of one ounce to each retail customer for consumption on the manufacturer's premises or at a farmers' market. A fourth class licensee may distribute by the glass up to four mixed drinks containing a combined total of no more than one ounce of spirits or fortified wine to each retail customer for consumption only on the manufacturer's premises. A farmers' market license is valid for all dates of operation for a specific farmers' market location.~~

~~* * *~~

~~(38) "Fortified wines": vinous beverages, including those to which spirits have been added during manufacture, containing at least 16 percent alcohol but no more than 23 percent alcohol by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and all vermouths containing no more than 23 percent alcohol by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit.~~

~~Sec. 51. 7 V.S.A. § 104 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 104. DUTIES; AUTHORITY TO RESOLVE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS~~

~~The Board shall have supervision and management of the sale of spirituous liquors, spirits and fortified wines within the State in accordance with the provisions of this title, and through the Commissioner of Liquor Control shall:~~

~~* * *~~

~~Sec. 52. 7 V.S.A. § 107 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 107. DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER OF LIQUOR CONTROL~~

~~The ~~commissioner of liquor control~~ Commissioner of Liquor Control shall:~~

~~* * *~~

~~(2) Make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board governing the hours during which such agencies shall be open for the sale of spirituous liquors, spirits and fortified wines and governing the qualifications and department, and salaries of the agencies' employees therein and the salaries thereof.~~

~~(3) Make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board governing:~~

~~(A) the prices at which ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits shall be sold in ~~such~~ by local agencies, and the method of ~~for their~~ delivery thereof, and the quantities of ~~spirituous liquors to~~ spirits that may be sold to any one person at any one time; and~~

~~(B) the minimum prices at which fortified wines shall be sold by local agencies and second-class licensees that hold fortified wine permits, the method for their delivery, and the quantities of fortified wines that may be sold to any one person at any one time.~~

~~(4) Supervise the quantities and qualities of ~~spirituous liquor~~ spirits and fortified wines to be kept as stock in ~~such~~ local agency agencies and make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board regarding the filling of requisitions therefor on the ~~commissioner of liquor control~~ Commissioner of Liquor Control.~~

~~(5) Purchase through the ~~commissioner of buildings and general services~~ spirituous liquors Commissioner of Buildings and General Services spirits and fortified wines for and in behalf of the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board, supervise the storage thereof and the distribution to local agencies, druggists and licensees of the third class, and holders of fortified wine permits, and make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board regarding the sale and delivery from ~~such~~ the central storage plant.~~

~~***~~

~~Sec. 53. 7 V.S.A. § 110 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 110. SPECIAL BRANDS; PURCHASE BY COMMISSIONER OF LIQUOR CONTROL~~

~~If any person shall desire to purchase any class, variety, or brand of spirituous liquor spirits or fortified wine which any local agency or fortified wine permit holder does not have in stock, the ~~commissioner of liquor control~~ Commissioner of Liquor Control shall order the same through the ~~commissioner of buildings and general services~~ Commissioner of Buildings and General Services upon the payment of a reasonable deposit by the purchaser in such proportion of the approximate cost of the order as shall be prescribed by the regulations of the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board.~~

~~Sec. 54. 7 V.S.A. § 112 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 112. LIQUOR CONTROL FUND~~

~~The ~~liquor control fund~~ Liquor Control Fund is hereby established. It shall consist of all receipts from the sale of spirits, fortified wines, and other items by the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control; fees paid to the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control for the benefit of the ~~department~~ Department; all other amounts received by the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control for its benefit; and all amounts ~~which that~~ are from time to time appropriated to the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control.~~

~~Sec. 55. 7 V.S.A. § 222 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 222. FIRST- AND SECOND-CLASS LICENSES, GRANTING OF; SALE TO MINORS; CONTRACTING FOR FOOD SERVICE~~

~~With the approval of the Liquor Control Board, the ~~control commissioners~~ may grant the following licenses to a retail dealer for the premises where the dealer carries on business ~~the following~~:~~

~~***~~

~~(2) Upon making application ~~and~~, paying the license fee provided in section 231 of this title, and upon satisfying the Board that such premises are leased, rented, or owned by the retail dealer and are a safe, sanitary, and proper place from which to sell malt and vinous beverages, a second-class license ~~for the premises where such dealer shall carry on the business~~, which shall authorize such dealer to export malt and vinous beverages, and to sell malt and vinous beverages to the public from such premises for consumption off the premises ~~and upon satisfying the Board that such premises are leased~~.~~

~~rented, or owned by such retail dealers and are safe, sanitary, and a proper place from which to sell malt and vinous beverages. A retail dealer carrying on business in more than one place shall be required to acquire a second-class license for each place where ~~he or she shall so sell~~ the retail dealer sells malt and vinous beverages. No malt or vinous beverages shall be sold by a second-class licensee to a minor.~~

~~***~~

~~(5)(A) The holder of a first-class license may serve a sampler flight of up to 32 ounces in the aggregate of malt beverages to a single customer at one time.~~

~~(B) The holder of a first-class license may serve a sampler flight of up to 12 ounces in the aggregate of vinous beverages to a single customer at one time.~~

~~(C) The holder of a third-class license may serve a sampler flight of up to four ounces in the aggregate of ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits or fortified wines to a single customer at one time.~~

~~(6) The Liquor Control Board may grant a fortified wine permit to a second-class licensee if the licensee files an application accompanied by the license fee as provided in section 231 of this title. The holder of a fortified wine permit may sell fortified wines to the public from the licensed premises for consumption off the premises. The Liquor Control Board shall issue no more than 150 fortified wine permits in any single year. The holder of a fortified wine permit shall purchase all fortified wines to be offered for sale to the public pursuant to the permit through the Liquor Control Board at a price equal to no more than 75 percent of the current retail price for the fortified wine established by the Commissioner pursuant to subdivision 107(3)(B) of this title.~~

~~Sec. 56. 7 V.S.A. § 224 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 224. ~~THIRD-CLASS~~ THIRD-CLASS LICENSES; OPEN CONTAINERS~~

~~(a) ~~The liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board may grant to a person who operates a hotel, restaurant, cabaret, or club a license of the third class if the person files an application accompanied by the license fee as provided in section 231 of this title for the premises in which the business of the hotel, restaurant, cabaret, or club is carried on. The holder of a ~~third-class~~ third-class license may sell ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines for consumption only on the premises covered by the license. The applicant for a ~~third-class~~ third-class license shall satisfy the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board that the applicant is the bona fide owner or lessee of the~~

~~premises and that the premises are operated for the purpose covered by the license.~~

~~***~~

~~(c) A person who holds a ~~third class~~ third-class license shall purchase from the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board all ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines dispensed in accordance with the provisions of the ~~third class~~ third-class license and this title.~~

~~Sec. 57. 7 V.S.A. § 225 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 225. EDUCATIONAL SAMPLING EVENT PERMIT~~

~~(a) The ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board may grant an educational sampling event permit to a person to conduct an event that is open to the public and at which malt beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits, or all ~~three~~ four are served only for the purposes of marketing and educational sampling, provided the event is also approved by the local licensing authority. At least 15 days prior to the event, an applicant shall submit an application to the ~~department~~ Department in a form required by the ~~department~~ Department. The application shall include a list of the alcoholic beverages to be acquired for sampling at the event, and the application shall be accompanied by a fee in the amount required pursuant to section 231 of this title. No more than four educational sampling event permits shall be issued annually to the same person. An educational sampling event permit shall be valid for no more than four consecutive days. The permit holder shall ~~assure~~ ensure all the following:~~

~~***~~

~~(b) An educational sampling event permit holder:~~

~~***~~

~~(2) May transport malt beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, and ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits to the event site, and those beverages may be served at the event by the permit holder or the holder's employees, volunteers, or representatives of a manufacturer, bottler, or importer participating in the event, provided they meet the server age and training requirements under this chapter.~~

~~(3) ~~[Deleted.]~~ [Repealed.]~~

~~***~~

~~(d) Taxes for the alcoholic beverages served at the event shall be paid as follows:~~

~~***~~

~~(3) Spirituous liquors: \$19.80 per gallon served.~~

~~(4) Fortified wines: \$19.80 per gallon served.~~

~~Sec. 58. 7 V.S.A. § 231 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 231. FEES FOR LICENSES AND PERMITS; DISPOSITION OF FEES~~

~~(a) The following fees shall be paid:~~

~~***~~

~~(23) For a fortified wine permit, \$100.00.~~

~~***~~

~~Sec. 59. 7 V.S.A. § 422 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 422. TAX ON SPIRITUOUS LIQUOR~~

~~(a) A tax is assessed on the gross revenue ~~on~~ from the ~~retail~~ sale of ~~spirituous liquor~~ spirits and fortified wines in the State of Vermont, ~~including fortified wine, sold by the Liquor Control Board, or sold by~~ the retail sale of spirits and fortified wines in Vermont by a manufacturer or rectifier of spirituous liquor ~~spirits or fortified wines~~, in accordance with the provisions of this title. The tax shall be at the following rates based on the gross revenue of the retail sales by the seller in the current year:~~

~~(1) if the gross revenue of the seller is \$500,000.00 or lower, the rate of tax is five percent;~~

~~(2) if the gross revenue of the seller is between \$500,000.00 and \$750,000.00, the rate of tax is \$25,000.00 plus 10 percent of the gross revenues over \$500,000.00;~~

~~(3) if the gross revenue of the seller is ~~over~~ \$750,000.00 or more, the rate of tax is 25 percent.~~

~~***~~

~~Sec. 60. STATUTORY REVISION~~

~~The Legislative Council, in its statutory revision capacity pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 424, is authorized to correct instances of the words "spirituous liquors" and "spirits" appearing in Title 7 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated to "spirits and fortified wines" as necessary to implement the intent of the revisions to 7 V.S.A. § 2 in this act.~~

~~Sec. 61. STUDY; REPORT~~

~~(a) On or before January 15, 2018, the Commissioner of Liquor Control, in consultation with the holders of second-class licenses and fortified wine permits, shall evaluate whether the number of fortified wine permits issued pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 222 is sufficient, and how the issuance of fortified wine permits has affected the sales of fortified wines in Vermont and the variety of fortified wines available to Vermont consumers.~~

~~(b) The Commissioner of Liquor Control shall report to the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs regarding his or her findings on or before January 15, 2018. The Commissioner's report shall include a recommendation regarding the appropriate number of fortified wine permits to be issued pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 222.~~

~~Secs. 58-99. [Reserved]~~

Sec. 62. [Reserved]

Sec. 63. 13 V.S.A. § 4010 is amended to read:

§ 4010. GUN SILENCERS

~~(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, a person who manufactures, sells, uses, or possesses with intent to sell or use an appliance known as or used for a gun silencer shall be fined \$25.00 for each offense. The provisions of this section shall not prevent the use or possession of gun silencers by:~~

~~* * *~~

~~(b) Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to a licensed manufacturer, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, who is also registered as a manufacturer pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 5802, for the purpose of manufacturing, joint production, calibration, integration, incorporation, testing, permanent and temporary export, permanent and temporary import, research and development, repair, or sale of silencers in accordance with federal, State, and local law.~~

Secs. 64-65. [Reserved]

Sec. 66. PREWRITTEN SOFTWARE ACCESSED REMOTELY

~~Charges for the right to access and use prewritten software run on underlying infrastructure that is not managed or controlled by the purchaser or any related company shall not be considered tangible personal property under 32 V.S.A. § 9701(7).~~

~~Secs. 67-70. [Reserved]~~

~~Sec. 71. 32 V.S.A. § 5930a(c)(2) is amended to read:~~

~~(2) The new jobs should make a net positive contribution to employment in the area, and meet or exceed the prevailing compensation level including wages and benefits, for the particular employment sector consistent with the applicable wage threshold for the labor market area. The new jobs should offer benefits and opportunities for advancement and professional growth consistent with the employment sector.~~

~~Sec. 72. 32 V.S.A. § 5930b is amended to read:~~

~~§ 5930b. VERMONT EMPLOYMENT GROWTH INCENTIVE~~

~~(a) Definitions. As used in this section:~~

~~* * *~~

~~(24) “Wage threshold” means the minimum annualized Vermont gross wages and salaries paid, as determined by the Council, but not less than:~~

~~(A) 60 percent above the minimum wage at the time of application, in order for a new job to be a qualifying job under this section; or~~

~~(B) 40 percent above the State minimum wage at the time of application for a businesses located in a labor market area of this State in which the unemployment rate is greater than the average unemployment rate for the State.~~

~~(25) “Labor market area” means a labor market area as designated by the Vermont Department of Labor.~~

~~(b) Authorization process.~~

~~(1) A business may apply to the Vermont Economic Progress Council for approval of a performance-based employment growth incentive to be paid out of the business’s withholding account upon approval by the Department of Taxes pursuant to the conditions set forth in this section. Businesses shall not be permitted to deduct approved incentives from withholding liability payments otherwise due. In addition to any other information that the Council may require in order to fulfill its obligations under section 5930a of this title, an employment growth incentive application shall include all the following information:~~

~~(A) application base number of jobs;~~

~~(B) total jobs at time of application;~~

~~(C) application base payroll;~~

~~(D) total payroll at time of application;~~

~~(E) jobs target for each year in the award period;~~

~~(F) payroll target for each year in the award period;~~

~~(G) capital investment target for each year in the award period; and~~

~~(H) a statement signed by the president or chief executive officer or equivalent acknowledging that to the extent the applicant fails to meet the minimum capital investment by the end of the award period, any incentives remaining to be earned shall be limited, and any incentives taken shall be subject to complete or partial reversal, pursuant to subdivisions (c)(10) and (11) of this section.~~

~~(2) The Council shall review each application in accordance with section 5930a of this title, except that the Council may provide for an initial approval pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection 5930a(c), followed by a final approval at a later date, before December 31 of the calendar year in which the economic activity commences.~~

~~(3) Except as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection, the value of the incentives will be dependent upon the net fiscal benefit resulting from projected qualifying payroll and qualifying capital investment. An incentive ratio shall be applied to the net fiscal benefit generated by the cost-benefit model in order to determine the maximum award the Council may authorize for each application it approves. The Council may establish a threshold for wages in excess of, but not less than, the wage threshold, as defined in subsection (a) of this section for individual applications the Council wishes to approve. The Council shall calculate an incentive percentage for each approved application as follows:~~

~~Authorized award amount ÷ the five-year sum of all payroll targets~~

~~(4) An approval shall specify: the application base jobs at the time of the application; total jobs at time of application; the application base payroll; total payroll at time of application; the incentive percentage; the wage threshold; the payroll thresholds; a job target for each year of the award period; a payroll target for each year of the award period; a capital investment target for each year of the award period and description sufficient for application of subdivisions (c)(10) and (11) of this section of the nature of qualifying capital investment over the award period upon which approval shall be conditioned; and the amount of the total award. The Council shall provide a copy of each approval to the Department of Taxes along with a copy of the application submitted by that applicant.~~

~~(5)(A) Notwithstanding subdivision (3) of this subsection, the Council may authorize incentives in excess of net fiscal benefit multiplied by the incentive ratio not to exceed an annual authorization established by law for~~

~~awards to businesses located in a labor market area in which the unemployment rate is greater than the average unemployment rate for the State or in which the average annual wage is below the average annual wage for the State.~~

~~(B)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (5)(B)(ii) of this subsection, the total amount of employment growth incentives the Vermont Economic Progress Council is authorized to approve under subdivision (5)(A) of this subsection shall not exceed \$1,000,000.00 from the General Fund.~~

~~(ii) The Council shall have the authority to exceed the cap imposed in subdivision (5)(B)(i) of this subsection upon application to and approval by the Emergency Board.~~

~~(c) Claiming an employment growth incentive.~~

~~* * *~~

~~(6)(A) A business whose application is approved and, in the first, second, or third year of the award period, fails to meet or exceed its payroll target and one out of two of its jobs and capital investment targets may not claim incentives in that year. To the extent such business reaches its first, second, or third year award period targets within the succeeding two calendar year reporting periods immediately succeeding year one, two, or three of the award period, or within the extended period if an extension is granted under subdivision (B) of this subdivision (6), whichever is applicable, such business may claim incentives in five-year installments as provided in subdivisions (1) through (4) of this subsection. A business which fails to meet or exceed its payroll target and one of its two jobs and capital investment targets within this time frame shall forfeit all authority under this section to earn and claim incentives for award period year one, two, or three, as applicable, and any future award period years. The Department of Taxes shall notify the Vermont Economic Progress Council that the first, second, or third year award period targets have not been met within the prescribed period, and the Council shall rescind authority for the business to earn incentives for the activity in year one, two, or three, as applicable, and any future award period years.~~

~~(B)(i) Notwithstanding subdivision (6)(A) of this subsection, if a business determines that it may not reach its first or second year award period targets within the succeeding two calendar year reporting periods due to facts or circumstances beyond its control, the business may request that the Council extend the period to meet the targets for another two reporting periods, reviewed annually, for award year one, and one reporting period for award year two.~~

~~(ii) The Council may grant an extension pursuant to this subdivision (B) if it determines that the business failed to meet its targets due to facts or circumstances beyond the control of the business and that there is a reasonable likelihood the business will meet the award period targets within the extension period.~~

~~(iii) If the Council grants an extension pursuant to this subdivision (B), the Council shall re-calculate the value of the incentive using the cost-benefit model and adjust the amount of the award as is necessary to account for the extension of the award period.~~

~~* * *~~

~~(h) Enhanced training incentive. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Council may award an enhanced training incentive as follows:~~

~~(1) A business whose incentive application is approved may elect to claim an enhanced training incentive at any time during the award period by:~~

~~(A) notifying the Council of its intent to pursue an enhanced training incentive and dedicate its incentive funds to training through the Vermont Training Program or a Workforce Education and Training Fund program; and~~

~~(B) applying for a grant from the Vermont Training Program or the Workforce Education and Training Fund to perform training for new employees who hold qualifying jobs.~~

~~(2) If the business successfully completes new employee training pursuant to the terms of its training grant and uses incentive funds to cover a 25 percent share of the training costs, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, or the Department of Labor, as applicable, shall disburse grant funds for on-the-job training of not more than 75 percent of wages for each employee in training, or not more than 75 percent of trainer expense upon successful completion of training hours.~~

~~(3) The Department of Taxes shall reimburse the Agency or the Department for 25 percent of the wages or trainer expense incurred by the Vermont Training Program or the Workforce Education and Training Fund pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection.~~

~~(4) If the business successfully completes its training and meets or exceeds its payroll target and either its jobs target or capital investment target, the Council shall approve the enhanced training incentive and notify the Department of Taxes.~~

~~(5) Upon notification by the Council, the Department of Taxes shall disburse to the business a payment in an amount equal to the business's cost~~

~~for training and the cost of the reimbursement to the Vermont Training Program or the Workforce Education and Training Fund for training expenses pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection. The Department shall disburse the remaining value of the incentive award in annual installments pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section.~~

~~(6)(A) If, during the utilization period for the incentive paid pursuant to this subsection (h), the business fails to maintain the qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll established in the award year, or does not reestablish qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll to 100 percent of the award year level, the Department of Taxes shall recapture the enhanced incentive pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.~~

~~(B) The amount of recapture shall equal the sum of the installments that the Department would have disbursed if it had paid the incentive in five-year installments pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section for the years during the utilization period that the qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll were not maintained.~~

~~(i) Overall gross cap on total employment growth incentive and education tax incentive authorizations.~~

~~(1) For any calendar year, the total amount of employment growth incentives the Vermont Economic Progress Council is authorized to approve under this section and property tax stabilizations under 32 V.S.A. § 5404a(a) shall not exceed \$10,000,000.00 from the General Fund and Education Fund combined each year.~~

~~(2) The Council shall have the authority to exceed the cap imposed in subdivision (1) of this subsection upon application to and approval by the Emergency Board.~~

Sec. 73. 2006 Acts and Resolves No. 184, Sec. 11 is amended to read:

~~Sec. 11. VEGI; ANNUAL CALENDAR YEAR CAPS~~

~~(a) Net negative awards cap. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any calendar year, the annual authorization for the total net fiscal cost of Vermont employment growth incentives that the Vermont economic progress council or the economic incentive review board may approve under 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(b)(5) shall not exceed \$1,000,000.00 from the general fund.~~

~~(b) Restrictions to labor market area. Employment growth incentives within the annual authorization amount in subsection (a) of this section shall be granted solely for awards to businesses located in a labor market area of this state in which the rate of unemployment is greater than the average for the state or in which the average annual wage is below the average annual wage~~

~~for the state. For the purposes of this section, a "labor market area" shall be as determined by the department of labor.~~

~~(e) Overall gross cap on total employment growth incentive and education tax incentive authorizations. For any calendar year, the total amount of employment growth incentives the Vermont economic progress council or the economic incentive review board is authorized to approve under 32 V.S.A. § 5930b and property tax stabilizations and allocations under 32 V.S.A. § 5404a(a) and (e) shall not exceed \$10,000,000.00 from the general fund and education fund combined each year. This maximum annual amount may be exceeded by the Vermont economic progress council upon application to and approval by the Emergency Board. [Repealed.]~~

~~Sec. 74. 10 V.S.A. § 531(d) is amended to read:~~

~~(d) In order to avoid duplication of programs or services and to provide the greatest return on investment from training provided under this section, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall:~~

~~(1) consult with the Commissioner of Labor regarding whether the grantee has accessed, or is eligible to access, other workforce education and training resources;~~

~~(2) disburse grant funds only for training hours that have been successfully completed by employees; provided that, except for an award under an enhanced training incentive as provided in 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(h), a grant for on-the-job training shall either provide not more than 50 percent of wages for each employee in training, or not more than 50 percent of trainer expense, but not both, and further provided that training shall be performed in accordance with a training plan that defines the subject of the training, the number of training hours, and how the effectiveness of the training will be evaluated; and~~

~~(3) use funds under this section only to supplement training efforts of employers and not to replace or supplant training efforts of employers.~~

~~Secs. 75-99. [Reserved]~~

~~Sec. 100. EFFECTIVE DATES~~

~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2015, except, notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Secs. 1-4 (Vermont Employment Growth Incentive provisions) shall take effect retroactively as of January 1, 2015.~~

~~Sec. 100. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.~~

~~Sec. 100. EFFECTIVE DATES~~

~~(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, this act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.~~

~~(b) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, other than 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(c) (extension of time to meet first or second year award targets), Secs. 71–74 (Vermont Employment Growth Incentive provisions) shall take effect retroactively as of January 1, 2015.~~

A. General Commerce

**** Facilitating Business Rapid Response to Declared State Disasters ****

Sec. A.1. 11 V.S.A. chapter 16 is added to read:

*CHAPTER 16. BUSINESS RAPID RESPONSE TO
DECLARED STATE DISASTERS*

§ 1701. DEFINITIONS

In this chapter:

(1) “Critical infrastructure” means property and equipment owned or used by communications networks and electric generation, transmission, and distribution systems.

(2)(A) “Declared State disaster or emergency” means:

(i) a disaster or emergency event for which a Governor’s state of emergency proclamation has been issued;

(ii) a disaster or emergency event for which a Presidential declaration of a federal major disaster or emergency has been issued; or

(iii) a disaster or emergency event within the State for which a good faith response effort is required, and for which the Commissioner of Public Service is given notification from the registered business and the Commissioner, in consultation with the Director of Emergency Management, Department of Public Safety, designates the event as a disaster or emergency, thereby invoking the provisions of this chapter.

(B) “Declared State disaster or emergency” does not include an emergency or situation arising solely from a labor dispute.

(3) “Disaster response period” means a period that begins ten days prior to the first day of the Governor’s proclamation, the President’s declaration, or designation by another authorized official of the State as set forth in this chapter, whichever occurs first, and that extends 60 calendar days after the declared State disaster or emergency.

(4) “Disaster- or emergency-related work” means repairing, renovating, installing, building, rendering services, or other nonretail business activities in areas of the State affected by the declared State disaster or emergency that relate to critical infrastructure that has been damaged, impaired, or destroyed by the declared State disaster or emergency.

(5) “Mutual Assistance Agreement” means an agreement to which one or more registered businesses and one or more out-of-state businesses are party and pursuant to which an electric or telephone utility may request and receive assistance from an out-of-state business for performance of disaster- or emergency-related work by the out-of-state business during the disaster response period.

(6)(A) “Out-of-state business” means a business entity that, except for disaster- or emergency-related work, has no presence in the State and conducts no business in the State whose services are requested pursuant to a Mutual Assistance Agreement by a registered business or by a State or local government for purposes of performing disaster- or emergency-related work on critical infrastructure in the State.

(B) “Out-of-state business” also includes a business entity that is affiliated with a registered business in the State solely through common ownership.

(C) An out-of-state business has no registrations or tax filings or nexus in the State other than disaster- or emergency-related work during the tax year immediately preceding the declared State disaster or emergency.

(7) “Out-of-state employee” means an employee who does not work in the State, except for disaster- or emergency-related work during the disaster response period.

(8) “Registered business in the State” or “registered business” means a business entity that is currently registered with the Secretary of State to do business in the State prior to the declared State disaster or emergency.

§ 1702. OBLIGATIONS AFTER DISASTER RESPONSE PERIOD

(a) Business and employee status during the disaster response period.

(1)(A) An out-of-state business that conducts operations within the State for purposes of performing work or services related to a declared State disaster or emergency during the disaster response period shall not be considered to have established a level of presence that would require that business to register, file, or remit State or local taxes or that would require that business or its out-of-state employees to be subject to any State licensing or registration requirements.

(B) This includes any State or local business licensing or registration requirements or State and local taxes or fees, including unemployment insurance, State or local occupational licensing fees, ad valorem tax on equipment brought into the State temporarily for use during the disaster response period and subsequently removed from the State, and Public Service Board or Secretary of State licensing and regulatory requirements.

(C) For purposes of any State or local tax on or measured by, in whole or in part, net or gross income or receipts, all activity of the out-of-state business that is conducted in this State pursuant to this chapter shall be disregarded with respect to any filing requirements for such tax, including the filing required for a unitary or combined group of which the out-of-state business may be a part.

(D) For the purpose of apportioning income, revenue, or receipts, the performance by an out-of-state business of any work in accordance with this section shall not be sourced to or shall not otherwise impact or increase the amount of income, revenue, or receipts apportioned to this State.

(2)(A) An out-of-state employee shall not be considered to have established residency or a presence in the State that would require that person or that person's employer to file and pay income taxes or to be subjected to tax withholdings or to file and pay any other State or local tax or fee during the disaster response period.

(B) This includes any related State or local employer withholding and remittance obligations, but does not include any transaction taxes or fees as described in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Transaction taxes and fees. An out-of-state business and an out-of-state employee shall be required to pay transaction taxes and fees, including fuel tax and sales and use tax on materials or services consumed or used in the State subject to sales and use tax, rooms and meals tax, car rental taxes or fees that the out-of-state affiliated business or out-of-state employee purchases for use or consumption in the State during the disaster response period, unless such taxes are otherwise exempted during a disaster response period. An out-of-state business making retail sales of tangible personal property during the disaster response period shall be subject to all sales tax registration, collection, reporting, and other requirements set forth in 32 V.S.A. chapter 233.

(c) Business or employee activity after disaster response period. An out-of-state business or out-of-state employee that remains in the State after the disaster response period will become subject to the State's normal standards for establishing presence, residency, or doing business in the State

and will therefore become responsible for any business or employee tax requirements that ensue.

§ 1703. ADMINISTRATION

(a) Notification of out-of-state business during the disaster response period.

(1) The out-of-state business that enters the State shall, upon request, provide to the Secretary of State a statement that it is in the State for purposes of responding to the disaster or emergency, which statement shall include the business's name, state of domicile, principal business address, federal tax identification number, date of entry, and contact information.

(2) A registered business in the State shall, upon request, provide the information required in subdivision (1) of this subsection for any affiliate that enters the State that is an out-of-state business.

(3) The notification shall also include contact information for the registered business in the State.

(b) Notification of intent to remain in State. An out-of-state business or an out-of-state employee that remains in the State after the disaster response period shall complete State and local registration, licensing, and filing requirements that ensue as a result of establishing the requisite business presence or residency in the State applicable under the existing law.

(c) Procedures. The Secretary of State may adopt necessary rules, develop and issue forms or online processes, and maintain and make available an annual record of any designations pursuant to this chapter to carry out these administrative procedures.

Sec. A.2. [Reserved]

* * * Blockchain Technology * * *

Sec. A.3. STUDY AND REPORT; BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY

(a) On or before January 15, 2016, the Secretary of State, the Commissioner of Financial Regulation, and the Attorney General shall consult with one or more Vermont delegates to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and with the Center for Legal Innovation at Vermont Law School, and together shall submit a report to the General Assembly their finding and recommendations on the potential opportunities and risks of creating a presumption of validity for electronic facts and records that employ blockchain technology and addressing any unresolved regulatory issues.

(b) Each participating Vermont delegate to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and each participating representative of the Center for Legal Innovation at Vermont Law School who is not also an employee of the State of Vermont and who is not otherwise compensated or reimbursed for his or her time shall be entitled to per diem compensation pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010(b).

* * * Fortified Wines * * *

Sec. A.4. 7 V.S.A. § 2 is amended to read:

§ 2. DEFINITIONS

The following words as used in this title, unless a contrary meaning is required by the context, shall have the following meaning:

* * *

(15) “Manufacturer’s or rectifier’s license”: a license granted by the Liquor Control Board that permits the holder to manufacture or rectify ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits or fortified wines for export and sale to the Liquor Control Board, or malt beverages and vinous beverages for export and sale to bottlers or wholesale dealers. This license permits a manufacturer of vinous beverages or fortified wines to receive from another manufacturer licensed in or outside this ~~state~~ State bulk shipments of vinous beverages to rectify with the licensee’s own product, provided that the vinous beverages or fortified wines produced by a Vermont manufacturer may contain no more than 25 percent imported vinous beverage. The Liquor Control Board may grant to a licensed manufacturer or rectifier a first-class restaurant or cabaret license or first- and third-class restaurant or cabaret license permitting the licensee to sell alcoholic beverages to the public only at the manufacturer’s premises, which, for the purposes of a manufacturer of malt beverages, includes up to two licensed establishments that are located on the contiguous real estate of the holder of the manufacturer’s license, provided the manufacturer owns or has direct control over those establishments. A manufacturer of malt beverages who also holds a first-class restaurant or cabaret license may serve to a customer malt beverage by the glass, not to exceed eight glasses at one time and not to exceed four ounces in each glass. The Liquor Control Board may grant to a licensed manufacturer or a rectifier of malt beverages a second-class license permitting the licensee to sell alcoholic beverages to the public anywhere on the manufacturer’s or rectifier’s premises. A licensed manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages may serve, with or without charge, at an event held on premises of the licensee or the vineyard property, spirits and vinous beverages and malt beverages, provided the licensee gives the Department written notice of the event, including details required by the Department, at least five days before the event. Any beverages not

manufactured by the licensee and served at the event shall be purchased on invoice from a licensed manufacturer or wholesale dealer or the Liquor Control Board.

** * **

(19) "Second-class license": a license granted by the control commissioners permitting the licensee to export malt or vinous beverages and to sell malt beverages or vinous beverages to the public for consumption off the premises for which the license is granted. The Liquor Control Board may grant a second-class licensee a fortified wine permit that permits the licensee to export and to sell fortified wines to the public for consumption off the licensed premises.

(20) "Spirits" or "spirituous liquors": beverages that contain more than one percent of alcohol obtained by distillation, by chemical synthesis, or through concentration by freezing; ~~and~~ vinous beverages containing more than ~~16~~ 23 percent of alcohol; and ~~all vermouths of any alcohol content;~~ malt beverages containing more than 16 percent of alcohol or more than six percent of alcohol if the terminal specific gravity thereof is less than 1.009; in each case measured by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

** * **

(22) "Third-class license": a license granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting the licensee to sell ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines for consumption only on the premises for which the license is granted.

(23) "Vinous beverages": all fermented beverages of any name or description manufactured or obtained for sale from the natural sugar content of fruits; or other agricultural product, containing sugar, the alcoholic content of which is not less than one percent nor more than 16 percent by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit, ~~except that all vermouths shall be purchased and retailed by and through the Liquor Control Board as authorized in chapters 5 and 7 of this title.~~

** * **

(27) "Special events permit": a permit granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a person holding a manufacturer's or rectifier's license to sell by the glass or by unopened bottle spirits, fortified wines, malt beverages, or vinous beverages manufactured or rectified by the license holder at an event open to the public that has been approved by the local licensing authority. For the purposes of tasting only, the permit holder may distribute, with or without charge, beverages manufactured by the permit holder by the glass no more than two ounces per product and eight ounces total of malt beverages or vinous beverages and no more than one ounce in total of spirits or fortified

wines to each individual. No more than ~~36~~ 104 special events permits may be issued to a holder of a manufacturer's or rectifier's license during a year. A special event permit shall be valid for the duration of each public event or four days, whichever is shorter. Requests for a special events permit, accompanied by the fee as required by subdivision 231(13) of this title, shall be submitted to the Department of Liquor Control at least five days prior to the date of the event. Each manufacturer or rectifier planning to attend a single special event under this permit may be listed on a single permit. However, each attendance at a special event shall count toward the manufacturer's or rectifier's ~~36~~ 104 special-event-permit limitation.

(28) "Fourth-class license" or "farmers' market license": the license granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a manufacturer or rectifier of malt ~~or beverages~~, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or spirits to sell by the unopened container and distribute; by the glass, with or without charge, beverages manufactured by the licensee. No more than a combined total of ten fourth-class and farmers' market licenses may be granted to a licensed manufacturer or rectifier. At only one fourth-class license location, a manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits may sell by the unopened container and distribute by the glass, with or without charge, vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits produced by no more than five additional manufacturers or rectifiers, provided these beverages are purchased on invoice from the manufacturer or rectifier. A manufacturer or rectifier of vinous beverages, malt beverages, fortified wines, or spirits may sell its product to no more than five additional manufacturers or rectifiers. A fourth-class licensee may distribute by the glass no more than two ounces of malt beverages or vinous beverage with a total of eight ounces to each retail customer and no more than one-quarter ounce of spirits or fortified wine with a total of one ounce to each retail customer for consumption on the manufacturer's premises or at a farmers' market. A fourth class licensee may distribute by the glass up to four mixed drinks containing a combined total of no more than one ounce of spirits or fortified wine to each retail customer for consumption only on the manufacturer's premises. A farmers' market license is valid for all dates of operation for a specific farmers' market location.

* * *

(38) "Fortified wines": vinous beverages, including those to which spirits have been added during manufacture, containing at least 16 percent alcohol but no more than 23 percent alcohol by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and all vermouths containing no more than 23 percent alcohol by volume at 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

(39) "Public library or museum permit": a permit granted by the Liquor Control Board permitting a public library or museum to serve malt beverages or vinous beverages, or both, by the glass to the public for a period of not more than six hours during an event held for a charitable or educational purpose, provided that the event is approved by the local licensing authority. A permit holder may purchase malt beverages or vinous beverages directly from a licensed retailer. A permit holder shall be subject to the provisions of this title and the rules of the Board regarding the service of alcoholic beverages. A request for a permit shall be submitted to the Department in a form required by the Department at least five days prior to the event and shall be accompanied by the permit fee required by subdivision 231(a)(24) of this title. As used in this section, "public library" has the same meaning as in 22 V.S.A. § 101 and "museum" has the same meaning as in 27 V.S.A. § 1151.

Sec. A.5. 7 V.S.A. § 104 is amended to read:

§ 104. DUTIES; AUTHORITY TO RESOLVE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS

The Board shall have supervision and management of the sale of ~~spirituos liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines within the State in accordance with the provisions of this title, and through the Commissioner of Liquor Control shall:

* * *

Sec. A.6. 7 V.S.A. § 107 is amended to read:

§ 107. DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER OF LIQUOR CONTROL

The ~~commissioner of liquor control~~ Commissioner of Liquor Control shall:

* * *

(2) Make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board governing the hours during which such agencies shall be open for the sale of ~~spirituos liquors~~, spirits and fortified wines and governing the qualifications ~~and~~ department, and salaries of the agencies' employees ~~therein and the salaries thereof~~.

(3) Make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board governing:

(A) the prices at which ~~spirituos liquors~~ spirits shall be sold ~~in such~~ by local agencies, ~~and~~ the method ~~of~~ for their delivery ~~thereof~~, and the quantities of ~~spirituos liquors to~~ spirits that may be sold to any one person at any one time; and

(B) the minimum prices at which fortified wines shall be sold by local agencies and second-class licensees that hold fortified wine permits, the

method for their delivery, and the quantities of fortified wines that may be sold to any one person at any one time.

(4) Supervise the quantities and qualities of ~~spiruous liquor~~ spirits and fortified wines to be kept as stock in ~~such~~ local ~~agency~~ agencies and make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board regarding the filling of requisitions therefor on the ~~commissioner of liquor control~~ Commissioner of Liquor Control.

(5) Purchase through the ~~commissioner of buildings and general services~~ ~~spiruous liquors~~ Commissioner of Buildings and General Services spirits and fortified wines for and in behalf of the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board, supervise the storage thereof and the distribution to local agencies, druggists ~~and~~, licensees of the third class, and holders of fortified wine permits, and make regulations subject to the approval of the ~~board~~ Board regarding the sale and delivery from ~~such~~ the central storage plant.

* * *

Sec. A.7. 7 V.S.A. § 110 is amended to read:

§ 110. SPECIAL BRANDS; PURCHASE BY COMMISSIONER OF LIQUOR CONTROL

If any person shall desire to purchase any class, variety, or brand of ~~spiruous liquor~~ spirits or fortified wine which any local agency or fortified wine permit holder does not have in stock, the ~~commissioner of liquor control~~ Commissioner of Liquor Control shall order the same through the ~~commissioner of buildings and general services~~ Commissioner of Buildings and General Services upon the payment of a reasonable deposit by the purchaser in such proportion of the approximate cost of the order as shall be prescribed by the regulations of the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board.

Sec. A.8. 7 V.S.A. § 112 is amended as follows:

§ 112. LIQUOR CONTROL FUND

The ~~liquor control fund~~ Liquor Control Fund is hereby established. It shall consist of all receipts from the sale of spirits, fortified wines, and other items by the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control; fees paid to the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control for the benefit of the ~~department~~ Department; all other amounts received by the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control for its benefit; and all amounts which that are from time to time appropriated to the ~~department of liquor control~~ Department of Liquor Control.

Sec. A.9. 7 V.S.A. § 222 is amended to read:

§ 222. FIRST- AND SECOND-CLASS LICENSES, GRANTING OF; SALE
TO MINORS; CONTRACTING FOR FOOD SERVICE

With the approval of the Liquor Control Board, the control commissioners may grant the following licenses to a retail dealer for the premises where the dealer carries on business ~~the following~~:

* * *

(2) Upon making application ~~and~~, paying the license fee provided in section 231 of this title, and upon satisfying the Board that such premises are leased, rented, or owned by the retail dealer and are a safe, sanitary, and proper place from which to sell malt and vinous beverages, a second-class license for the premises where such dealer shall carry on the business, which shall authorize such dealer to export malt and vinous beverages, and to sell malt and vinous beverages to the public from such premises for consumption off the premises and upon satisfying the Board that such premises are leased, rented, or owned by such retail dealers and are safe, sanitary, and a proper place from which to sell malt and vinous beverages. A retail dealer carrying on business in more than one place shall be required to acquire a second-class license for each place where ~~he or she shall so sell~~ the retail dealer sells malt and vinous beverages. No malt or vinous beverages shall be sold by a second-class licensee to a minor.

* * *

(5)(A) The holder of a first-class license may serve a sampler flight of up to 32 ounces in the aggregate of malt beverages to a single customer at one time.

(B) The holder of a first-class license may serve a sampler flight of up to 12 ounces in the aggregate of vinous beverages to a single customer at one time.

(C) The holder of a third-class license may serve a sampler flight of up to four ounces in the aggregate of ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits or fortified wines to a single customer at one time.

(6) The Liquor Control Board may grant a fortified wine permit to a second-class licensee if the licensee files an application accompanied by the license fee as provided in section 231 of this title. The holder of a fortified wine permit may sell fortified wines to the public from the licensed premises for consumption off the premises. The Liquor Control Board shall issue no more than 150 fortified wine permits in any single year. The holder of a fortified wine permit shall purchase all fortified wines to be offered for sale to the public pursuant to the permit through the Liquor Control Board at a price

equal to no more than 75 percent of the current retail price for the fortified wine established by the Commissioner pursuant to subdivision 107(3)(B) of this title.

Sec. A.10. 7 V.S.A. § 224 is amended to read:

§ 224. ~~THIRD-CLASS~~ THIRD-CLASS LICENSES; OPEN CONTAINERS

(a) The ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board may grant to a person who operates a hotel, restaurant, cabaret, or club a license of the third class if the person files an application accompanied by the license fee as provided in section 231 of this title for the premises in which the business of the hotel, restaurant, cabaret, or club is carried on. The holder of a ~~third-class~~ third-class license may sell ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines for consumption only on the premises covered by the license. The applicant for a ~~third-class~~ third-class license shall satisfy the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board that the applicant is the bona fide owner or lessee of the premises and that the premises are operated for the purpose covered by the license.

* * *

(c) A person who holds a ~~third-class~~ third-class license shall purchase from the ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board all ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits and fortified wines dispensed in accordance with the provisions of the ~~third-class~~ third-class license and this title.

Sec. A.11. 7 V.S.A. § 225 is amended to read:

§ 225. EDUCATIONAL SAMPLING EVENT PERMIT

(a) The ~~liquor control board~~ Liquor Control Board may grant an educational sampling event permit to a person to conduct an event that is open to the public and at which malt beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits, or all ~~three~~ four are served only for the purposes of marketing and educational sampling, provided the event is also approved by the local licensing authority. At least 15 days prior to the event, an applicant shall submit an application to the ~~department~~ Department in a form required by the ~~department~~ Department. The application shall include a list of the alcoholic beverages to be acquired for sampling at the event, and the application shall be accompanied by a fee in the amount required pursuant to section 231 of this title. No more than four educational sampling event permits shall be issued annually to the same person. An educational sampling event permit shall be valid for no more than four consecutive days. The permit holder shall ~~assure~~ ensure all the following:

* * *

(b) *An educational sampling event permit holder:*

* * *

(2) *May transport malt beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, and ~~spirituous liquors~~ spirits to the event site, and those beverages may be served at the event by the permit holder or the holder's employees, volunteers, or representatives of a manufacturer, bottler, or importer participating in the event, provided they meet the server age and training requirements under this chapter.*

(3) ~~[Deleted.]~~ [Repealed.]

* * *

(d) *Taxes for the alcoholic beverages served at the event shall be paid as follows:*

* * *

(3) *Spirituous liquors: \$19.80 per gallon served.*

(4) *Fortified wines: \$19.80 per gallon served.*

Sec. A.12. 7 V.S.A. § 231 is amended to read:

§ 231. FEES FOR LICENSES AND PERMITS; DISPOSITION OF FEES

(a) *The following fees shall be paid:*

* * *

(23) *For a fortified wine permit, \$100.00.*

(24) *For a public library or museum permit, \$20.00.*

* * *

Sec. A.13. 7 V.S.A. § 422 is amended to read:

§ 422. TAX ON ~~SPIRITUOUS LIQUOR~~ SPIRITS AND FORTIFIED WINES

(a) *A tax is assessed on the gross revenue ~~on~~ from the ~~retail~~ sale of ~~spirituous liquor~~ spirits and fortified wines in the State of Vermont, ~~including fortified wine, sold by the Liquor Control Board, or sold by~~ the retail sale of spirits and fortified wines in Vermont by a manufacturer or rectifier of spirituous liquor spirits or fortified wines, in accordance with the provisions of this title. The tax shall be at the following rates based on the gross revenue of the retail sales by the seller in the current year:*

(1) *if the gross revenue of the seller is \$500,000.00 or lower, the rate of tax is five percent;*

(2) if the gross revenue of the seller is between \$500,000.00 and \$750,000.00, the rate of tax is \$25,000.00 plus 10 percent of the gross revenues over \$500,000.00;

(3) if the gross revenue of the seller is ~~over~~ \$750,000.00 or more, the rate of tax is 25 percent.

* * *

Sec. A.14. STATUTORY REVISION

The Legislative Council, in its statutory revision capacity pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 424, is authorized to correct instances of the words “spirituous liquors” and “spirits” appearing in Title 7 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated to “spirits and fortified wines” as necessary to implement the intent of the revisions to 7 V.S.A. § 2 in this act.

* * *

Sec. A.15. STUDY; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2018, the Commissioner of Liquor Control, in consultation with the holders of second-class licenses and fortified wine permits, shall evaluate whether the number of fortified wine permits issued pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 222 is sufficient, and how the issuance of fortified wine permits has affected the sales of fortified wines in Vermont and the variety of fortified wines available to Vermont consumers.

(b) The Commissioner of Liquor Control shall report to the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs regarding his or her findings on or before January 15, 2018. The Commissioner’s report shall include a recommendation regarding the appropriate number of fortified wine permits to be issued pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 222.

*Sec. A.16. VERMONT LIQUOR CONTROL SYSTEM MODERNIZATION
STUDY COMMITTEE*

(a) Creation. There is created a Vermont Liquor Control System Modernization Study Committee to evaluate Vermont’s liquor control system and the Department of Liquor Control and determine whether and how the system and the Department can be made more efficient, effective, and profitable for the Vermont economy while protecting the public health and safety.

(b) Membership. The Commission shall be composed of the following seven members:

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

(2) two current members of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the Chair of the Liquor Control Board or designee;

(4) one member appointed by the Governor; and

(5) the Commissioner of Taxes or designee.

(c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study and evaluate Vermont's liquor control system and the Department of Liquor Control and determine whether and how the system and the Department can be made more efficient, effective, and profitable for the Vermont economy while protecting the public health and safety. In particular, the Committee shall:

(1) examine and evaluate the governance and operation of the Department of Liquor Control, including the manner in which it warehouses and distributes spirits and fortified wines, in comparison with the governance and operation of liquor control agencies in other states, and identify various measures by which the governance and operation of the Department of Liquor Control could be made more efficient, effective, and profitable for the Vermont economy while protecting the public health and safety;

(2) examine and evaluate any changes to licensing, enforcement, education, fees, and taxes related to the production, sale, warehousing, and distribution of alcoholic beverages that would be necessary to implement the various measures identified pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection;

(3) evaluate the impact of the various measures identified pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection with respect to:

(A) public health and safety;

(B) the tax revenue and income generated by the Department;

(C) any savings in the cost of the services provided by the Department;

(D) any economic impact on the businesses licensed by the Department; and

(E) the price and availability of alcoholic beverages for consumers in Vermont.

(4) examine and evaluate Vermont's regulatory system for the production, sale, warehousing, and distribution of spirits and fortified wines in comparison with the systems employed by other states, including systems in

which spirits and fortified wines are warehoused or distributed, or both, by private entities, public entities, or a combination of private and public entities;

(5) identify various measures by which Vermont's regulatory system for the production, sale, warehousing, and distribution of spirits and fortified wines could be made more efficient, effective, and profitable for the Vermont economy while protecting the public health and safety;

(6) examine and evaluate any changes to licensing, enforcement, education, fees, and taxes related to the production, sale, warehousing, and distribution of alcoholic beverages that would be necessary to implement the various measures identified pursuant to subdivision (5) of this subsection; and

(7) evaluate the impact of the various measures identified pursuant to subdivision (5) of this subsection with respect to:

(A) public health and safety;

(B) the tax revenue and income generated by the Department;

(C) any savings in the cost of the services provided by the Department;

(D) any economic impact on the businesses licensed by the Department; and

(E) the price and availability of alcoholic beverages for consumers in Vermont.

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

(e) Report. On or before December 15, 2015, the Committee shall submit a report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development; on General, Housing and Military Affairs; and on Government Operations and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Government Operations with its findings and proposed changes to the Department of Liquor Control and Vermont's liquor control system, as well as a recommendation for any legislative action necessary to implement the changes proposed by the Committee. The report of the Committee may take the form of draft legislation.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Co-Chairs of the Committee shall call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before July 30, 2015.

(2) A member from the House of Representatives designated by the Speaker of the House and a member from the Senate designated by the Senate Committee on Committees shall be the Co-Chairs of the Committee.

(3) A majority of the membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 15, 2016.

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

B. Uniform Commercial Code

** * * Uniform Commercial Code; Article 4A * * **

Sec. B.1. 9A V.S.A. § 4A-108 is amended to read:

§ 4A-108. ~~EXCLUSION OF CONSUMER TRANSACTIONS GOVERNED BY FEDERAL LAW RELATIONSHIP TO ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER ACT~~

(a) ~~This~~ Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, this article does not apply to a funds transfer any part of which is governed by the Electronic Fund Transfer Act of 1978 (15 U.S.C. § 1693 et seq.) as amended from time to time.

(b) This article applies to a funds transfer that is a remittance transfer as defined in the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. § 1693o-1) as amended from time to time, unless the remittance transfer is an electronic fund transfer as defined in the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. § 1693a) as amended from time to time.

(c) In a funds transfer to which this article applies, in the event of an inconsistency between an applicable provision of this article and an applicable provision of the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, the provision of the Electronic Fund Transfer Act governs to the extent of the inconsistency.

** * * Uniform Commercial Code; Article 7 * * **

Sec. B.2. REPEAL

9A V.S.A. article 7 is repealed.

Sec. B.3. 9A V.S.A. article 7 is added to read:

ARTICLE 7. DOCUMENTS OF TITLE

Part 1. General

§ 7-101. SHORT TITLE

This article may be cited as Uniform Commercial Code-Documents of Title.

§ 7-102. DEFINITIONS AND INDEX OF DEFINITIONS

(a) In this article, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Bailee" means a person that by a warehouse receipt, bill of lading, or other document of title acknowledges possession of goods and contracts to deliver them.

(2) "Carrier" means a person that issues a bill of lading.

(3) "Consignee" means a person named in a bill of lading to which or to whose order the bill promises delivery.

(4) "Consignor" means a person named in a bill of lading as the person from which the goods have been received for shipment.

(5) "Delivery order" means a record that contains an order to deliver goods directed to a warehouse, carrier, or other person that in the ordinary course of business issues warehouse receipts or bills of lading.

(6) "Goods" means all things that are treated as movable for the purposes of a contract for storage or transportation.

(7) "Issuer" means a bailee that issues a document of title, or, in the case of an unaccepted delivery order, the person that orders the possessor of goods to deliver. The term includes a person for which an agent or employee purports to act in issuing a document if the agent or employee has real or apparent authority to issue documents, even if the issuer did not receive any goods, the goods were misdescribed, or in any other respect the agent or employee violated the issuer's instructions.

(8) "Person entitled under the document" means the holder, in the case of a negotiable document of title, or the person to which delivery of the goods is to be made by the terms of, or pursuant to instructions in a record under, a nonnegotiable document of title.

(9) "Sign" means, with present intent to authenticate or adopt a record:

(A) to execute or adopt a tangible symbol; or

(B) to attach to or logically associate with the record an electronic sound, symbol, or process.

(10) "Shipper" means a person that enters into a contract of transportation with a carrier.

(11) "Warehouse" means a person engaged in the business of storing goods for hire.

(b) Definitions in other articles applying to this article and the sections in which they appear are:

(1) "Contract for sale," Section 2-106.

(2) "Lessee in the ordinary course of business," Section 2A-103.

(3) "Receipt" of goods, Section 2-103.

(c) In addition, Article 1 contains general definitions and principles of construction and interpretation applicable throughout this article.

§ 7-103. RELATION OF ARTICLE TO TREATY OR STATUTE

(a) This article is subject to any treaty or statute of the United States or regulatory statute of this State to the extent the treaty, statute, or regulatory statute is applicable.

(b) This article does not modify or repeal any law prescribing the form or content of a document of title or the services or facilities to be afforded by a bailee, or otherwise regulating a bailee's business in respects not specifically treated in this article. However, violation of such a law does not affect the status of a document of title that otherwise is within the definition of a document of title.

(c) This article modifies, limits, and supersedes the federal Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (15 U.S.C. Section 7001, et. seq.) but does not modify, limit, or supersede Section 101(c) of that act (15 U.S.C. Section 7001(c)) or authorize electronic delivery of any of the notices described in Section 103(b) of that act (15 U.S.C. Section 7003(b)).

(d) To the extent there is a conflict between the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (9 V.S.A. chapter 20) and this article, this article governs.

§ 7-104. NEGOTIABLE AND NONNEGOTIABLE DOCUMENT OF TITLE

(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c) of this section, a document of title is negotiable if by its terms the goods are to be delivered to bearer or to the order of a named person.

(b) A document of title other than one described in subsection (a) of this section is nonnegotiable. A bill of lading that states that the goods are consigned to a named person is not made negotiable by a provision that the goods are to be delivered only against an order in a record signed by the same or another named person.

(c) A document of title is nonnegotiable if, at the time it is issued, the document has a conspicuous legend, however expressed, that it is nonnegotiable.

§ 7-105. REISSUANCE IN ALTERNATIVE MEDIUM

(a) Upon request of a person entitled under an electronic document of title, the issuer of the electronic document may issue a tangible document of title as a substitute for the electronic document if:

(1) the person entitled under the electronic document surrenders control of the document to the issuer; and

(2) the tangible document when issued contains a statement that it is issued in substitution for the electronic document.

(b) Upon issuance of a tangible document of title in substitution for an electronic document of title in accordance with subsection (a) of this section:

(1) the electronic document ceases to have any effect or validity; and

(2) the person that procured issuance of the tangible document warrants to all subsequent persons entitled under the tangible document that the warrantor was a person entitled under the electronic document when the warrantor surrendered control of the electronic document to the issuer.

(c) Upon request of a person entitled under a tangible document of title, the issuer of the tangible document may issue an electronic document of title as a substitute for the tangible document if:

(1) the person entitled under the tangible document surrenders possession of the document to the issuer; and

(2) the electronic document when issued contains a statement that it is issued in substitution for the tangible document.

(d) Upon issuance of an electronic document of title in substitution for a tangible document of title in accordance with subsection (c) of this section:

(1) the tangible document ceases to have any effect or validity; and

(2) the person that procured issuance of the electronic document warrants to all subsequent persons entitled under the electronic document that the warrantor was a person entitled under the tangible document when the warrantor surrendered possession of the tangible document to the issuer.

§ 7-106. CONTROL OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT OF TITLE

(a) A person has control of an electronic document of title if a system employed for evidencing the transfer of interests in the electronic document reliably establishes that person as the person to which the electronic document was issued or transferred.

(b) A system satisfies subsection (a) of this section, and a person is deemed to have control of an electronic document of title, if the document is created, stored, and assigned in such a manner that:

(1) a single authoritative copy of the document exists which is unique, identifiable, and, except as otherwise provided in subdivisions (4), (5), and (6) of this subsection, unalterable;

(2) the authoritative copy identifies the person asserting control as:

(A) the person to which the document was issued; or

(B) if the authoritative copy indicates that the document has been transferred, the person to which the document was most recently transferred;

(3) the authoritative copy is communicated to and maintained by the person asserting control or its designated custodian;

(4) copies or amendments that add or change an identified assignee of the authoritative copy can be made only with the consent of the person asserting control;

(5) each copy of the authoritative copy and any copy of a copy is readily identifiable as a copy that is not the authoritative copy; and

(6) any amendment of the authoritative copy is readily identifiable as authorized or unauthorized.

Part 2. Warehouse Receipts: Special Provisions

§ 7-201. PERSON THAT MAY ISSUE A WAREHOUSE RECEIPT; STORAGE UNDER BOND

(a) A warehouse receipt may be issued by any warehouse.

(b) If goods, including distilled spirits and agricultural commodities, are stored under a statute requiring a bond against withdrawal or a license for the issuance of receipts in the nature of warehouse receipts, a receipt issued for the goods is deemed to be a warehouse receipt even if issued by a person that is the owner of the goods and is not a warehouse.

§ 7-202. FORM OF WAREHOUSE RECEIPT; EFFECT OF OMISSION

(a) A warehouse receipt need not be in any particular form.

(b) Unless a warehouse receipt provides for each of the following, the warehouse is liable for damages caused to a person injured by its omission:

(1) a statement of the location of the warehouse facility where the goods are stored;

(2) the date of issue of the receipt;

(3) the unique identification code of the receipt;

(4) a statement whether the goods received will be delivered to the bearer, to a named person, or to a named person or its order;

(5) the rate of storage and handling charges, unless goods are stored under a field warehousing arrangement, in which case a statement of that fact is sufficient on a nonnegotiable receipt;

(6) a description of the goods or the packages containing them;

(7) the signature of the warehouse or its agent;

(8) if the receipt is issued for goods that the warehouse owns, either solely, jointly, or in common with others, a statement of the fact of that ownership; and

(9) a statement of the amount of advances made and of liabilities incurred for which the warehouse claims a lien or security interest, unless the precise amount of advances made or liabilities incurred, at the time of the issue of the receipt, is unknown to the warehouse or to its agent that issued the receipt, in which case a statement of the fact that advances have been made or liabilities incurred and the purpose of the advances or liabilities is sufficient.

(c) A warehouse may insert in its receipt any terms that are not contrary to this title and do not impair its obligation of delivery under section 7-403 of this title or its duty of care under section 7-204 of this title. Any contrary provision is ineffective.

§ 7-203. LIABILITY FOR NONRECEIPT OR MISDESCRIPTION

A party to or purchaser for value in good faith of a document of title, other than a bill of lading, that relies upon the description of the goods in the document may recover from the issuer damages caused by the nonreceipt or misdescription of the goods, except to the extent that:

(1) the document conspicuously indicates that the issuer does not know whether all or part of the goods in fact were received or conform to the description, such as a case in which the description is in terms of marks or labels or kind, quantity, or condition, or the receipt or description is qualified by "contents, condition, and quality unknown," "said to contain," or words of similar import, if the indication is true; or

(2) the party or purchaser otherwise has notice of the nonreceipt or misdescription.

§ 7-204. DUTY OF CARE; CONTRACTUAL LIMITATION OF WAREHOUSE'S LIABILITY

(a) A warehouse is liable for damages for loss of or injury to the goods caused by its failure to exercise care with regard to the goods that a reasonably careful person would exercise under similar circumstances. Unless otherwise agreed, the warehouse is not liable for damages that could not have been avoided by the exercise of that care.

(b) Damages may be limited by a term in the warehouse receipt or storage agreement limiting the amount of liability in case of loss or damage beyond which the warehouse is not liable. Such a limitation is not effective with respect to the warehouse's liability for conversion to its own use. On request of the bailor in a record at the time of signing the storage agreement or within a reasonable time after receipt of the warehouse receipt, the warehouse's liability may be increased on part or all of the goods covered by the storage agreement or the warehouse receipt. In this event, increased rates may be charged based on an increased valuation of the goods.

(c) Reasonable provisions as to the time and manner of presenting claims and commencing actions based on the bailment may be included in the warehouse receipt or storage agreement.

§ 7-205. TITLE UNDER WAREHOUSE RECEIPT DEFEATED IN CERTAIN CASES

A buyer in ordinary course of business of fungible goods sold and delivered by a warehouse that is also in the business of buying and selling such goods takes the goods free of any claim under a warehouse receipt even if the receipt is negotiable and has been duly negotiated.

§ 7-206. TERMINATION OF STORAGE AT WAREHOUSE'S OPTION

(a) A warehouse, by giving notice to the person on whose account the goods are held and any other person known to claim an interest in the goods, may require payment of any charges and removal of the goods from the warehouse at the termination of the period of storage fixed by the document of title or, if a period is not fixed, within a stated period not less than 30 days after the warehouse gives notice. If the goods are not removed before the date specified in the notice, the warehouse may sell them pursuant to section 7-210 of this title.

(b) If a warehouse in good faith believes that goods are about to deteriorate or decline in value to less than the amount of its lien within the time provided in subsection (a) of this section and section 7-210 of this title, the warehouse may specify in the notice given under subsection (a) of this section any reasonable shorter time for removal of the goods and, if the goods are not removed, may sell them at public sale held not less than one week after a single advertisement or posting.

(c) If, as a result of a quality or condition of the goods of which the warehouse did not have notice at the time of deposit, the goods are a hazard to other property, the warehouse facilities, or other persons, the warehouse may sell the goods at public or private sale without advertisement or posting on reasonable notification to all persons known to claim an interest in the goods. If the warehouse, after a reasonable effort, is unable to sell the goods, it may dispose of them in any lawful manner and does not incur liability by reason of that disposition.

(d) A warehouse shall deliver the goods to any person entitled to them under this article upon due demand made at any time before sale or other disposition under this section.

(e) A warehouse may satisfy its lien from the proceeds of any sale or disposition under this section but shall hold the balance for delivery on the demand of any person to which the warehouse would have been bound to deliver the goods.

§ 7-207. GOODS SHALL BE KEPT SEPARATE; FUNGIBLE GOODS

(a) Unless the warehouse receipt provides otherwise, a warehouse shall keep separate the goods covered by each receipt so as to permit at all times identification and delivery of those goods. However, different lots of fungible goods may be commingled.

(b) If different lots of fungible goods are commingled, the goods are owned in common by the persons entitled thereto and the warehouse is severally liable to each owner for that owner's share. If, because of overissue, a mass of fungible goods is insufficient to meet all the receipts the warehouse has issued against it, the persons entitled include all holders to which overissued receipts have been duly negotiated.

§ 7-208. ALTERED WAREHOUSE RECEIPTS

If a blank in a negotiable tangible warehouse receipt has been filled in without authority, a good-faith purchaser for value and without notice of the lack of authority may treat the insertion as authorized. Any other unauthorized alteration leaves any tangible or electronic warehouse receipt enforceable against the issuer according to its original tenor.

§ 7-209. LIEN OF WAREHOUSE

(a) A warehouse has a lien against the bailor on the goods covered by a warehouse receipt or storage agreement or on the proceeds thereof in its possession for charges for storage or transportation, including demurrage and terminal charges, insurance, labor, or other charges, present or future, in relation to the goods, and for expenses necessary for preservation of the goods or reasonably incurred in their sale pursuant to law. If the person on whose

account the goods are held is liable for similar charges or expenses in relation to other goods whenever deposited and it is stated in the warehouse receipt or storage agreement that a lien is claimed for charges and expenses in relation to other goods, the warehouse also has a lien against the goods covered by the warehouse receipt or storage agreement or on the proceeds thereof in its possession for those charges and expenses, whether or not the other goods have been delivered by the warehouse. However, as against a person to which a negotiable warehouse receipt is duly negotiated, a warehouse's lien is limited to charges in an amount or at a rate specified in the warehouse receipt or, if no charges are so specified, to a reasonable charge for storage of the specific goods covered by the receipt subsequent to the date of the receipt.

(b) A warehouse may also reserve a security interest against the bailor for the maximum amount specified on the receipt for charges other than those specified in subsection (a) of this section, such as for money advanced and interest. The security interest is governed by article 9 of this title.

(c) A warehouse's lien for charges and expenses under subsection (a) of this section or a security interest under subsection (b) of this section is also effective against any person that so entrusted the bailor with possession of the goods that a pledge of them by the bailor to a good-faith purchaser for value would have been valid. However, the lien or security interest is not effective against a person that before issuance of a document of title had a legal interest or a perfected security interest in the goods and that did not:

(1) deliver or entrust the goods or any document of title covering the goods to the bailor or the bailor's nominee with:

(A) actual or apparent authority to ship, store, or sell;

(B) power to obtain delivery under section 7-403 of this title; or

(C) power of disposition under sections 2-403, 2A-304(2), 2A-305(2), 9-320, or 9-321(c) of this title, or other statute or rule of law; or

(2) acquiesce in the procurement by the bailor or its nominee of any document.

(d) A warehouse's lien on household goods for charges and expenses in relation to the goods under subsection (a) of this section is also effective against all persons if the depositor was the legal possessor of the goods at the time of deposit. In this subsection, "household goods" means furniture, furnishings, or personal effects used by the depositor in a dwelling.

(e) A warehouse loses its lien on any goods that it voluntarily delivers or unjustifiably refuses to deliver.

§ 7-210. ENFORCEMENT OF WAREHOUSE'S LIEN

(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, a warehouse's lien may be enforced by public or private sale of the goods, in bulk or in packages, at any time or place and on any terms that are commercially reasonable, after notifying all persons known to claim an interest in the goods. The notification shall include a statement of the amount due, the nature of the proposed sale, and the time and place of any public sale. The fact that a better price could have been obtained by a sale at a different time or in a method different from that selected by the warehouse is not of itself sufficient to establish that the sale was not made in a commercially reasonable manner. The warehouse sells in a commercially reasonable manner if the warehouse sells the goods in the usual manner in any recognized market therefore, sells at the price current in that market at the time of the sale, or otherwise sells in conformity with commercially reasonable practices among dealers in the type of goods sold. A sale of more goods than apparently necessary to be offered to ensure satisfaction of the obligation is not commercially reasonable, except in cases covered by the preceding sentence.

(b) A warehouse may enforce its lien on goods, other than goods stored by a merchant in the course of its business, only if the following requirements are satisfied:

(1) All persons known to claim an interest in the goods shall be notified.

(2) The notification shall include an itemized statement of the claim, a description of the goods subject to the lien, a demand for payment within a specified time not less than 10 days after receipt of the notification, and a conspicuous statement that unless the claim is paid within that time the goods will be advertised for sale and sold by auction at a specified time and place.

(3) The sale shall conform to the terms of the notification.

(4) The sale shall be held at the nearest suitable place to where the goods are held or stored.

(5) After the expiration of the time given in the notification, an advertisement of the sale shall be published once a week for two weeks consecutively in a newspaper of general circulation where the sale is to be held. The advertisement shall include a description of the goods, the name of the person on whose account the goods are being held, and the time and place of the sale. The sale shall take place at least 15 days after the first publication. If there is no newspaper of general circulation where the sale is to be held, the advertisement shall be posted at least 10 days before the sale in not fewer than six conspicuous places in the neighborhood of the proposed sale.

(c) Before any sale pursuant to this section, any person claiming a right in the goods may pay the amount necessary to satisfy the lien and the reasonable expenses incurred in complying with this section. In that event, the goods may not be sold but shall be retained by the warehouse subject to the terms of the receipt and this article.

(d) A warehouse may buy at any public sale held pursuant to this section.

(e) A purchaser in good faith of goods sold to enforce a warehouse's lien takes the goods free of any rights of persons against which the lien was valid, despite the warehouse's noncompliance with this section.

(f) A warehouse may satisfy its lien from the proceeds of any sale pursuant to this section but shall hold the balance, if any, for delivery on demand to any person to which the warehouse would have been bound to deliver the goods.

(g) The rights provided by this section are in addition to all other rights allowed by law to a creditor against a debtor.

(h) If a lien is on goods stored by a merchant in the course of its business, the lien may be enforced in accordance with subsection (a) or (b) of this section.

(i) A warehouse is liable for damages caused by failure to comply with the requirements for sale under this section and, in case of willful violation, is liable for conversion.

Part 3. Bills Of Lading: Special Provisions

§ 7-301. LIABILITY FOR NONRECEIPT OR MISDESCRIPTION; "SAID TO CONTAIN"; "SHIPPER'S WEIGHT, LOAD, AND COUNT"; IMPROPER HANDLING

(a) A consignee of a nonnegotiable bill of lading which has given value in good faith, or a holder to which a negotiable bill has been duly negotiated, relying upon the description of the goods in the bill or upon the date shown in the bill, may recover from the issuer damages caused by the misdating of the bill or the nonreceipt or misdescription of the goods, except to the extent that the bill indicates that the issuer does not know whether any part or all of the goods in fact were received or conform to the description, such as in a case in which the description is in terms of marks or labels or kind, quantity, or condition or the receipt or description is qualified by "contents or condition of contents of packages unknown," "said to contain," "shipper's weight, load, and count," or words of similar import, if that indication is true.

(b) If goods are loaded by the issuer of a bill of lading;

(1) the issuer shall count the packages of goods if shipped in packages and ascertain the kind and quantity if shipped in bulk; and

(2) words such as “shipper’s weight, load, and count,” or words of similar import indicating that the description was made by the shipper are ineffective except as to goods concealed in packages.

(c) If bulk goods are loaded by a shipper that makes available to the issuer of a bill of lading adequate facilities for weighing those goods, the issuer shall ascertain the kind and quantity within a reasonable time after receiving the shipper’s request in a record to do so. In that case, “shipper’s weight” or words of similar import are ineffective.

(d) The issuer of a bill of lading, by including in the bill the words “shipper’s weight, load, and count,” or words of similar import, may indicate that the goods were loaded by the shipper, and, if that statement is true, the issuer is not liable for damages caused by the improper loading. However, omission of such words does not imply liability for damages caused by improper loading.

(e) A shipper guarantees to an issuer the accuracy at the time of shipment of the description, marks, labels, number, kind, quantity, condition, and weight, as furnished by the shipper, and the shipper shall indemnify the issuer against damage caused by inaccuracies in those particulars. This right of indemnity does not limit the issuer’s responsibility or liability under the contract of carriage to any person other than the shipper.

§ 7-302. THROUGH BILLS OF LADING AND SIMILAR DOCUMENTS
OF TITLE

(a) The issuer of a through bill of lading, or other document of title embodying an undertaking to be performed in part by a person acting as its agent or by a performing carrier, is liable to any person entitled to recover on the bill or other document for any breach by the other person or the performing carrier of its obligation under the bill or other document. However, to the extent that the bill or other document covers an undertaking to be performed overseas or in territory not contiguous to the continental United States or an undertaking including matters other than transportation, this liability for breach by the other person or the performing carrier may be varied by agreement of the parties.

(b) If goods covered by a through bill of lading or other document of title embodying an undertaking to be performed in part by a person other than the issuer are received by that person, the person is subject, with respect to its own performance while the goods are in its possession, to the obligation of the issuer. The person’s obligation is discharged by delivery of the goods to another person pursuant to the bill or other document and does not include liability for breach by any other person or by the issuer.

(c) The issuer of a through bill of lading or other document of title described in subsection (a) of this section is entitled to recover from the performing carrier, or other person in possession of the goods when the breach of the obligation under the bill or other document occurred:

(1) the amount it may be required to pay to any person entitled to recover on the bill or other document for the breach, as may be evidenced by any receipt, judgment, or transcript of judgment; and

(2) the amount of any expense reasonably incurred by the issuer in defending any action commenced by any person entitled to recover on the bill or other document for the breach.

§ 7-303. DIVERSION; RECONSIGNMENT; CHANGE OF INSTRUCTIONS

(a) Unless the bill of lading otherwise provides, a carrier may deliver the goods to a person or destination other than that stated in the bill or may otherwise dispose of the goods, without liability for misdelivery, on instructions from:

(1) the holder of a negotiable bill;

(2) the consignor on a nonnegotiable bill, even if the consignee has given contrary instructions;

(3) the consignee on a nonnegotiable bill in the absence of contrary instructions from the consignor, if the goods have arrived at the billed destination or if the consignee is in possession of the tangible bill or in control of the electronic bill; or

(4) the consignee on a nonnegotiable bill, if the consignee is entitled as against the consignor to dispose of the goods.

(b) Unless instructions described in subsection (a) of this section are included in a negotiable bill of lading, a person to which the bill is duly negotiated may hold the bailee according to the original terms.

§ 7-304. TANGIBLE BILLS OF LADING IN A SET

(a) Except as customary in international transportation, a tangible bill of lading may not be issued in a set of parts. The issuer is liable for damages caused by violation of this subsection.

(b) If a tangible bill of lading is lawfully issued in a set of parts, each of which contains an identification code and is expressed to be valid only if the goods have not been delivered against any other part, the whole of the parts constitutes one bill.

(c) If a tangible negotiable bill of lading is lawfully issued in a set of parts and different parts are negotiated to different persons, the title of the holder to which the first due negotiation is made prevails as to both the document of title and the goods even if any later holder may have received the goods from the carrier in good faith and discharged the carrier's obligation by surrendering its part.

(d) A person that negotiates or transfers a single part of a tangible bill of lading issued in a set is liable to holders of that part as if it were the whole set.

(e) The bailee shall deliver in accordance with part 4 of this article against the first presented part of a tangible bill of lading lawfully issued in a set. Delivery in this manner discharges the bailee's obligation on the whole bill.

§ 7-305. DESTINATION BILLS

(a) Instead of issuing a bill of lading to the consignor at the place of shipment, a carrier, at the request of the consignor, may procure the bill to be issued at destination or at any other place designated in the request.

(b) Upon request of any person entitled as against a carrier to control the goods while in transit and on surrender of possession or control of any outstanding bill of lading or other receipt covering the goods, the issuer, subject to section 7-105 of this title, may procure a substitute bill to be issued at any place designated in the request.

§ 7-306. ALTERED BILLS OF LADING

An unauthorized alteration or filling in of a blank in a bill of lading leaves the bill enforceable according to its original tenor.

§ 7-307. LIEN OF CARRIER

(a) A carrier has a lien on the goods covered by a bill of lading or on the proceeds thereof in its possession for charges after the date of the carrier's receipt of the goods for storage or transportation, including demurrage and terminal charges, and for expenses necessary for preservation of the goods incident to their transportation or reasonably incurred in their sale pursuant to law. However, against a purchaser for value of a negotiable bill of lading, a carrier's lien is limited to charges stated in the bill or the applicable tariffs or, if no charges are stated, a reasonable charge.

(b) A lien for charges and expenses under subsection (a) of this section on goods that the carrier was required by law to receive for transportation is effective against the consignor or any person entitled to the goods unless the carrier had notice that the consignor lacked authority to subject the goods to those charges and expenses. Any other lien under subsection (a) of this section is effective against the consignor and any person that permitted the bailor to

have control or possession of the goods unless the carrier had notice that the bailor lacked authority.

(c) A carrier loses its lien on any goods that it voluntarily delivers or unjustifiably refuses to deliver.

§ 7-308. ENFORCEMENT OF CARRIER'S LIEN

(a) A carrier's lien on goods may be enforced by public or private sale of the goods, in bulk or in packages, at any time or place and on any terms that are commercially reasonable, after notifying all persons known to claim an interest in the goods. The notification shall include a statement of the amount due, the nature of the proposed sale, and the time and place of any public sale. The fact that a better price could have been obtained by a sale at a different time or in a method different from that selected by the carrier is not of itself sufficient to establish that the sale was not made in a commercially reasonable manner. The carrier sells goods in a commercially reasonable manner if the carrier sells the goods in the usual manner in any recognized market therefor, sells at the price current in that market at the time of the sale, or otherwise sells in conformity with commercially reasonable practices among dealers in the type of goods sold. A sale of more goods than apparently necessary to be offered to ensure satisfaction of the obligation is not commercially reasonable, except in cases covered by the preceding sentence.

(b) Before any sale pursuant to this section, any person claiming a right in the goods may pay the amount necessary to satisfy the lien and the reasonable expenses incurred in complying with this section. In that event, the goods may not be sold but shall be retained by the carrier, subject to the terms of the bill of lading and this article.

(c) A carrier may buy at any public sale pursuant to this section.

(d) A purchaser in good faith of goods sold to enforce a carrier's lien takes the goods free of any rights of persons against which the lien was valid, despite the carrier's noncompliance with this section.

(e) A carrier may satisfy its lien from the proceeds of any sale pursuant to this section but shall hold the balance, if any, for delivery on demand to any person to which the carrier would have been bound to deliver the goods.

(f) The rights provided by this section are in addition to all other rights allowed by law to a creditor against a debtor.

(g) A carrier's lien may be enforced pursuant to either subsection (a) of this section or the procedure set forth in subsection 7-210(b) of this title.

(h) A carrier is liable for damages caused by failure to comply with the requirements for sale under this section and, in case of willful violation, is liable for conversion.

§ 7-309. DUTY OF CARE; CONTRACTUAL LIMITATION OF CARRIER'S LIABILITY

(a) A carrier that issues a bill of lading, whether negotiable or nonnegotiable, shall exercise the degree of care in relation to the goods which a reasonably careful person would exercise under similar circumstances. This subsection does not affect any statute, regulation, or rule of law that imposes liability upon a common carrier for damages not caused by its negligence.

(b) Damages may be limited by a term in the bill of lading or in a transportation agreement that the carrier's liability may not exceed a value stated in the bill or transportation agreement if the carrier's rates are dependent upon value and the consignor is afforded an opportunity to declare a higher value and the consignor is advised of the opportunity. However, such a limitation is not effective with respect to the carrier's liability for conversion to its own use.

(c) Reasonable provisions as to the time and manner of presenting claims and commencing actions based on the shipment may be included in a bill of lading or a transportation agreement.

Part 4. Warehouse Receipts and Bills of Lading:

General Obligations

§ 7-401. IRREGULARITIES IN ISSUE OF RECEIPT OR BILL OR CONDUCT OF ISSUER

The obligations imposed by this article on an issuer apply to a document of title even if:

(1) the document does not comply with the requirements of this article or of any other statute, rule, or regulation regarding its issuance, form, or content;

(2) the issuer violated laws regulating the conduct of its business;

(3) the goods covered by the document were owned by the bailee when the document was issued; or

(4) the person issuing the document is not a warehouse but the document purports to be a warehouse receipt.

§ 7-402. DUPLICATE DOCUMENT OF TITLE; OVERISSUE

A duplicate or any other document of title purporting to cover goods already represented by an outstanding document of the same issuer does not confer any right in the goods, except as provided in the case of tangible bills of lading in a set of parts, overissue of documents for fungible goods, substitutes for lost, stolen, or destroyed documents, or substitute documents issued pursuant to section 7-105 of this title. The issuer is liable for damages caused by its overissue or failure to identify a duplicate document by a conspicuous notation.

§ 7-403. OBLIGATION OF BAILEE TO DELIVER; EXCUSE

(a) A bailee shall deliver the goods to a person entitled under a document of title if the person complies with subsections (b) and (c) of this section, unless and to the extent that the bailee establishes any of the following:

(1) delivery of the goods to a person whose receipt was rightful as against the claimant;

(2) damage to or delay, loss, or destruction of the goods for which the bailee is not liable;

(3) previous sale or other disposition of the goods in lawful enforcement of a lien or on a warehouse's lawful termination of storage;

(4) the exercise by a seller of its right to stop delivery pursuant to section 2-705 of this title or by a lessor of its right to stop delivery pursuant to section 2A-526 of this title;

(5) a diversion, reconsignment, or other disposition pursuant to section 7-303 of this title;

(6) release, satisfaction, or any other personal defense against the claimant; or

(7) any other lawful excuse.

(b) A person claiming goods covered by a document of title shall satisfy the bailee's lien if the bailee so requests or if the bailee is prohibited by law from delivering the goods until the charges are paid.

(c) Unless a person claiming the goods is a person against which the document of title does not confer a right under subsection 7-503(a) of this title:

(1) the person claiming under a document shall surrender possession or control of any outstanding negotiable document covering the goods for cancellation or indication of partial deliveries; and

(2) the bailee shall cancel the document or conspicuously indicate in the document the partial delivery or the bailee is liable to any person to which the document is duly negotiated.

§ 7-404. NO LIABILITY FOR GOOD-FAITH DELIVERY PURSUANT TO DOCUMENT OF TITLE

A bailee that in good faith has received goods and delivered or otherwise disposed of the goods according to the terms of a document of title or pursuant to this article is not liable for the goods even if:

(1) the person from which the bailee received the goods did not have authority to procure the document or to dispose of the goods; or

(2) the person to which the bailee delivered the goods did not have authority to receive the goods.

Part 5. Warehouse Receipts And Bills Of Lading:

Negotiation And Transfer

§ 7-501. FORM OF NEGOTIATION AND REQUIREMENTS OF DUE NEGOTIATION

(a) The following rules apply to a negotiable tangible document of title:

(1) If the document's original terms run to the order of a named person, the document is negotiated by the named person's indorsement and delivery. After the named person's indorsement in blank or to bearer, any person may negotiate the document by delivery alone.

(2) If the document's original terms run to bearer, it is negotiated by delivery alone.

(3) If the document's original terms run to the order of a named person and it is delivered to the named person, the effect is the same as if the document had been negotiated.

(4) Negotiation of the document after it has been indorsed to a named person requires indorsement by the named person and delivery.

(5) A document is duly negotiated if it is negotiated in the manner stated in this subsection to a holder that purchases it in good faith, without notice of any defense against or claim to it on the part of any person, and for value, unless it is established that the negotiation is not in the regular course of business or financing or involves receiving the document in settlement or payment of a monetary obligation.

(b) The following rules apply to a negotiable electronic document of title:

(1) If the document's original terms run to the order of a named person or to bearer, the document is negotiated by delivery of the document to another person. Indorsement by the named person is not required to negotiate the document.

(2) If the document's original terms run to the order of a named person and the named person has control of the document, the effect is the same as if the document had been negotiated.

(3) A document is duly negotiated if it is negotiated in the manner stated in this subsection to a holder that purchases it in good faith, without notice of any defense against or claim to it on the part of any person, and for value, unless it is established that the negotiation is not in the regular course of business or financing or involves taking delivery of the document in settlement or payment of a monetary obligation.

(c) Indorsement of a nonnegotiable document of title neither makes it negotiable nor adds to the transferee's rights.

(d) The naming in a negotiable bill of lading of a person to be notified of the arrival of the goods does not limit the negotiability of the bill or constitute notice to a purchaser of the bill of any interest of that person in the goods.

§ 7-502. RIGHTS ACQUIRED BY DUE NEGOTIATION

(a) Subject to sections 7-205 and 7-503 of this title, a holder to which a negotiable document of title has been duly negotiated acquires thereby:

(1) title to the document;

(2) title to the goods;

(3) all rights accruing under the law of agency or estoppel, including rights to goods delivered to the bailee after the document was issued; and

(4) the direct obligation of the issuer to hold or deliver the goods according to the terms of the document free of any defense or claim by the issuer except those arising under the terms of the document or under this article, but in the case of a delivery order, the bailee's obligation accrues only upon the bailee's acceptance of the delivery order and the obligation acquired by the holder is that the issuer and any indorser will procure the acceptance of the bailee.

(b) Subject to section 7-503 of this title, title and rights acquired by due negotiation are not defeated by any stoppage of the goods represented by the document of title or by surrender of the goods by the bailee and are not impaired even if:

(1) the due negotiation or any prior due negotiation constituted a breach of duty;

(2) any person has been deprived of possession of a negotiable tangible document or control of a negotiable electronic document by misrepresentation, fraud, accident, mistake, duress, loss, theft, or conversion; or

(3) a previous sale or other transfer of the goods or document has been made to a third person.

§ 7-503. DOCUMENT OF TITLE TO GOODS DEFEATED IN CERTAIN CASES

(a) A document of title confers no right in goods against a person that before issuance of the document had a legal interest or a perfected security interest in the goods and that did not:

(1) deliver or entrust the goods or any document of title covering the goods to the bailor or the bailor's nominee with:

(A) actual or apparent authority to ship, store, or sell;

(B) power to obtain delivery under section 7-403 of this title; or

(C) power of disposition under section 2-403, subdivisions 2A-304(2) or 2A-305(2), section 9-320, or subsection 9-321(c) of this title or other statute or rule of law; or

(2) acquiesce in the procurement by the bailor or its nominee of any document.

(b) Title to goods based upon an unaccepted delivery order is subject to the rights of any person to which a negotiable warehouse receipt or bill of lading covering the goods has been duly negotiated. That title may be defeated under section 7-504 of this title to the same extent as the rights of the issuer or a transferee from the issuer.

(c) Title to goods based upon a bill of lading issued to a freight forwarder is subject to the rights of any person to which a bill issued by the freight forwarder is duly negotiated. However, delivery by the carrier in accordance with part 4 of this article pursuant to its own bill of lading discharges the carrier's obligation to deliver.

§ 7-504. RIGHTS ACQUIRED IN ABSENCE OF DUE NEGOTIATION; EFFECT OF DIVERSION; STOPPAGE OF DELIVERY

(a) A transferee of a document of title, whether negotiable or nonnegotiable, to which the document has been delivered but not duly negotiated, acquires the title and rights that its transferor had or had actual authority to convey.

(b) In the case of a transfer of a nonnegotiable document of title, until but not after the bailee receives notice of the transfer, the rights of the transferee may be defeated:

(1) by those creditors of the transferor which could treat the transfer as void under section 2-402 or 2A-308 of this title;

(2) by a buyer from the transferor in ordinary course of business if the bailee has delivered the goods to the buyer or received notification of the buyer's rights;

(3) by a lessee from the transferor in ordinary course of business if the bailee has delivered the goods to the lessee or received notification of the lessee's rights; or

(4) as against the bailee, by good-faith dealings of the bailee with the transferor.

(c) A diversion or other change of shipping instructions by the consignor in a nonnegotiable bill of lading which causes the bailee not to deliver the goods to the consignee defeats the consignee's title to the goods if the goods have been delivered to a buyer in ordinary course of business or a lessee in ordinary course of business and, in any event, defeats the consignee's rights against the bailee.

(d) Delivery of the goods pursuant to a nonnegotiable document of title may be stopped by a seller under section 2-705 of this title or a lessor under section 2A-526 of this title, subject to the requirements of due notification in those sections. A bailee that honors the seller's or lessor's instructions is entitled to be indemnified by the seller or lessor against any resulting loss or expense.

§ 7-505. INDORSER NOT GUARANTOR FOR OTHER PARTIES

The indorsement of a tangible document of title issued by a bailee does not make the indorser liable for any default by the bailee or previous indorsers.

§ 7-506. DELIVERY WITHOUT INDORSEMENT: RIGHT TO COMPEL INDORSEMENT

The transferee of a negotiable tangible document of title has a specifically enforceable right to have its transferor supply any necessary indorsement, but the transfer becomes a negotiation only as of the time the indorsement is supplied.

§ 7-507. WARRANTIES ON NEGOTIATION OR DELIVERY OF DOCUMENT OF TITLE

If a person negotiates or delivers a document of title for value, otherwise than as a mere intermediary under section 7-508 of this title, unless otherwise agreed, the transferor, in addition to any warranty made in selling or leasing the goods, warrants to its immediate purchaser only that:

(1) the document is genuine;

(2) the transferor does not have knowledge of any fact that would impair the document's validity or worth; and

(3) the negotiation or delivery is rightful and fully effective with respect to the title to the document and the goods it represents.

§ 7-508. WARRANTIES OF COLLECTING BANK AS TO DOCUMENTS
OF TITLE

A collecting bank or other intermediary known to be entrusted with documents of title on behalf of another or with collection of a draft or other claim against delivery of documents warrants by the delivery of the documents only its own good faith and authority even if the collecting bank or other intermediary has purchased or made advances against the claim or draft to be collected.

§ 7-509. ADEQUATE COMPLIANCE WITH COMMERCIAL CONTRACT

Whether a document of title is adequate to fulfill the obligations of a contract for sale, a contract for lease, or the conditions of a letter of credit is determined by article 2, 2A, or 5 of this title.

Part 6. Warehouse Receipts and Bills of Lading:

Miscellaneous Provisions

§ 7-601. LOST, STOLEN, OR DESTROYED DOCUMENTS OF TITLE

(a) If a document of title is lost, stolen, or destroyed, a court may order delivery of the goods or issuance of a substitute document and the bailee may without liability to any person comply with the order. If the document was negotiable, a court may not order delivery of the goods or issuance of a substitute document without the claimant's posting security unless it finds that any person that may suffer loss as a result of nonsurrender of possession or control of the document is adequately protected against the loss. If the document was nonnegotiable, the court may require security. The court may also order payment of the bailee's reasonable costs and attorney's fees in any action under this subsection.

(b) A bailee that, without a court order, delivers goods to a person claiming under a missing negotiable document of title is liable to any person injured thereby. If the delivery is not in good faith, the bailee is liable for

conversion. Delivery in good faith is not conversion if the claimant posts security with the bailee in an amount at least double the value of the goods at the time of posting to indemnify any person injured by the delivery which files a notice of claim within one year after the delivery.

§ 7-602. JUDICIAL PROCESS AGAINST GOODS COVERED BY
NEGOTIABLE DOCUMENT OF TITLE

Unless a document of title was originally issued upon delivery of the goods by a person that did not have power to dispose of them, a lien does not attach by virtue of any judicial process to goods in the possession of a bailee for which a negotiable document of title is outstanding unless possession or control of the document is first surrendered to the bailee or the document's negotiation is enjoined. The bailee may not be compelled to deliver the goods pursuant to process until possession or control of the document is surrendered to the bailee or to the court. A purchaser of the document for value without notice of the process or injunction takes free of the lien imposed by judicial process.

§ 7-603. CONFLICTING CLAIMS; INTERPLEADER

If more than one person claims title to or possession of the goods, the bailee is excused from delivery until the bailee has a reasonable time to ascertain the validity of the adverse claims or to commence an action for interpleader. The bailee may assert an interpleader either in defending an action for nondelivery of the goods or by original action.

Sec. B.4. 9A V.S.A. article 1 is amended to read:

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

* * *

§ 1-201. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

* * *

(b) Subject to definitions contained in other articles of this title that apply to particular articles or parts thereof:

* * *

(5) "Bearer" means a person in control of a negotiable electronic document of title or a person in possession of a negotiable instrument, negotiable tangible document of title, or certificated security that is payable to bearer or indorsed in blank.

(6) "Bill of lading" means a document of title evidencing the receipt of goods for shipment issued by a person engaged in the business of directly or

indirectly transporting or forwarding goods. The term does not include a warehouse receipt.

* * *

(15) “Delivery,” with respect to an electronic document of title means voluntary transfer of control and with respect to an instrument, a tangible document of title, or chattel paper, means voluntary transfer of possession.

~~(16) “Document of title” includes bill of lading, dock warrant, dock receipt, warehouse receipt or order for the delivery of goods, and also any other document which means a record (i) that in the regular course of business or financing is treated as adequately evidencing that the person in possession or control of the record is entitled to receive, control, hold, and dispose of the document record and the goods the record covers and (ii) that purports to be issued by or addressed to a bailee and to cover goods in the bailee’s possession which are either identified or are fungible portions of an identified mass. The term includes a bill of lading, transport document, dock warrant, dock receipt, warehouse receipt, and order for delivery of goods. To be a document of title, a document must purport to be issued by or addressed to a bailee and purport to cover goods in the bailee’s possession which are either identified or are fungible portions of an identified mass. An electronic document of title means a document of title evidenced by a record consisting of information stored in an electronic medium. A tangible document of title means a document of title evidenced by a record consisting of information that is inscribed on a tangible medium.~~

* * *

(21) “Holder” means:

(A) ~~the person in possession of a negotiable instrument that is payable either to bearer or to an identified person that is the person in possession; or~~

(B) ~~the person in possession of a negotiable tangible document of title if the goods are deliverable either to bearer or to the order of the person in possession; or~~

(C) the person in control of a negotiable electronic document of title.

* * *

(42) “Warehouse receipt” means a receipt document of title issued by a person engaged in the business of storing goods for hire.

* * *

Sec. B.5. 9A V.S.A. article 2 is amended to read:

ARTICLE 2. SALES

** * **

§ 2-103. DEFINITIONS AND INDEX OF DEFINITIONS

** * **

(3) The “Control” as provided in section 7-106 of this title and the following definitions in other articles apply to this article:

“Check”. Section 3-104.

“Consignee”. Section 7-102.

“Consignor”. Section 7-102.

“Consumer goods”. Section 9-102.

“Dishonor”. Section 3-502.

“Draft”. Section 3-104.

** * **

*§ 2-104. DEFINITIONS: “MERCHANT”; “BETWEEN MERCHANTS”;
“FINANCING AGENCY”*

** * **

(2) “Financing agency” means a bank, finance company or other person who in the ordinary course of business makes advances against goods or documents of title or who by arrangement with either the seller or the buyer intervenes in ordinary course to make or collect payment due or claimed under the contract for sale, as by purchasing or paying the seller’s draft or making advances against it or by merely taking it for collection whether or not documents of title accompany or are associated with the draft. “Financing agency” includes also a bank or other person who similarly intervenes between persons who are in the position of seller and buyer in respect to the goods (§ 2-707).

** * **

*§ 2-310. OPEN TIME FOR PAYMENT OR RUNNING OF CREDIT;
AUTHORITY TO SHIP UNDER RESERVATION*

Unless otherwise agreed:

(a) payment is due at the time and place at which the buyer is to receive the goods even though the place of shipment is the place of delivery; and

(b) if the seller is authorized to send the goods he or she may ship them under reservation, and may tender the documents of title, but the buyer may inspect the goods after their arrival before payment is due unless such inspection is inconsistent with the terms of the contract (§ 2-513); and

(c) if delivery is authorized and made by way of documents of title otherwise than by subsection (b) of this section then payment is due regardless of where the goods are to be received (i) at the time and place at which the buyer is to receive delivery of the tangible documents or ~~regardless of where the goods are to be received (ii) at the time the buyer is to receive delivery of the electronic documents and at the seller's place of business, or if none, the seller's residence;~~ and

(d) where the seller is required or authorized to ship the goods on credit the credit period runs from the time of shipment but post-dating the invoice or delaying its dispatch will correspondingly delay the starting of the credit period.

* * *

§ 2-323. FORM OF BILL OF LADING REQUIRED IN OVERSEAS SHIPMENT; "OVERSEAS"

* * *

(2) Where in a case within subsection (1) of this section a tangible bill of lading has been issued in a set of parts, unless otherwise agreed if the documents are not to be sent from abroad the buyer may demand tender of the full set; otherwise only one part of the bill of lading need be tendered. Even if the agreement expressly requires a full set:

* * *

§ 2-401. PASSING OF TITLE; RESERVATION FOR SECURITY; LIMITED APPLICATION OF THIS SECTION

* * *

(3) Unless otherwise explicitly agreed where delivery is to be made without moving the goods:

(a) if the seller is to deliver a tangible document of title, title passes at the time when and the place where he or she delivers such documents and if the seller is to deliver an electronic document of title, title passes when the seller delivers the document; or

(b) if the goods are at the time of contracting already identified and no documents of title are to be delivered, title passes at the time and place of contracting.

* * *

§ 2-503. MANNER OF SELLER'S TENDER OF DELIVERY

* * *

(4) Where goods are in the possession of a bailee and are to be delivered without being moved:

(a) tender requires that the seller either tender a negotiable document of title covering such goods or procure acknowledgment by the bailee of the buyer's right to possession of the goods; but

(b) tender to the buyer of a ~~non-negotiable~~ nonnegotiable document of title or of a ~~written direction to~~ record directing the bailee to deliver is sufficient tender unless the buyer seasonably objects, and except as otherwise provided in article 9 of this title receipt by the bailee of notification of the buyer's rights fixes those rights as against the bailee and all third persons; but risk of loss of the goods and of any failure by the bailee to honor the ~~non-negotiable~~ nonnegotiable document of title or to obey the direction remains on the seller until the buyer has had a reasonable time to present the document or direction, and a refusal by the bailee to honor the document or to obey the direction defeats the tender.

(5) Where the contract requires the seller to deliver documents:

(a) he or she must tender all such documents in correct form, except as provided in this article with respect to bills of lading in a set (§ 2-323(2)); and

(b) tender through customary banking channels is sufficient and dishonor of a draft accompanying or associated with the documents constitutes ~~non-acceptance~~ nonacceptance or rejection.

§ 2-505. SELLER'S SHIPMENT UNDER RESERVATION

(1) Where the seller has identified goods to the contract by or before shipment:

(a) his or her procurement of a negotiable bill of lading to his or her own order or otherwise reserves in him a security interest in the goods. His or her procurement of the bill to the order of a financing agency or of the buyer indicates in addition only the seller's expectation of transferring that interest to the person named.

(b) a non-negotiable bill of lading to himself or herself or his or her nominee reserves possession of the goods as security but except in a case of conditional delivery (§ 2-507(2)) a ~~non-negotiable~~ nonnegotiable bill of lading naming the buyer as consignee reserves no security interest even though the seller retains possession or control of the bill of lading.

(2) When shipment by the seller with reservation of a security interest is in violation of the contract for sale it constitutes an improper contract for transportation within the preceding section but impairs neither the rights given to the buyer by shipment and identification of the goods to the contract nor the seller's powers as a holder of a negotiable document of title.

§ 2-506. RIGHTS OF FINANCING AGENCY

** * **

(2) The right to reimbursement of a financing agency which has in good faith honored or purchased the draft under commitment to or authority from the buyer is not impaired by subsequent discovery of defects with reference to any relevant document which was apparently regular ~~on its face~~.

** * **

§ 2-509. RISK OF LOSS IN THE ABSENCE OF BREACH

** * **

(2) Where the goods are held by a bailee to be delivered without being moved, the risk of loss passes to the buyer:

(a) on his or her receipt of possession or control of a negotiable document of title covering the goods; or

(b) on acknowledgment by the bailee of the buyer's right to possession of the goods; or

(c) after his or her receipt of possession or control of a ~~non-negotiable nonnegotiable~~ document of title or other ~~written~~ direction to deliver in a record, as provided in § subdivision 2-503(4)(b) of this title.

** * **

§ 2-605. WAIVER OF BUYER'S OBJECTIONS BY FAILURE TO PARTICULARIZE

** * **

(2) Payment against documents made without reservation of rights precludes recovery of the payment for defects apparent ~~on the face of~~ in the documents.

** * **

§ 2-705. SELLER'S STOPPAGE OF DELIVERY IN TRANSIT OR OTHERWISE

** * **

(2) As against such buyer the seller may stop delivery until:

(a) receipt of the goods by the buyer; or

(b) acknowledgment to the buyer by any bailee of the goods except a carrier that the bailee holds the goods for the buyer; or

(c) such acknowledgment to the buyer by a carrier by reshipment or as ~~warehouseman~~ a warehouse; or

(d) negotiation to the buyer of any negotiable document of title covering the goods.

(3)(a) To stop delivery the seller must so notify as to enable the bailee by reasonable diligence to prevent delivery of the goods.

(b) After such notification the bailee must hold and deliver the goods according to the directions of the seller but the seller is liable to the bailee for any ensuing charges or damages.

(c) If a negotiable document of title has been issued for goods the bailee is not obliged to obey a notification to stop until surrender of possession or control of the document.

* * *

Sec. B.6. 9A V.S.A. article 2A is amended to read:

ARTICLE 2A. LEASES

* * *

§ 2A-103. DEFINITIONS AND INDEX OF DEFINITIONS

(1) In this article unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) “Buyer in ordinary course of business” means a person who in good faith and without knowledge that the sale to him or her is in violation of the ownership rights or security interest or leasehold interest of a third party in the goods, buys in ordinary course from a person in the business of selling goods of that kind but does not include a pawnbroker. “Buying” may be for cash or by exchange of other property or on secured or unsecured credit and includes ~~receiving~~ acquiring goods or documents of title under a ~~pre-existing~~ preexisting contract for sale but does not include a transfer in bulk or as security for or in total or partial satisfaction of a money debt.

* * *

(o) “Lessee in ordinary course of business” means a person who in good faith and without knowledge that the lease to him ~~(or her)~~ or her is in violation of the ownership rights or security interest or leasehold interest of a third party in the goods, leases in ordinary course from a person in the business of selling or leasing goods of that kind but does not include a

pawnbroker. "Leasing" may be for cash or by exchange of other property or on secured or unsecured credit and includes ~~receiving~~ acquiring goods or documents of title under a ~~pre-existing~~ preexisting lease contract but does not include a transfer in bulk or as security for or in total or partial satisfaction of a money debt.

* * *

§ 2A-514. WAIVER OF LESSEE'S OBJECTIONS

* * *

(2) A lessee's failure to reserve rights when paying rent or other consideration against documents precludes recovery of the payment for defects apparent ~~on the face of~~ in the documents.

* * *

§ 2A-526. LESSOR'S STOPPAGE OF DELIVERY IN TRANSIT OR OTHERWISE

* * *

(2) In pursuing its remedies under subsection (1) of this section, the lessor may stop delivery until:

(a) receipt of the goods by the lessee;

(b) acknowledgment to the lessee by any bailee of the goods, except a carrier, that the bailee holds the goods for the lessee; or

(c) such an acknowledgment to the lessee by a carrier via reshipment or as ~~warehouseman~~ a warehouse.

* * *

Sec. B.7. 9A V.S.A. article 4 is amended to read:

ARTICLE 4. BANK DEPOSITS AND COLLECTIONS

* * *

§ 4-104. DEFINITIONS AND INDEX OF DEFINITIONS

* * *

(c) ~~The~~ "Control" as provided in section 7-106 of this title and the following definitions in other articles apply to this article:

"Acceptance" § 3-409

"Alteration" § 3-407

"Cashier's check" § 3-104

“Certificate of deposit” § 3-104

“Certified check” § 3-409

“Check” § 3-104

“Demand draft” § 3-104

“Holder in due course” § 3-302

“Instrument” § 3-104

“Notice of dishonor” § 3-503

“Order” § 3-103

“Ordinary care” § 3-103

“Person entitled to enforce” § 3-301

“Presentment” § 3-501

“Promise” § 3-103

“Prove” § 3-103

“Teller’s check” § 3-104

“Unauthorized signature” § 3-403

* * *

*§ 4-210. SECURITY INTEREST OF COLLECTING BANK IN ITEMS,
ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDS*

* * *

(c) Receipt by a collecting bank of a final settlement for an item is a realization on its security interest in the item, accompanying documents, and proceeds. So long as the bank does not receive final settlement for the item or give up possession of the item or possession or control of the accompanying documents for purposes other than collection, the security interest continues to that extent and is subject to ~~Article~~ article 9 of this title, but:

(1) no security agreement is necessary to make the security interest enforceable (§ 9-203(b)(3)(A));

(2) no filing is required to perfect the security interest; and

(3) the security interest has priority over conflicting perfected security interests in the item, accompanying documents, or proceeds.

* * *

Sec. B.8. 9A V.S.A. article 8 is amended to read:

ARTICLE 8. INVESTMENT SECURITIES

* * *

§ 8-102. DEFINITIONS

(a) In this article:

* * *

(9) "Financial asset," except as otherwise provided in section 8-103 of this title, means:

(i) a security;

(ii) an obligation of a person or a share, participation, or other interest in a person or in property or an enterprise of a person, which is, or is of a type, dealt in or traded on financial markets, or which is recognized in any area in which it is issued or dealt in as a medium for investment; or

(iii) any property that is held by a securities intermediary for another person in a securities account if the securities intermediary has expressly agreed with the other person that the property is to be treated as a financial asset under this article.

As the context requires, the term means either the interest itself or the means by which a person's claim to it is evidenced, including a certificated or uncertificated security, a security certificate, or a security entitlement.

* * *

§ 8-103. RULES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS AND INTERESTS ARE SECURITIES OR FINANCIAL ASSETS

* * *

(g) A document of title is not a financial asset unless subdivision 8-102(a)(9)(iii) of this title applies.

* * *

Sec. B.9. 9A V.S.A. article 9 is amended to read:

ARTICLE 9. SECURED TRANSACTIONS

* * *

§ 9-102. DEFINITIONS AND INDEX OF DEFINITIONS

(a) In this article:

* * *

(30) “Document” means a document of title or a receipt of the type described in ~~subdivision 7-201(2)~~ subsection 7-201(b) of this title.

* * *

(b) ~~The~~ “Control” as provided in section 7-106 of this title and the following definitions in other articles apply to this article:

“Applicant” Section 5-102.

“Beneficiary” Section 5-102.

“Broker” Section 8-102.

“Certificated security” Section 8-102.

“Check” Section 3-104.

“Clearing corporation” Section 8-102.

“Contract for sale” Section 2-106.

“Customer” Section 4-104.

“Entitlement holder” Section 8-102.

“Financial asset” Section 8-102.

“Holder in due course” Section 3-302.

“Issuer” (with respect to a letter of credit or letter-of-credit right) Section 5-102.

“Issuer” (with respect to documents of title) Section 7-102.

“Issuer” (with respect to a security) Section 8-201.

“Lease” Section 2A-103.

“Lease agreement” Section 2A-103.

“Lease contract” Section 2A-103.

“Leasehold interest” Section 2A-103.

“Lessee” Section 2A-103.

“Lessee in ordinary course of business” Section 2A-103.

“Lessor” Section 2A-103.

“Lessor’s residual interest” Section 2A-103.

“Letter of credit” Section 5-102.

“Merchant” Section 2-104.

“Negotiable instrument” Section 3-104.

“Nominated person” Section 5-102.

“Note” Section 3-104.

“Proceeds of a letter of credit” Section 5-114.

“Prove” Section 3-103.

“Sale” Section 2-106.

“Securities account” Section 8-501.

“Securities intermediary” Section 8-102.

“Security” Section 8-102.

“Security certificate” Section 8-102.

“Security entitlement” Section 8-102.

“Uncertificated security” Section 8-102.

(c) Article 1 contains general definitions and principles of construction and interpretation applicable throughout this article.

* * *

*§ 9-203. ATTACHMENT AND ENFORCEABILITY OF SECURITY
INTEREST; PROCEEDS; SUPPORTING OBLIGATIONS;
FORMAL REQUISITES*

* * *

(b) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (c) through (i) of this section, a security interest is enforceable against the debtor and third parties with respect to the collateral only if:

(1) value has been given;

(2) the debtor has rights in the collateral or the power to transfer rights in the collateral to a secured party; and

(3) one of the following conditions is met:

(A) the debtor has authenticated a security agreement that provides a description of the collateral and, if the security interest covers timber to be cut, a description of the land concerned;

(B) the collateral is not a certificated security and is in the possession of the secured party under section 9-313 of this title pursuant to the debtor’s security agreement;

(C) the collateral is a certificated security in registered form and the security certificate has been delivered to the secured party under section 8-301 pursuant to the debtor's security agreement; or

(D) the collateral is deposit accounts, electronic chattel paper, investment property, ~~or~~ letter-of-credit rights, or electronic documents, and the secured party has control under section 7-106, 9-104, 9-105, 9-106, or 9-107 of this title pursuant to the debtor's security agreement.

* * *

*§ 9-207. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF SECURED PARTY HAVING
POSSESSION OR CONTROL OF COLLATERAL*

* * *

(c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of this section, a secured party having possession of collateral or control of collateral under section 7-106, 9-104, 9-105, 9-106, or 9-107 of this title:

(1) may hold as additional security any proceeds, except money or funds, received from the collateral;

(2) shall apply money or funds received from the collateral to reduce the secured obligation, unless remitted to the debtor; and

(3) may create a security interest in the collateral.

* * *

*§ 9-208. ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF SECURED PARTY HAVING
CONTROL OF COLLATERAL*

* * *

(b) Within 10 days after receiving an authenticated demand by the debtor:

* * *

(4) a secured party having control of investment property under section 8-106(d)(2) or 9-106(b) shall send to the securities intermediary or commodity intermediary with which the security entitlement or commodity contract is maintained an authenticated record that releases the securities intermediary or commodity intermediary from any further obligation to comply with entitlement orders or directions originated by the secured party; ~~and~~

(5) a secured party having control of a letter-of-credit right under section 9-107 shall send to each person having an unfulfilled obligation to pay or deliver proceeds of the letter of credit to the secured party an authenticated release from any further obligation to pay or deliver proceeds of the letter of credit to the secured party; and

(6) a secured party having control of an electronic document shall:

(A) give control of the electronic document to the debtor or its designated custodian;

(B) if the debtor designates a custodian that is the designated custodian with which the authoritative copy of the electronic document is maintained for the secured party, communicate to the custodian an authenticated record releasing the designated custodian from any further obligation to comply with instructions originated by the secured party and instructing the custodian to comply with instructions originated by the debtor; and

(C) take appropriate action to enable the debtor or its designated custodian to make copies of or revisions to the authoritative copy which add or change an identified assignee of the authoritative copy without the consent of the secured party.

* * *

§ 9-301. LAW GOVERNING PERFECTION AND PRIORITY OF SECURITY INTERESTS

Except as otherwise provided in sections 9-303 through 9-306 of this title, the following rules determine the law governing perfection, the effect of perfection or nonperfection, and the priority of a security interest in collateral:

* * *

(3) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (4) of this section, while tangible negotiable documents, goods, instruments, money, or tangible chattel paper is located in a jurisdiction, the local law of that jurisdiction governs:

* * *

§ 9-310. WHEN FILING REQUIRED TO PERFECT SECURITY INTEREST OR AGRICULTURAL LIEN; SECURITY INTERESTS AND AGRICULTURAL LIENS TO WHICH FILING PROVISIONS DO NOT APPLY

* * *

(b) The filing of a financing statement is not necessary to perfect a security interest:

* * *

(5) in certificated securities, documents, goods, or instruments which is perfected without filing, control, or possession under section 9-312(e), (f), or (g);

(6) *in collateral in the secured party's possession under section 9-313;*

(7) *in a certificated security which is perfected by delivery of the security certificate to the secured party under section 9-313;*

(8) *in deposit accounts, electronic chattel paper, electronic documents, investment property, or letter-of-credit rights which is perfected by control under section 9-314;*

* * *

§ 9-312. *PERFECTION OF SECURITY INTERESTS IN CHATTEL PAPER, DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS, DOCUMENTS, GOODS COVERED BY DOCUMENTS, INSTRUMENTS, INVESTMENT PROPERTY, LETTER-OF-CREDIT RIGHTS, AND MONEY; PERFECTION BY PERMISSIVE FILING; TEMPORARY PERFECTION WITHOUT FILING OR TRANSFER OF POSSESSION*

* * *

(e) *A security interest in certificated securities, negotiable documents, or instruments is perfected without filing or the taking of possession or control for a period of 20 days from the time it attaches to the extent that it arises for new value given under an authenticated security agreement.*

* * *

§ 9-313. *WHEN POSSESSION BY OR DELIVERY TO SECURED PARTY PERFECTS SECURITY INTEREST WITHOUT FILING*

(a) *Perfection by possession or delivery. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b), a secured party may perfect a security interest in tangible negotiable documents, goods, instruments, money, or tangible chattel paper by taking possession of the collateral. A secured party may perfect a security interest in certificated securities by taking delivery of the certificated securities under section 8-301.*

* * *

§ 9-314. *PERFECTION BY CONTROL*

(a) *A security interest in investment property, deposit accounts, letter-of-credit rights, ~~or~~ electronic chattel paper, or electronic documents may be perfected by control of the collateral under section 7-106, 9-104, 9-105, 9-106, or 9-107.*

(b) *A security interest in deposit accounts, electronic chattel paper, ~~or~~ letter-of-credit rights, or electronic documents is perfected by control under*

section 7-106, 9-104, 9-105, or 9-107 when the secured party obtains control and remains perfected by control only while the secured party retains control.

* * *

§ 9-317. INTERESTS THAT TAKE PRIORITY OVER OR TAKE FREE OF SECURITY INTEREST OR AGRICULTURAL LIEN

* * *

(b) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (e) of this section, a buyer, other than a secured party, of tangible chattel paper, tangible documents, goods, instruments, or a certificated security takes free of a security interest or agricultural lien if the buyer gives value and receives delivery of the collateral without knowledge of the security interest or agricultural lien and before it is perfected.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (e) of this section, a lessee of goods takes free of a security interest or agricultural lien if the lessee gives value and receives delivery of the collateral without knowledge of the security interest or agricultural lien and before it is perfected.

(d) A licensee of a general intangible or a buyer, other than a secured party, of ~~collateral other than tangible chattel paper, tangible documents, goods, instruments, or~~ accounts, electronic chattel paper, electronic documents, general intangibles, or investment property other than a certificated security takes free of a security interest if the licensee or buyer gives value without knowledge of the security interest and before it is perfected.

* * *

§ 9-338. PRIORITY OF SECURITY INTEREST OR AGRICULTURAL LIEN PERFECTED BY FILED FINANCING STATEMENT PROVIDING CERTAIN INCORRECT INFORMATION

If a security interest or agricultural lien is perfected by a filed financing statement providing information described in subdivision 9-516(b)(5) of this title which is incorrect at the time the financing statement is filed:

(1) the security interest or agricultural lien is subordinate to a conflicting perfected security interest in the collateral to the extent that the holder of the conflicting security interest gives value in reasonable reliance upon the incorrect information; and

(2) a purchaser, other than a secured party, of the collateral takes free of the security interest or agricultural lien to the extent that, in reasonable reliance upon the incorrect information, the purchaser gives value and, in the

case of tangible chattel paper, tangible documents, goods, instruments, or a security certificate, receives delivery of the collateral.

* * *

*§ 9-601. RIGHTS AFTER DEFAULT; JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT;
CONSIGNOR OR BUYER OF ACCOUNTS, CHATTEL PAPER,
PAYMENT INTANGIBLES, OR PROMISSORY NOTES*

* * *

(b) A secured party in possession of collateral or control of collateral under section 7-106, 9-104, 9-105, 9-106, or 9-107 has the rights and duties provided in section 9-207.

* * *

C. Workforce Education, Training, and Development

** * * Vermont Strong Scholars and Internship Initiative * * **

*Sec. C.1. VERMONT STRONG SCHOLARS LOAN FORGIVENESS
FINDINGS; INTENT*

The General Assembly finds that the fundamental fairness, integrity, and success of the Vermont Strong Scholars loan forgiveness program under Sec. C.2 of this act, whereby graduating high school students will be counseled and encouraged to apply to Vermont schools, take certain courses, graduate and then take certain Vermont jobs, in exchange for student loan forgiveness, is critically dependent on the State providing reliable, sustainable, and adequate funding for the loan forgiveness that does not diminish resources for other State workforce education and training programs.

Sec. C.2. 16 V.S.A. § 2888 is amended to read:

*§ 2888. VERMONT STRONG SCHOLARS ~~AND INTERNSHIP~~
INITIATIVE*

(a) Creation.

(1) There is created a postsecondary loan forgiveness ~~and internship~~ initiative designed to forgive a portion of Vermont Student Assistance Corporation loans of students employed in ~~economic sectors~~ occupations identified as important to Vermont's economy and to build ~~internship~~ opportunities for students to gain work experience with Vermont employers.

(2) The initiative shall be known as the Vermont Strong Scholars ~~and Internship~~ Initiative and is designed to:

(A) encourage students to:

(i) ~~consider jobs in economic sectors~~ occupations that are critical to the Vermont economy;

(ii) enroll and remain enrolled in a Vermont postsecondary institution; and

(iii) live and work in Vermont upon graduation;

(B) ~~reduce student loan debt for postsecondary education in targeted fields~~ degrees involving a course of study related to, and resulting in, employment in target occupations; and

(C) ~~provide experiential learning through internship opportunities with Vermont employers;~~ and

~~(D) support a pipeline~~ steady stream of qualified talent for employment with Vermont's employers.

(b) Vermont Strong Loan Forgiveness Program.

(1) ~~Economic sectors~~ Occupations; projections.

(A) Annually, on or before November 15, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development and the Commissioner of Labor, in consultation with the Vermont State Colleges, the University of Vermont, the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, the Secretary of Human Services, and the Secretary of Education, shall identify ~~economic sectors~~ occupations, projecting at least four years into the future, that are or will be critical to the Vermont economy.

(B) Based upon the identified ~~economic sectors~~ occupations and the number of students anticipated to qualify for loan forgiveness under this section, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall annually provide the General Assembly with the estimated cost of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation's loan forgiveness awards under the Loan Forgiveness Program during the then-current fiscal year and each of the four following fiscal years.

(2) Eligibility. A graduate of a public or private Vermont postsecondary institution shall be eligible for forgiveness of a portion of his or her Vermont Student Assistance Corporation postsecondary education loans under this section if he or she:

(A) was a Vermont resident, as defined in subdivision 2822(7) of this title, at the time he or she was graduated;

(B) enrolled in his or her first year of study at a postsecondary institution on or after July 1, 2015 and completed an associate's degree within

three years, or a bachelor's degree within six years of his or her enrollment date;

(C) becomes employed on a full-time basis in Vermont within 12 months of graduation in an ~~economic sector~~ occupation identified by the Secretary and Commissioner under subdivision (1) of this subsection;

(D) remains employed on a full-time basis in Vermont throughout the period of loan forgiveness in an ~~economic sector~~ occupation identified by the Secretary and Commissioner under subdivision (1) of this subsection; and

(E) remains a Vermont resident throughout the period of loan forgiveness.

(3) Loan forgiveness. An eligible individual shall have a portion of his or her Vermont Student Assistance Corporation loan forgiven as follows:

(A) ~~For~~ for an individual awarded an associate's degree, in an amount equal to the comprehensive in-state tuition rate for 15 credits at the Vermont State Colleges during the individual's final semester of enrollment, to be prorated over the three years following graduation;

(B) ~~For~~ for an individual awarded a bachelor's degree, in an amount equal to the comprehensive in-state tuition rate for 30 credits at the Vermont State Colleges during the individual's final year of enrollment, to be prorated over the five years following graduation;

(C) ~~Loan~~ loan forgiveness may be awarded on a prorated basis to an otherwise eligible Vermont resident who transfers to ~~and is graduated from~~ a Vermont postsecondary institution and graduates after July 1, 2017, with an associate's degree or after July 1, 2019, with a bachelor's degree.

(4) Management.

(A) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall develop all organizational details of the Loan Forgiveness Program consistent with the purposes and requirements of this section.

(B) The Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for management of the Loan Forgiveness Program.

(C) The Secretary may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 necessary to implement the Program.

(c) ~~Vermont Strong Internship Program.~~

(1) ~~Internship Program management.~~

~~(A) The Commissioner of Labor and the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall jointly develop and implement the organizational details of the Internship Program consistent with the purposes and requirements of this section and may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 necessary to implement the Internship Program.~~

~~(B) The Commissioner, in consultation with the Secretary, shall issue a request for proposals for a person to serve as an Internship Program Intermediary, who shall perform the duties and responsibilities pursuant to the terms of a performance contract negotiated by the Commissioner and the Intermediary.~~

~~(C) The Department of Labor, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the regional development corporations, and the Intermediary, shall have responsibility for building connections within the business community to ensure broad private sector participation in the Internship Program.~~

~~(D) The Program Intermediary shall:~~

~~(i) identify and foster postsecondary internships that are rigorous, productive, well-managed, and mentored;~~

~~(ii) cultivate relationships with employers, employer-focused organizations, and State and regional government bodies;~~

~~(iii) build relationships with Vermont postsecondary institutions and facilitate recruitment of students to apply for available internships;~~

~~(iv) create and maintain a registry of participating employers and associated internship opportunities;~~

~~(v) coordinate and provide support to the participating student, the employer, and the student's postsecondary institution;~~

~~(vi) develop and oversee a participation contract between each student and employer, including terms governing the expectations for the internship, a work plan, mentoring and supervision of the student, reporting by the employer and student, and compensation terms; and~~

~~(vii) carry out any additional activities and duties as directed by the Commissioner.~~

~~(2) Qualifying internships.~~

~~(A) Criteria. To qualify for participation in the Internship Program an internship shall at minimum:~~

~~(i) be with a Vermont employer as approved by the Intermediary in consultation with the Commissioner and Secretary;~~

~~(ii) pay compensation to an intern of at least the prevailing minimum wage; and~~

~~(iii) meet the quality standards and expectations as established by the Intermediary.~~

~~(B) Employment of interns. Interns shall be employed by the sponsoring employer except, with the approval of the Commissioner on a case-by-case basis, interns may be employed by the Intermediary and assigned to work with a participating Vermont employer, in which case the sponsoring employer shall contribute funds as determined by the Commissioner.~~

~~(3) Student eligibility. To participate in the Internship Program, an individual shall be:~~

~~(A) a Vermont resident enrolled in a postsecondary institution in or outside Vermont;~~

~~(B) a student who graduated from a postsecondary institution within 24 months of entering the program who was classified as a Vermont resident during that schooling or who is a student who attended a postsecondary institution in Vermont; or~~

~~(C) a student enrolled in a Vermont postsecondary institution.
[Repealed.]~~

~~(d) Funding.~~

~~(1) Loan Forgiveness Program.~~

~~(A) Loan forgiveness; State funding.~~

~~(i)(A) There is created a special fund to be known as the Vermont Strong Scholars Fund pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5, which shall be used and administered by the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development solely for the purposes of loan forgiveness pursuant to this section.~~

~~(ii)(B) The Fund shall consist of sums to be identified by the Secretary from any source accepted for the benefit of the Fund and interest earned from the investment of Fund balances.~~

~~(iii)(C) Any interest earned and any remaining balance at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward in the Fund.~~

~~(iv)(D) The availability and payment of loan forgiveness awards under this ~~subdivision~~ chapter is subject to State funding available for the awards.~~

~~(B)(2) Loan forgiveness; Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall have the authority to grant loan forgiveness pursuant to this section by using the private loan forgiveness capacity associated with bonds issued by the Corporation to raise funds for private loans that are eligible for forgiveness under this section, if available.~~

~~(2) Internship Program. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Commissioner of Labor shall have the authority to use funds allocated to the Workforce Education and Training Fund established in 10 V.S.A. § 543 to implement the Internship Program created in this section.~~

~~*** Workforce Education and Training Fund ***~~

~~Sec. C.3. 10 V.S.A. chapter 22A is amended to read:~~

~~CHAPTER 22A. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING~~

~~***~~

~~§ 543. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND; GRANT PROGRAMS~~

~~(a) Creation. There is created a Workforce Education and Training Fund in the Department of Labor to be managed in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5.~~

~~(b) Purposes. The Fund shall be used exclusively Department shall use the Fund for the following purposes:~~

~~(1) training for Vermont workers, including those who are unemployed, underemployed, or in transition from one job or career to another; and~~

~~(2) internships to provide students with work-based learning opportunities with Vermont employers; ~~and~~~~

~~(3) apprenticeship-related—instruction apprenticeship, preapprenticeship, and industry-recognized credential training; and~~

~~(4) other workforce development initiatives related to current and future job opportunities in Vermont as determined by the Commissioner of Labor.~~

~~(c) Administrative Support and other support. Administrative The Department of Labor shall provide administrative support for the grant award process shall be provided by the Department of Labor. Technical support shall be provided whenever. When appropriate and reasonable by the State Workforce Investment Board and all other public entities involved in economic development and workforce education and training shall provide other support in the process.~~

~~(d) Eligible Activities. Awards activities.~~

~~(1) The Department shall grant awards from the Fund shall be made to employers and entities that offer programs that require collaboration between employees and businesses, including private, public, and nonprofit entities, institutions of higher education, high schools, technical centers, and workforce education and training programs. Funding shall be for training programs and student internship programs that:~~

~~(A) create jobs, offer education, training, apprenticeship, preapprenticeship and industry-recognized credentials, mentoring, or work-based learning activities, or any combination;~~

~~(B) that employ ~~innovative~~ intensive student-oriented ~~competency based or collaborative~~ approaches to workforce education and training; and~~

~~(C) that link workforce education and economic development strategies. Training~~

~~(2) The Department may fund programs or projects that demonstrate actual increased income and economic opportunity for employees and employers may be funded for more than one year.~~

~~(3) ~~Student~~ The Department may fund student internships and training programs that involve the same employer may be funded multiple times, provided that new students participate in multiple years with approval of the Commissioner.~~

~~(e) [Repealed].~~

~~(f) Awards. The Commissioner of Labor, in consultation with the Chair of the State Workforce Investment Board, shall develop award criteria and may make grant awards to the following:~~

~~(1) Training Programs.~~

~~(A) Public, private, and nonprofit entities, including employers and education and training providers, for existing or new ~~innovative~~ training programs that enhance the skills of Vermont workers and:~~

~~(i) train workers for trades or occupations that are expected to lead to jobs paying at least 200 percent of the current minimum wage or at least 150 percent if benefits are included; this requirement may be waived when warranted based on regional or occupational wages or economic reality;~~

~~(ii) do not duplicate, supplant, or replace other available ~~programs~~ training funded with public money;~~

~~(iii) ~~articulate clear goals and demonstrate readily accountable, reportable, and measurable results~~ provide a project timeline, including~~

performance goals, and identify how the effectiveness and outcomes of the program will be measured, including for the individual participants, the employers, and the program as a whole; and

(iv) demonstrate an integrated connection between training and specific new or continuing employment opportunities articulate the need for the training and the direct connection between the training and the job.

(B) Awards The Department shall grant awards under this subdivision shall be made (1) to programs or projects that:

(i) offer innovative programs of intensive, student-centric, competency-based education, training, apprenticeship, preapprenticeship and industry-recognized credentials, mentoring, or any combination of these;

(ii) address the needs of workers who are unemployed, underemployed, or are at risk of becoming unemployed due to changing workplace demands by increasing productivity and developing new skills for incumbent workers, and workers who are in transition from one job or career to another; or

(iii) address the needs of employers to hire new employees, or retrain incumbent workers, when the employer has demonstrated a need not within the normal course of business, with priority to training that results in new or existing job openings for which the employer intends to hire; or

(iv) in the discretion of the Commissioner, otherwise serve the purposes of this chapter.

(2) Vermont Career Strong Internship Program. Funding for eligible internship programs and activities under the Vermont Career Strong Internship Program established in section 544 of this title.

(3) Apprenticeship Program. The Vermont Apprenticeship Program established under 21 V.S.A. chapter 13. Awards under this subdivision may be used to fund the cost of apprenticeship-related instruction provided by the Department of Labor.

(g) [Repealed.]

§ 544. VERMONT CAREER STRONG INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

(a)(1) The Department of Labor, in consultation with the Agency of Education, shall develop, and the Department shall implement, a statewide Vermont Career Strong Internship Program for Vermonters students who are in high school or in college and for those who are recent graduates of 24 months or less.

(2) *The Department of Labor shall coordinate and provide funding to public and private entities for internship programs that match Vermont employers with students from public and private secondary schools, regional technical centers, the Community High School of Vermont, colleges, and recent graduates of 24 months or less.*

(3) *Funding awarded through the Vermont ~~Career~~ Strong Internship Program may be used to build and administer an internship program and to provide participants with a stipend during the internship, based on need. Funds may be made only to programs or projects that ~~do all the following~~:*

(A) *do not replace or supplant existing positions;*

(B) *expose students to the workplace or create real workplace expectations and consequences;*

(C) *provide a process that measures progress toward mastery of skills, attitude, behavior, and sense of responsibility required for success in that workplace;*

(D) *are designed to motivate and educate ~~secondary and postsecondary students and recent graduates~~ participants through work-based learning opportunities with Vermont employers ~~that are likely to lead to real employment~~;*

(E) *include mechanisms that promote employer involvement with secondary and postsecondary students and curriculum and the delivery of education at the participating schools; ~~and~~ or*

(F) *offer participants a continuum of learning, experience, and relationships with employers that will make it financially possible and attractive for graduates to continue to work and live in Vermont.*

(4) *As used in this section, “internship” means a learning experience working with an employer where the intern may, but does not necessarily, receive academic credit, financial remuneration, a stipend, or any combination of these.*

(b) *The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Agencies of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Education, State-funded postsecondary educational institutions, the State Workforce Investment Board, and other State agencies and departments that have workforce education and training and training monies, shall:*

(1) *identify new and existing funding sources that may be allocated to the Vermont ~~Career~~ Strong Internship Program;*

(2) collect data and establish program goals and quantifiable performance measures that demonstrate program results for internship programs funded through the Vermont ~~Career~~ Strong Internship Program;

(3) develop or enhance a website that will connect students and graduates with internship opportunities with Vermont employers;

(4) engage appropriate agencies and departments of the State in the Internship Program to expand internship opportunities with State government and with entities awarded State contracts; and

(5) work with other public and private entities to develop and enhance internship programs, opportunities, and activities throughout the State.

Sec. C.4. [Reserved.]

** * * Vermont Governor's Committee on Employment
of People with Disabilities * * **

Sec. C.5. 21 V.S.A. § 497a is amended to read:

§ 497a. COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED

There is hereby established a permanent committee to be known as the Vermont ~~governor's committee on employment of people with disabilities~~ Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, to consist of ~~21~~ 23 members, including ~~a~~ one representative of ~~each from~~ each from the Vermont ~~employment service division~~ Department of Labor's Workforce Development Division and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, one representative of ~~from~~ from the ~~vocational rehabilitation division of the department of disabilities, aging, and independent living~~ Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, Vocational Rehabilitation Division and one from the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, one representative of the ~~veterans' administration, one representative of the veterans' employment service~~ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, one representative of the State of Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs, and 17 members to be appointed by the ~~governor~~ Governor. The appointive members shall hold office for the term specified or until their successors are named by the ~~governor~~ Governor. The members shall receive no salary for their services as such, but the necessary expenses of the ~~committee~~ Committee shall be paid by the state State. ~~Those persons acting as said committee on June 29, 1963 shall continue as such until their successors are appointed as herein provided.~~

** * * Vermont ABLÉ Savings Program * * **

Sec. C.6. PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is:

(1) to encourage and assist individuals and families in saving private funds for the purpose of supporting individuals with disabilities in maintaining health, independence, and quality of life.

(2) to provide secure funding for disability-related expenses on behalf of designated beneficiaries with disabilities that will supplement, but not supplant, benefits provided through private insurance, the Medicaid program under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, the supplemental security income program under Title XVI of such Act, the beneficiary's employment, and other sources.

Sec. C.7. 33 V.S.A. chapter 80 is added to read:

*CHAPTER 80. VERMONT ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE
EXPERIENCE (ABLE) SAVINGS PROGRAM*

§ 8001. PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

(a) The State Treasurer or designee shall have the authority to establish the Vermont Achieving A Better Life Experience (ABLE) Savings Program consistent with the provisions of this chapter under which a person may make contributions for a taxable year, for the benefit of an individual who is an eligible individual for such taxable year, to an ABLÉ account which is established for the purpose of meeting the qualified disability expenses of the designated beneficiary of the account; and which:

(1) limits a designated beneficiary to one ABLÉ account for purposes of this section;

(2) allows for the establishment of an ABLÉ account only for a designated beneficiary who is a resident of Vermont or a resident of a contracting State; and

(3) meets the other requirements of this chapter.

(b)(1) The Treasurer or designee may solicit proposals from financial organizations to implement the Program as account depositories and managers.

(2) A financial organization that submits a proposal shall describe the investment instruments which will be held in accounts.

(3) The Treasurer shall select from among the applicants one or more financial organizations that demonstrate the most advantageous combination, both to potential program participants and this State, of the following criteria:

(A) the financial stability and integrity of the financial organization;

(B) the safety of the investment instrument offered;

(C) the ability of the financial organization to satisfy recordkeeping and reporting requirements;

(D) the financial organization's plan for promoting the program and the investment the organization is willing to make to promote the program;

(E) the fees, if any, proposed to be charged to the account owners;

(F) the minimum initial deposit and minimum contributions that the financial organization will require;

(G) the ability of the financial organization to accept electronic withdrawals, including payroll deduction plans; and

(H) other benefits to the State or its residents included in the proposal, including fees payable to the State to cover expenses of operation of the Program.

(c) The Treasurer or designee shall have the authority to adopt rules, policies, and procedures necessary to implement the provisions of this chapter and comply with applicable federal law.

§ 8002. DEFINITIONS

In this chapter:

(1) "ABLE account" means an account established by an eligible individual, owned by the eligible individual, and maintained under the Vermont ABLE Savings Program.

(2) "Designated beneficiary" means the eligible individual who establishes an ABLE account under this chapter and is the owner of the account.

(3) "Disability certification" means a certification to the satisfaction of the Secretary by the individual or the parent or guardian of the individual that:

(A) certifies that:

(i) the individual has a medically determinable physical or mental impairment, which results in marked and severe functional limitations, and which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months, or the

individual is blind within the meaning of Section 1614(a)(2) of the Social Security Act, and

(ii) such blindness or disability occurred before the individual attained 26 years of age; and

(B) includes a copy of the individual's diagnosis relating to the individual's relevant impairment or impairments, signed by a physician meeting the criteria of Section 1861(r)(1) of the Social Security Act.

(4) "Eligible individual" means:

(A) a person who during a taxable year is entitled to benefits based on blindness or disability under Title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, and such blindness or disability occurred before the date on which the individual attained 26 years of age; or

(B) a person for whom a disability certification is filed with the Secretary for the taxable year.

(5) "Financial organization" means an organization authorized to do business in this State and that is:

(A) licensed or chartered by the Department of Financial Regulation;

(B) chartered by an agency of the federal government; or

(C) subject to the jurisdiction and regulation of the federal Securities and Exchange Commission.

(6) "Member of family" means a brother, sister, stepbrother, or stepsister of a designated beneficiary.

(7) "Qualified disability expense" means an expense related to the eligible individual's blindness or disability which is made for the benefit of an eligible individual who is the designated beneficiary, including the following expenses: education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology and personal support services, health, prevention and wellness, financial management and administrative services, legal fees, expenses for oversight and monitoring, funeral and burial expenses, and other expenses, which are approved by the Secretary under regulations and consistent with the purposes of this section.

(8) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

§ 8003. PROGRAM LIMITATIONS

(a) Cash contributions. The Treasurer or designee shall not accept a contribution:

(1) unless it is in cash; or

(2) except in the case of a contribution under 26 U.S.C. § 529A(c)(1)(C) (relating to a change in a designated beneficiary or program), if such contribution to an ABLE account would result in aggregate contributions from all contributors to the ABLE account for the taxable year exceeding the amount in effect under subsection 2503(b) of this title for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins.

(b) Separate accounting. The Treasurer or designee shall provide separate accounting for each designated beneficiary.

(c) Limited investment direction. A designated beneficiary may, directly or indirectly, direct the investment of any contributions to the Vermont ABLE Savings Program, or any earnings thereon, no more than two times in any calendar year.

(d) No pledging of interest as security. A person shall not use an interest in the Vermont ABLE Savings Program, or any portion thereof, as security for a loan.

(e) Prohibition on excess contributions. The Treasurer or designee shall adopt adequate safeguards under the Vermont ABLE Savings Program to prevent aggregate contributions on behalf of a designated beneficiary in excess of the limit established by the State pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 529(b)(6).

§ 8004. REPORTS

(a) In general. The Treasurer or designee shall make such reports regarding the Program to the Secretary and to designated beneficiaries with respect to contributions, distributions, the return of excess contributions, and such other matters as the Secretary may require.

(b) Notice of establishment of account. The Treasurer or designee shall submit a notice to the Secretary upon the establishment of an ABLE account that includes the name and state of residence of the designated beneficiary and such other information as the Secretary may require.

(c) Electronic distribution statements. The Treasurer or designee shall submit electronically on a monthly basis to the Commissioner of Social Security, in the manner specified by the Commissioner, statements on relevant distributions and account balances from all ABLE accounts created under the Vermont ABLE Savings Program.

(d) Requirements. The Treasurer or designee shall file the reports and notices required under this section at such time and in such manner and furnished to such individuals at such time and in such manner as may be required by the Secretary.

Sec. C.8. VERMONT ABLE TASK FORCE; REPORTS

The State Treasurer shall convene a Vermont ABLE Task Force to include representatives of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council, Vermont Center for Independent Living; Green Mountain Self-Advocates, and other stakeholders with relevant expertise, to provide recommendations on or before January 15, 2016 to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on planning and delivery of the ABLE Savings Program, including:

- (1) promotion and marketing of the Program;
- (2) rules governing operation of ABLE accounts, including mechanisms for consumer convenience;
- (3) fees charged to account owners;
- (4) future enhancements to protect from the loss of State benefits as may be necessary to fulfill the intent of the ABLE Act;
- (5) the composition and charge of an ABLE Advisory Board; and
- (6) a progress update on implementation of the Program consistent with U.S. Treasury Department Rules, the Internal Revenue Code, and the federal ABLE Act (P.L. 113-295 of 2014).

** * * Enhancing Eligibility and Work Incentives for the Medicaid for Working Persons with Disabilities Program * * **

*Sec. C.9. MEDICAID FOR WORKING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES;
RULEMAKING*

(a) On or before October 1, 2015, the Agency of Human Services shall request permission from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in order to increase to \$10,000.00 per individual and \$15,000.00 per couple the asset limit for eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program. Within 30 days following CMS approval of the increased asset limit, the Agency of Human Services shall commence the rulemaking process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to amend its rules accordingly.

(b) On or before October 1, 2015, the Agency of Human Services shall request permission from CMS to disregard the income of a spouse who is a Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities beneficiary when calculating the eligibility of the other spouse to receive traditional Medicaid benefits. Within 30 days following CMS approval of the income disregard, the Agency of Human Services shall commence the rulemaking process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to amend its rules accordingly.

(c) On or before October 1, 2015, the Agency of Human Services shall request permission from CMS to disregard the income of an applicant's or beneficiary's spouse when determining the applicant's or beneficiary's eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program, after a determination has been made that the applicant's or beneficiary's net family income is below 250 percent of the federal poverty level for a family of the applicable size. Within 30 days following CMS approval of the income disregard, the Agency of Human Services shall commence the rulemaking process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to amend its rules accordingly.

(d) On or before October 1, 2015, the Agency of Human Services shall request permission from CMS to disregard Social Security retirement income for the purpose of calculating eligibility for the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program for beneficiaries who have reached the Social Security retirement age and whose Social Security Disability Insurance benefits have automatically converted to Social Security retirement benefits. Within 30 days following CMS approval of the income disregard, the Agency of Human Services shall commence the rulemaking process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to amend its rules accordingly.

(e) The Agency of Human Services shall engage the assistance of benefits counselors at public and nonprofit organizations to increase public awareness of the Medicaid for Working People with Disabilities program and of other work incentives for individuals with disabilities.

(f) On or before January 15, 2016, the Agency of Human Services shall provide a report on the implementation of this section to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Health and Welfare.

* * * Vermont Career Technical Education * * *

Sec. C.10. VERMONT CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

(a). Findings and intent.

(1) The "on time" graduation rate for high school students in Vermont is 86.6 percent (2013).

(2) The postsecondary continuation rate for 12th grade graduates is approximately 60 percent. Many states have set a target of 80 percent for students graduating from high school and transitioning to further education or training, or both.

(3) According to the Vermont Department of Labor, in 2014 the total number of people considered as "underutilized" labor in Vermont was 31,700.

(4) Vermont's workforce is aging, with 27.7 percent of all workers over 55 years of age.

(5) According to a report issued by the McClure Foundation, with assistance from the Vermont Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Division, there are currently, and will be, many high-wage, high-skill job openings in Vermont between now and 2020.

(6) In order to support the creation and growth of high paid jobs in Vermont, we must provide our students with the needed education, skills, and competencies for these positions.

(7) Vermont's Career and Technical Education Centers (CTEs) are a key resource in preparing Vermonters for careers and meeting the workforce needs of Vermont employers.

(8) CTE learning is designed to prepare students to be ready for their next step, including further training, college, jobs, and careers.

(9) Vermont's CTEs do not currently offer enough programs of study of the size, scope, and quality necessary to prepare high school students for these current and anticipated high-skill, high-wage, high-demand job openings.

(10) Due to the demands and complexity of these jobs, CTE programming should provide new courses in a sequence from grades 9-12, including dual enrollment, with smooth transitions to postsecondary training or further education, or both.

(11) There is an approved project within the Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) that identifies six high-priority cluster programs of study which the Agency of Education is currently implementing: Travel/Tourism and Business Systems (Culinary, Hospitality, Accounting, Management, Entrepreneurship); Manufacturing/Engineering (STEM); Construction/Green Building and Design; Agriculture, Local Food Systems, Natural Resources; Information Technology (Networking, Software Development, Website Design); Health/Medical.

(12) The CEDS project for high-priority CTE programs of study will provide uniform high-quality programs at the centers throughout the State.

(13) The Vermont Department of Labor, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Agency of Education, and the Vermont State Colleges should collaborate more closely to develop high school CTE programs of study, including adult technical education programs, aligned with the needs of Vermont's employers.

(14) In some cases, the funding models for the CTEs act as a disincentive for school districts to send their students to regional technical centers.

(15) The purpose of this section is to direct the Department of Labor, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Agency of Education, and the Vermont State Colleges to collaborate on how to better utilize Vermont's CTEs.

(b) Study and report. The Agency of Education, the Department of Labor, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and the Vermont State Colleges shall convene, develop suggestions, and report on or before December 1, 2015 to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Education and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Education on how Vermont's CTEs can be better utilized to provide training aligned with high-wage, high-skills, high-demand employment opportunities in Vermont, including:

(1) how the Agency of Education will develop priority pathway programs of study with regional CTEs in collaboration with the Department of Labor, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and the Vermont State Colleges;

(2) how these programs can include opportunities for post-secondary enrollment in apprenticeships, internships, approved training programs, sub-baccalaureate programs, and adult technical education programs;

(3) how to ensure equitable and appropriate access to CTE programs of study developed and implemented in grades 9 through 12;

(4) what barriers or challenges exist to the development and implementation of high-quality priority pathways as described in the CEDS approved project; and

(5) one or more recommendations to address the financial disincentive for school districts to send students to the CTEs created by the CTE funding model.

D. Tourism and Economic Development Marketing

D.1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) The State of Vermont is a worldwide leader in the global tourism market. Visitors from around the world come to Vermont to recreate and the Vermont brand is now recognized and admired throughout the world.

(2) Vermont is rapidly developing a reputation as a place where entrepreneurs and innovators can succeed, and where they can come to start and grow great businesses.

(3) The Department of Tourism and Marketing should continue its very successful tourism marketing efforts in order to maintain our standing in the global tourism market.

(4) The Department should also develop an economic development marketing program, highlighting the many positive features that make Vermont a great place to live, work, and do business, including:

(A) Vermont's long history of innovation, including agricultural, business, and technical innovation; product design; and entrepreneurship;

(B) the multitude and diversity of successful start-up businesses in environmental technology, health technology, advanced manufacturing, services technology, biotechnology, recreation technology, and social technology;

(C) the benefits of Vermont's size, scale, and accessibility to government officials and resources, which make Vermont a state where business can start, grow, and prosper; and

(D) the benefits of Vermont's educational and workforce development resources, and its highly skilled and highly educated population.

(b) The purpose of Secs. D.2 and D.3 of this act is to expand the mission of the Department of Tourism and Marketing to ensure a focus on economic development marketing.

Sec. D.2. 3 V.S.A. chapter 47 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 47: COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

* * *

**§ 2472. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DEVELOPMENT**

(a) The department of housing and community affairs is created within the agency of commerce and community development Department of Housing and Community Development is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. The ~~department~~ Department shall:

(1) Be the central ~~state~~ State agency to coordinate, consolidate, and operate, to the extent possible, all housing programs enacted hereafter by the general assembly General Assembly or created by executive order of the ~~governor~~ Governor.

(2) ~~Be the central state~~ State agency for local and regional planning and coordination.

(3) Administer the community development block grant program pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 29. When awarding municipal planning grants prior to fiscal year 2012, the ~~department~~ Department shall give priority to grants for downtowns, new town centers, growth centers, and Vermont neighborhoods.

(4) In partnership with the ~~division for historic preservation~~ Division of Historic Preservation, direct, supervise, and administer the Vermont downtown program, and any other program designed to preserve the continued economic vitality of the ~~state's~~ State's traditional commercial districts.

(b) Neither the Vermont ~~state housing authority~~ State Housing Authority or the Vermont ~~home mortgage guarantee board agency~~ Housing Finance Agency shall be considered part of the ~~department of housing and community affairs~~ Department, but shall keep the ~~department~~ Department advised of programs and activities being conducted.

* * *

§ 2473. DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

~~The division for historic preservation~~ Division of Historic Preservation is created within the ~~department of housing and community affairs~~ Department of Housing and Community Development as the successor to and the continuation of the ~~board of historic sites~~ Board of Historic Sites and the ~~division of historic sites~~ Division of Historic Sites.

* * *

§ 2476. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND MARKETING

(a) ~~The department of tourism and marketing of the agency is created, as successor to the department of travel~~ The Department of Tourism and Marketing is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. The ~~department~~ Department shall be administered by a ~~commissioner~~ Commissioner.

(b) Tourism marketing. ~~The department of tourism and marketing~~ Department shall be responsible for ~~the promotion of Vermont goods and services as well as the promotion of Vermont's travel, recreation, and cultural attractions through advertising and other informational programs, and for provision of travel and recreation information and services to visitors to the state~~ State, in coordination with other agencies of ~~state~~ State government,

chambers of commerce and travel associations, and the private sector in order to increase the benefits of tourism marketing, including:

(1) enhancing Vermont's image as a tourist destination in the regional, national, and global marketplace;

(2) increasing occupancy rates;

(3) increasing visitor spending throughout the State; and

(4) increasing State revenues generated through the rooms and meals tax.

(c) Economic development marketing. The Department shall be responsible for the promotion of Vermont as great place to live, work, and do business in order to increase the benefits of economic development marketing, including:

(1) attracting additional private investment in Vermont businesses;

(2) recruiting new businesses;

(3) attracting more innovators and entrepreneurs to locate in Vermont;

(4) attracting, recruiting, and growing the workforce to fill existing vacancies in growing businesses; and

(5) promoting and supporting Vermont businesses, goods, and services.

~~(d) On and after July 1, 1997, all departments engaging in marketing activities shall submit to and coordinate marketing plans with the commissioner of the department of tourism and marketing Commissioner.~~

~~(d) [Repealed.]~~

(e) ~~The department of tourism and marketing~~ Department may conduct direct marketing activities pursuant to this chapter or ~~chapter 27 of Title 10 V.S.A. chapter 27, but and shall make best reasonable efforts~~ work to increase marketing activities conducted in partnership with one or more private sector partners to maximize State marketing resources and to enable Vermont businesses to align their own brand identities with the Vermont brand, enhancing the reputations of both the business and the State.

(f) Building on established, successful collaboration with private partners in travel and tourism, agriculture, and other industry sectors, the department should Department shall have the authority ~~undertake reasonable efforts~~ to extend its marketing and promotional resources to include partners in the arts and humanities, as well as other partners that depend on tourism for a significant part of their annual revenue.

(g) The Department shall expand its outreach and information-gathering procedures to allow Vermont businesses and other interested stakeholders to comment on the design and implementation of its tourism marketing and economic development marketing initiatives and also to provide ongoing feedback to the Department on the effectiveness of its initiatives.

Sec. D.3. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND MARKETING; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING; LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL AND REPORT TO DEFINE PROGRAM GOALS, TARGETS, PERFORMANCE MEASURES, AND RESULTS

(a) On or before January 15, 2016, the Department of Tourism and Marketing shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to identify the goals, targets, performance measures, and results of its economic development marketing programs, including testimony or a written report addressing:

(1) Department functions, including:

(A) the mission and objectives of the Department and its programs;

(B) measurable goals for success;

(C) a profile of specific target audiences;

(D) research necessary to engage those audiences;

(E) strategies to identify and document Vermont's unique offerings and benefits to those audiences; and

(F) tactics to accomplish each strategy.

(2) Desired goals, including:

(A) new people, employees, and businesses relocate and invest in Vermont; and

(B) current Vermonters and businesses stay and prosper here.

(3) Measurable targets, including an increase in:

(A) student applications to Vermont schools;

(B) workforce participants;

(C) employment opportunities and jobs;

(D) number of businesses;

(E) investment in Vermont businesses; and

(F) the number of homeowners.

(4) Methods for identifying and collecting data indicators, and analyzing results.

**** Domestic Export Program ****

Sec. D.5. 6 V.S.A. chapter 207 is amended to read:

*CHAPTER 207. PROMOTION AND MARKETING OF VERMONT FOODS
AND PRODUCTS*

Subchapter 3. Agricultural Exports

§ 4621. DOMESTIC EXPORT PROGRAM

(a) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in collaboration with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the Chief Marketing Officer, shall have the authority to create a Domestic Export Program, the purpose of which may include:

(1) connecting Vermont producers with brokers, buyers, and distributors in other U.S. state and regional markets;

(2) providing technical and marketing assistance to Vermont producers to convert these connections into increased sales and sustainable commercial relationships; and

(3) providing one-time matching grants to attend trade shows and similar events to expand producers' market presence in other U.S. states, subject to available funding.

(b) The Secretary shall collect data on the activities and outcomes of the program authorized under this section and submit his or her findings and recommendations in a report on or before January 15 of each year to the House Committees on Agriculture and Forest Products and on Commerce and Economic Development and to the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Sec. D.6. IMPLEMENTATION; DOMESTIC EXPORT PROGRAM

The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall pursue grants, funding, and other resources, and shall continue to identify operational efficiencies within the Agency, in order to sustain adequately the creation and implementation of activities under the domestic export program authorized in 6 V.S.A. § 4621.

E. Access to Capital

** * * Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA); Lending; Green
Manufacture of Microbead Alternatives * * **

Sec. E.1. 10 V.S.A. § 280bb is amended to read:

§ 280bb. VERMONT ENTREPRENEURIAL LENDING PROGRAM

(a) There is created the Vermont Entrepreneurial Lending Program to be administered by the Vermont Economic Development Authority. The Program shall seek to meet the working capital and capital-asset financing needs of Vermont-based businesses in seed, start-up, and growth stages. The Program shall specifically seek to fulfill capital requirement needs that are unmet in Vermont, including:

(1) loans ~~up to \$100,000.00~~ to manufacturing businesses and software developers with innovative products that typically reflect long-term, organic growth;

(2) loans up to \$1,000,000.00 in growth-stage companies that do not meet the underwriting criteria of other public and private entrepreneurial financing sources; ~~and~~

(3) loans to businesses that are unable to access adequate capital resources because the primary assets of these businesses are typically intellectual property or similar nontangible assets; and

(4) loans to advanced manufacturers and other Vermont businesses for product development and intellectual property design.

(b) The Authority shall adopt regulations, policies, and procedures for the Program as are necessary to increase the amount of investment funds available to Vermont businesses whose capital requirements are not being met by conventional lending sources.

(c) When considering entrepreneurial lending through the Program, the Authority shall give additional consideration and weight to an application of a business whose business model and practices will have a demonstrable effect in achieving other public policy goals of the State, including:

(1) The business will create jobs in strategic sectors such as the knowledge-based economy, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, wood products manufacturing, and value-added agricultural processing.

(2) The business is located in a designated downtown, village center, growth center, industrial park, or other significant geographic location recognized by the State.

(3) *The business adopts energy and thermal efficiency practices in its operations or otherwise operates in a way that reflects a commitment to green energy principles.*

(4) *The business will create jobs that pay a livable wage and significant benefits to Vermont employees.*

(5) *The business will create environmental benefits or will manufacture environmentally responsible products.*

(d) *The Authority shall include provisions in the terms of a loan made under the Program to ensure that a loan recipient shall maintain operations within the State for a minimum of five years from the date on which the recipient receives the loan funds from the Authority or shall otherwise be required to repay the outstanding funds in full.*

Sec. E.2. 10 V.S.A. § 212 is amended to read:

§ 212. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(6) *“Eligible facility” or “eligible project” means any industrial, commercial, or agricultural enterprise or endeavor approved by the authority that meets the criteria established in the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Strategy adopted by the Governor under section 280b of this title, including land and rights in land, air, or water, buildings, structures, machinery, and equipment of such eligible facilities or eligible projects, except that an eligible facility or project shall not include the portion of an enterprise or endeavor relating to the sale of goods at retail where such goods are manufactured primarily out of state, and except further that an eligible facility or project shall not include the portion of an enterprise or endeavor relating to housing. Such enterprises or endeavors may include:*

(A) *quarrying, mining, manufacturing, processing, including the further processing of agricultural products, assembling, or warehousing of goods or materials for sale or distribution or the maintenance of safety standards in connection therewith, and including Vermont-based manufacturers that are adversely impacted by the State’s regulation or ban of products as they transition from the manufacture of the regulated or banned products to the design and manufacture of environmentally sound substitutes.*

* * *

* * * Vermont State Treasurer; Local Investments * * *

Sec. E.3. Sec. 25 of Act 199 of 2014 (sunset of Treasurer's credit facility for local investments and Treasurer's local investment advisory committee) is amended to read:

Sec. 25. SUNSET

Secs. 23–24 of this act shall be repealed on July 1, ~~2015~~ 2016.

** * * Licensed Lender Exemption for Commercial Loans * * **

Sec. E.4. 8 V.S.A. § 2201 is amended to read:

§ 2201. LICENSES REQUIRED

** * **

(d) No lender license, mortgage broker license, or sales finance company license shall be required of:

** * **

(10) Persons who lend, other than residential mortgage loans, an aggregate of less than ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$250,000.00 in any one year at rates of interest of no more than 12 percent per annum.

** * **

Sec. E.5. PEER-TO-PEER LENDING; STUDY; REPORT

(a) The Department of Financial Regulation, in collaboration with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, shall conduct a study and analysis of models for peer-to-peer lending and investment that will enable established entrepreneurs to connect with emerging entrepreneurs and increased lending, equity investment, and business mentoring while preserving adequate regulatory oversight and business consumer protection.

(b) The Department and the Agency shall report its findings and any recommendations for legislation on or before December 1, 2015, to the House Committee on Commerce and Community Development and to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Sec. E.6. MEDIA PRODUCTION DATABASE

(a) Subject to subsection (c) of this section, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall create and maintain a current database of media production resources in Vermont.

(b)(1) The database shall be a searchable directory of media production professionals, including location scouts, lighting resources, animation, studios, equipment rental, sites, editing equipment, independent contractors who work in production, acting, and photographers.

(2) The database shall be accessible to the public through the Agency website and other appropriate sources.

(c) Implementation of this section shall be contingent upon the Agency's successful creation of a partnership with one or more Vermont colleges, universities, or other internship programs to create and maintain the media production database.

F. Natural Resources, Land Use, and Planning

**** Giving Deference to Regional Planning and Planners in Mitigating Adverse Economic Impacts of Major Employers ****

Sec. F.1. 24 V.S.A. § 2787 is added to read:

§ 2787. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY; DEFERENCE TO REGIONAL PLANS; CEDS

In the event a major employer in an economic region announces a closure, relocation, or other significant action that will impact directly and indirectly jobs or wages in the region, and a regional planning commission has adopted a regional plan pursuant to section 4348 of this title or a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, or both, and the plan or CEDS, or both, includes mitigation strategies to address substantial local and regional economic and fiscal challenges related to that employer, including closure, relocation, or reduction in workforce, then:

(1) the Executive Branch shall defer to the regional plan and CEDS when using or distributing funds or other resources meant to mitigate anticipated local and regional economic and fiscal challenges, or shall provide the regional planning commission for the region with its basis for not deferring to the plan and the CEDS; and

(2) the Executive Branch shall involve the regional planning commission and regional development corporation for the region in decisions regarding the use or distribution of those funds or resources.

**** Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone ****

Sec. F.2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) the Agency of Commerce and Community Development projects that the 44 Vermont towns served by the two most Southern regional development corporations and regional planning commissions in Vermont will lose 3.5 percent of their population by 2030 and that the total population of individuals

over 65 years of age in this combined region will increase from 17 percent in 2010 to 30 percent in 2030;

(2) the number of visitors to the Southern Vermont visitor center has decreased 25 percent since 2006;

(3) since 2006, growth in the region's rooms and meals tax is 10 percent, as compared to 25 percent in the Chittenden County region;

(4) the rate of residential construction in the region is currently half of the prerecession level;

(5) the two Southern Vermont regions have collaborated on business recovery programming after Tropical Storm Irene, including development of individualized downtown and village revitalization plans and development of the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing program; and

(6) the two regions, having also worked together on some workforce development and internship initiatives, are seeking to establish a more formal structure for their workforce and recruitment efforts.

(b) The purposes of Secs. F.3 and F.4 of this act are:

(1) to establish officially a Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone comprising of the geographic areas served by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Bennington County Industrial Corporation; and

(2) to establish a study committee that will assist the General Assembly, the Governor, and partners within the Zone in establishing a replicable framework for regional cooperation by and between public sector and private sector partners concerning economic development initiatives; workforce training, retention, and recruitment; and sustainable business investment.

(c)(1) The General Assembly acknowledges the challenges in Southern Vermont and intends for this formal designation to accelerate economic development initiatives that are underway or are needed in the future.

(2) The General Assembly does not intend that the Zone in current or future years will be a recipient of General Fund appropriations. Rather, the intent of the Zone is to coordinate targeted investment through public-private partnerships from other funding sources if available and to facilitate economic growth through regional cooperation.

Sec. F.3. 10 V.S.A. chapter 1 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 1: ~~THE FUTURE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT~~

* * *

~~Subchapter 1: The Vermont Business Recruitment Partnership~~

§ 8. SOUTHERN VERMONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE

There is created the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone, comprising of the geographic areas served by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Bennington County Industrial Corporation.

* * *

Sec. F.4. SOUTHERN VERMONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE; STUDY COMMITTEE; REPORT

(a) There is created the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone Study Committee the purpose of which shall be to reverse the decline in the workforce from 2000–2014 and to revitalize economic growth within the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone created in 10 V.S.A. § 8.

(b) The Study Committee shall consist of the following members:

(A) five members who represent the interests of the private sector and represent a balance of geographic interests within the Zone;

(i) one member appointed by the Governor;

(ii) two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(iii) two members appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees;

(B) one member each from the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Bennington County Industrial Corporation; and

(C) one member each from the Windham Regional Commission and the Bennington County Regional Commission.

(c) On or before December 1, 2015, the Committee shall submit a report to the Secretary of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the House Committee on Commerce and Community Development, and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs that includes proposals:

(1) to establish an integrated investment strategy for retaining businesses within and recruiting business to the Zone;

(2) to establish an implementation plan for the Southern Vermont Sustainable Recruitment and Marketing Project created in 2014 and contained in the Windham Region's federally recognized Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy;

(3) to outline the benefits and obstacles within the Zone involved in integrating internship and career exposure programs, workforce development programs, and young professional activities;

(4) to propose an organizational and operational structure of a public-private partnership with the mission of aggregating capital and coordinating investment in small- and medium-size businesses located within the Zone; and

(5) to recommend whether and in what configuration the Study Committee or other group should continue and its mission.

(d) Meetings.

(1) The members of the Committee who represent the regional development corporations shall jointly call the first meeting, to occur on or before August 1, 2015.

(2) The Committee shall select a chair from among the private sector members at the first meeting.

(3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

(4) The Committee shall cease to exist on July 1, 2016.

* * *

* * * Act 250; Criterion 9(L) * * *

**Sec. F.5. ACT 250; IMPLEMENTATION OF SETTLEMENT PATTERNS
CRITERION**

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 147, Sec. 2 amended 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(9)(L) (Criterion 9L) to become a settlement patterns criterion. The purpose of the amendment was to guide and accomplish coordinated, efficient, and economic development in the State that is consistent with Vermont's historic settlement pattern of compact centers separated by rural countryside.

(2) Effective on October 17, 2014, the Natural Resources Board (NRB) adopted a procedure to implement Criterion 9L (the Criterion 9L Procedure).

(b) The General Assembly determines that additional opportunity for public comment on the Criterion 9L Procedure, as well as additional education and improved guidance, would be beneficial in implementing the criterion.

(1) The NRB shall review the Criterion 9L Procedure in full collaboration with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) and the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR).

(A) As part of this review, the NRB shall solicit input from affected parties and the public, including planners, developers, municipalities, environmental advocacy organizations, regional planning commissions,

regional development corporations, and business advocacy organizations such as State and regional chambers of commerce.

(B) Based on this review, the NRB shall adopt revisions in the form of a procedure under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25.

(2) ACCD shall work with the NRB and ANR to develop outreach material on Criterion 9L, including illustrative examples of appropriate development design, and implement a training plan on the criterion for local elected officials, municipal boards, State and regional organizations and associations, environmental groups, consultants, and developers.

* * * *Municipal Land Use; Neighborhood Development Area* * * *

Sec. F.6. 24 V.S.A. § 4471(e) is amended to read:

(e) ~~Vermont—neighborhood~~ Neighborhood development area. Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a determination by an appropriate municipal panel shall not be subject to appeal if the determination is that a proposed residential development within a designated downtown development district, designated growth center, ~~or~~ designated Vermont neighborhood, or designated neighborhood development area seeking conditional use approval will not result in an undue adverse effect on the character of the area affected, as provided in under subdivision 4414(3)(A)(ii) of this title.

* * * *Act 250; Primary Agricultural Soils* * * *

Sec. F.7. 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(9)(B) is amended to read:

(B) *Primary agricultural soils.* A permit will be granted for the development or subdivision of primary agricultural soils only when it is demonstrated by the applicant that, in addition to all other applicable criteria, either, the subdivision or development will not result in any reduction in the agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils; or:

(i) the development or subdivision will not significantly interfere with or jeopardize the continuation of agriculture or forestry on adjoining lands or reduce their agricultural or forestry potential; ~~and~~

(ii) except in the case of an application for a project located in a designated ~~growth center~~ area listed in subdivision 6093(a)(1) of this title, there are no lands other than primary agricultural soils owned or controlled by the applicant which are reasonably suited to the purpose of the development or subdivision; ~~and~~

(iii) except in the case of an application for a project located in a designated ~~growth center~~ area listed in subdivision 6093(a)(1) of this title, the subdivision or development has been planned to minimize the reduction of

agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils through innovative land use design resulting in compact development patterns, so that the remaining primary agricultural soils on the project tract are capable of supporting or contributing to an economic or commercial agricultural operation; and

(iv) suitable mitigation will be provided for any reduction in the agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils caused by the development or subdivision, in accordance with section 6093 of this title and rules adopted by the Natural Resources Board.

** * * Acquisition of Land by Public Agencies; Conservation Easements * * **

Sec. F.8. 10 V.S.A. § 6310 is added to read:

§ 6310. CONSERVATION EASEMENT HOLDER; NONMERGER

If a holder of a conservation easement is or becomes the owner in fee simple of property subject to the easement, the easement shall continue in effect and shall not be extinguished.

Sec. F.9. 30 V.S.A. § 248(q) is amended to read:

(q)(1) A certificate under this section shall be required for a plant using methane derived from an agricultural operation ~~shall be required~~ as follows:

(A) With respect to a plant that constitutes farming pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22)(F), only for the equipment used to generate electricity from biogas, the equipment used to refine biogas into natural gas, the structures housing such equipment used to generate electricity or refine biogas, and the interconnection to electric and natural gas distribution and transmission systems. The certificate shall not be required for the methane digester, the digester influents and non-gas effluents, the buildings and equipment used to handle such influents and non-gas effluents, or the on-farm use of heat and exhaust produced by the generation of electricity, and these components shall not be subject to jurisdiction under this section.

(B) With respect to a plant that does not constitute farming pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22)(F) but which receives feedstock from off-site farms, for all on-site components of the plant, for the transportation of feedstock to the plant from off-site contributing farms, and the transportation of effluent or digestate back to those farms. The certificate shall not regulate any farming activities conducted on the contributing farms that provide feedstock to a plant or use of effluent or digestate returned to the contributing farms from the plant.

** * **

G. Tax Credits and Business Incentives

** * * Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI) * * **

Sec. G.1. 32 V.S.A. § 5930a(c)(2) is amended to read:

(2) ~~The new jobs should make a net positive contribution to employment in the area, and meet or exceed the prevailing compensation level including wages and benefits, for the particular employment sector~~ consistent with the applicable wage threshold for the labor market area. The new jobs should offer benefits and opportunities for advancement and professional growth consistent with the employment sector.

Sec. G.2. 32 V.S.A. § 5930b is amended to read:

§ 5930b. VERMONT EMPLOYMENT GROWTH INCENTIVE

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

** * **

(20) ~~“Qualifying jobs” means new, full-time Vermont jobs held by nonowners that meet the wage threshold.~~

“Qualifying job” means a new, full-time Vermont job held by a nonowner that meets the wage threshold and for which the employer provides at least three of the following:

(A) health care benefits with 50 percent or more of the premium paid by the employer;

(B) dental assistance;

(C) paid vacation;

(D) paid holidays;

(E) child care;

(F) other extraordinary employee benefits;

(G) retirement benefits;

(H) other paid time off, including paid sick days.

** * **

(24) “Wage threshold” means the minimum annualized Vermont gross wages and salaries paid, as determined by the Council, but not less than:

(A) 60 percent above the minimum wage at the time of application, ~~in order for a new job to be a qualifying job under this section;~~ or

(B) for a business located in a labor market area in which the average annual unemployment rate is higher than the average annual unemployment rate for the State, the greater of:

(i) 40 percent above the State minimum wage at the time of application; or

(ii) \$13.00 per hour.

(25) "Labor market area" means a labor market area as designated by the Vermont Department of Labor.

(b) Authorization process.

(1) A business may apply to the Vermont Economic Progress Council for approval of a performance-based employment growth incentive to be paid out of the business's withholding account upon approval by the Department of Taxes pursuant to the conditions set forth in this section. Businesses shall not be permitted to deduct approved incentives from withholding liability payments otherwise due. In addition to any other information that the Council may require in order to fulfill its obligations under section 5930a of this title, an employment growth incentive application shall include all the following information:

(A) application base number of jobs;

(B) total jobs at time of application;

(C) application base payroll;

(D) total payroll at time of application;

(E) jobs target for each year in the award period;

(F) payroll target for each year in the award period;

(G) capital investment target for each year in the award period; and

(H) a statement signed by the president or chief executive officer or equivalent acknowledging that to the extent the applicant fails to meet the minimum capital investment by the end of the award period, any incentives remaining to be earned shall be limited, and any incentives taken shall be subject to complete or partial reversal, pursuant to subdivisions (c)(10) and (11) of this section.

(2) The Council shall review each application in accordance with section 5930a of this title, except that the Council may provide for an initial approval pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection 5930a(c), followed by a final approval at a later date, before December 31 of the calendar year in which the economic activity commences.

(3) Except as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection, the value of the incentives will be dependent upon the net fiscal benefit resulting from projected qualifying payroll and qualifying capital investment. An incentive

ratio shall be applied to the net fiscal benefit generated by the cost-benefit model in order to determine the maximum award the Council may authorize for each application it approves. The Council may establish a threshold for wages in excess of, but not less than, the wage threshold, as defined in subsection (a) of this section for individual applications the Council wishes to approve. The Council shall calculate an incentive percentage for each approved application as follows:

Authorized award amount ÷ the five-year sum of all payroll targets

(4) An approval shall specify: the application base jobs at the time of the application; total jobs at time of application; the application base payroll; total payroll at time of application; the incentive percentage; the wage threshold; the payroll thresholds; a job target for each year of the award period; a payroll target for each year of the award period; a capital investment target for each year of the award period and description sufficient for application of subdivisions (c)(10) and (11) of this section of the nature of qualifying capital investment over the award period upon which approval shall be conditioned; and the amount of the total award. The Council shall provide a copy of each approval to the Department of Taxes along with a copy of the application submitted by that applicant.

(5)(A) Notwithstanding subdivision (3) of this subsection, the Council may authorize incentives in excess of net fiscal benefit multiplied by the incentive ratio not to exceed an annual authorization established by law for awards to businesses located in a labor market area in which the average annual unemployment rate is greater than the average annual unemployment rate for the State or in which the average annual wage is below the average annual wage for the State.

(B)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (B)(ii) of this subdivision (5), the total amount of employment growth incentives the Vermont Economic Progress Council is authorized to approve under subdivision (A) of this subdivision (5) shall not exceed \$1,000,000.00 from the General Fund.

(ii) The Council shall have the authority to exceed the cap imposed in subdivision (i) of this subdivision (5)(B) upon application to and approval by the Emergency Board.

(c) Claiming an employment growth incentive.

** * **

(6)(A) A business whose application is approved and, in the first, second, or third year of the award period, fails to meet or exceed its payroll target and one out of two of its jobs and capital investment targets may not claim incentives in that year. To the extent such business reaches its first,

second, or third year award period targets within the succeeding two calendar year reporting periods immediately succeeding year one, two, or three of the award period, or within the extended period if an extension is granted under subdivision (B) of this subdivision (6), whichever is applicable, such business may claim incentives in five-year installments as provided in subdivisions (1) through (4) of this subsection. A business which fails to meet or exceed its payroll target and one of its two jobs and capital investment targets within this time frame shall forfeit all authority under this section to earn and claim incentives for award period year one, two, or three, as applicable, and any future award period years. The Department of Taxes shall notify the Vermont Economic Progress Council that the first, second, or third year award period targets have not been met within the prescribed period, and the Council shall rescind authority for the business to earn incentives for the activity in year one, two, or three, as applicable, and any future award period years.

(B)(i) Notwithstanding subdivision (A) of this subdivision (6), if a business determines that it may not reach its first or second year award period targets within the succeeding two calendar year reporting periods due to facts or circumstances beyond its control, the business may request that the Council extend the period to meet the targets for another two reporting periods, reviewed annually, for award year one, and one reporting period for award year two.

(ii) The Council may grant an extension pursuant to this subdivision (B) if it determines that the business failed to meet its targets due to facts or circumstances beyond the control of the business and that there is a reasonable likelihood the business will meet the award period targets within the extension period.

(iii) If the Council grants an extension pursuant to this subdivision (B), the Council shall recalculate the value of the incentive using the cost-benefit model and shall adjust the amount of the award as is necessary to account for the extension of the award period.

* * *

(h) Enhanced training incentive. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Council may award an enhanced training incentive as follows:

(1) A business whose incentive application is approved may elect to claim an enhanced training incentive at any time during the award period by:

(A) notifying the Council of its intent to pursue an enhanced training incentive and dedicate its incentive funds to training through the Vermont Training Program or a Workforce Education and Training Fund program; and

(B) applying for a grant from the Vermont Training Program or the Workforce Education and Training Fund to perform training for new employees who hold qualifying jobs.

(2) If a business is awarded a grant for training pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development or the Department of Labor, as applicable, shall disburse grant funds for on-the-job training of not more than 75 percent of wages for each employee in training, or not more than 75 percent of trainer expense, and the business shall be responsible for the remaining 25 percent of the applicable training costs.

(3) If the business successfully completes its training and meets or exceeds its payroll target and either its jobs target or capital investment target, the Council shall approve the enhanced training incentive and notify the Department of Taxes.

(4) Upon notification by the Council, the Department of Taxes:

(A) shall disburse to the business a payment in an amount equal to 25 percent of the cost for training expenses pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection (h);

(B) shall disburse to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development or the Department of Labor, as applicable, a payment in an amount equal to 25 percent of the cost for training expenses pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection (h); and

(C) shall disburse the remaining value of the incentive award in annual installments pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section.

(5)(A) If, during the utilization period for the incentive paid pursuant to this subsection (h), the business fails to maintain the qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll established in the award year, or does not reestablish qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll to 100 percent of the award year level, the Department of Taxes shall recapture the enhanced incentive pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

(B) The amount of recapture shall equal the sum of the installments that the Department would have disbursed if it had paid the incentive in five-year installments pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section for the years during the utilization period that the qualifying jobs or qualifying payroll were not maintained.

(i) Overall gross cap on total employment growth incentive and education tax incentive authorizations.

(1) For any calendar year, the total amount of employment growth incentives the Vermont Economic Progress Council is authorized to approve

under this section and property tax stabilizations under subsection 5404a(a) of this title shall not exceed \$10,000,000.00 from the General Fund and Education Fund combined each year.

(2) The Council shall have the authority to exceed the cap imposed in subdivision (1) of this subsection upon application to and approval by the Emergency Board.

Sec. G.3. 2006 Acts and Resolves No. 184, Sec. 11 is amended to read:

~~Sec. 11. VEGI; ANNUAL CALENDAR YEAR CAPS~~

~~(a) Net negative awards cap. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any calendar year, the annual authorization for the total net fiscal cost of Vermont employment growth incentives that the Vermont economic progress council or the economic incentive review board may approve under 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(b)(5) shall not exceed \$1,000,000.00 from the general fund.~~

~~(b) Restrictions to labor market area. Employment growth incentives within the annual authorization amount in subsection (a) of this section shall be granted solely for awards to businesses located in a labor market area of this state in which the rate of unemployment is greater than the average for the state or in which the average annual wage is below the average annual wage for the state. For the purposes of this section, a "labor market area" shall be as determined by the department of labor.~~

~~(c) Overall gross cap on total employment growth incentive and education tax incentive authorizations. For any calendar year, the total amount of employment growth incentives the Vermont economic progress council or the economic incentive review board is authorized to approve under 32 V.S.A. § 5930b and property tax stabilizations and allocations under 32 V.S.A. § 5404a(a) and (e) shall not exceed \$10,000,000.00 from the general fund and education fund combined each year. This maximum annual amount may be exceeded by the Vermont economic progress council upon application to and approval by the Emergency Board. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. G.4. 10 V.S.A. § 531(d) is amended to read:

(d) In order to avoid duplication of programs or services and to provide the greatest return on investment from training provided under this section, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall:

(1) consult with the Commissioner of Labor regarding whether the grantee has accessed, or is eligible to access, other workforce education and training resources;

(2) disburse grant funds only for training hours that have been successfully completed by employees; provided that, except for an award under

an enhanced training incentive as provided in 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(h), a grant for on-the-job training shall either provide not more than 50 percent of wages for each employee in training, or not more than 50 percent of trainer expense, but not both, and further provided that training shall be performed in accordance with a training plan that defines the subject of the training, the number of training hours, and how the effectiveness of the training will be evaluated; and

(3) use funds under this section only to supplement training efforts of employers and not to replace or supplant training efforts of employers.

** * * Employee Relocation Tax Credit Study * * **

*Sec. G.5. EMPLOYEE RELOCATION TAX CREDIT; STUDY
COMMITTEE; REPORT*

(a) Creation. There is created an Employee Relocation Study Committee to research and develop one or more incentive programs to encourage employees who are qualified for high-demand, unfilled positions within Vermont businesses to relocate to Vermont.

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

(1) one current member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) one current member of the Senate appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) one member who represents the interests of the regional development corporations, appointed by the Governor;

(4) one member who represents the interests of private business, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(5) one member who represents the interests of private business, appointed by the Committee on Committees; and

(6) the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development.

(c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study potential incentive programs, tax credits, or other mechanisms to encourage employee relocation, including the following issues:

(1) eligibility criteria for employees, employers, and employment positions;

(2) amount and conditions for incentives or credits;

(3) distribution of incentives or credits by region, employer, and by State-level or regional-level grantors; and

(4) data, and a mechanism for collecting data, to measure the effectiveness of any proposed program.

(d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

(e) Report. On or before January 15, 2016, the Committee shall submit a report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall call the first meeting of the Committee, to occur on or before September 1, 2015.

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

(3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

(4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 16, 2016.

(g) Reimbursement.

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

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

* * * VHFA; Down Payment Assistance Program * * *

Sec. G.6. DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds:

(1) The Federal Bipartisan Policy Center's Housing Commission notes that homeownership can produce powerful economic, social, and civic benefits that serve the individual homeowner, the larger community, and the nation.

(2) Supporting more Vermonters to become homeowners allows them an opportunity to improve and invest in their neighborhoods and become stable members of their community's life and workforce.

(3) Homeownership, even with the recent decline in housing values, has continued to be the most reliable source of individual wealth accumulation and equity for the future.

(4) First-time homebuyers often delay purchasing a home due to the fees and down payment costs required at closing and need support to achieve their homeownership opportunity.

Sec. G.7. 32 V.S.A. § 5930u is amended to read:

§ 5930u. TAX CREDIT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Affordable housing project” or “project” means:

(A) a rental housing project identified in 26 U.S.C. § 42(g); or

(B) owner-occupied housing identified in 26 U.S.C. § 143(e) ~~and (f)~~ and eligible (c)(1) or that qualifies under the Vermont Housing Finance Agency allocation plan criteria governing owner-occupied housing.

(2) “Affordable housing tax credits” means the tax credit provided by this subchapter.

(3) “Allocating agency” means the Vermont Housing Finance Agency.

(4) “Committee” means the Joint Committee on Tax Credits consisting of five members; a representative from the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the Vermont State Housing Authority, and the Office of the Governor.

(5) “Credit certificate” means a certificate issued by the allocating agency to a taxpayer that specifies the amount of affordable housing tax credits that can be applied against the taxpayer’s individual or corporate income tax or franchise or insurance premium tax liability as provided in this subchapter.

(6) “Eligible applicant” means any municipality, private sector developer, ~~department of state government as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6302(a); State agency as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6301a, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, or a nonprofit organization qualifying under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3); or cooperative housing organization, the purpose of which is the creation and retention of~~ to create and retain affordable housing for ~~lower income~~ lower income Vermonters; ~~with lower income and the which has in its bylaws that require a requirement that housing to the housing the organization creates be maintained as affordable housing for lower income Vermonters with lower income on a perpetual basis.~~

(7) “Eligible cash contribution” means an amount of cash contributed to the owner, developer, or sponsor of an affordable housing project and determined by the allocating agency as eligible for affordable housing tax credits.

(8) “Section 42 credits” means tax credit provided by 26 U.S.C. §§ 38 and 42.

(9) “Allocation plan” means the plan recommended by the Committee and approved by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, which sets forth the eligibility requirements and process for selection of eligible housing projects to receive affordable housing tax credits under this section. The allocation plan shall include:

(A) requirements for creation and retention of affordable housing for ~~low income persons~~; with low income; and

(B) requirements to ensure that eligible housing is maintained as affordable by subsidy covenant, as defined in 27 V.S.A. § 610 on a perpetual basis, and meets all other requirements of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency related to affordable housing.

(b) Eligible tax credit allocations.

(1) Affordable housing credit allocation.

(A) An eligible applicant may apply to the allocating agency for an allocation of affordable housing tax credits under this section related to an affordable housing project authorized by the allocating agency under the allocation plan. In the case of a specific affordable rental housing project, the eligible applicant ~~must~~ shall also be the owner or a person having the right to acquire ownership of the building and ~~must~~ shall apply prior to placement of the affordable housing project in service. In the case of owner-occupied housing units, the applicant ~~must apply prior to purchase of the unit and must~~ shall ensure that the allocated funds will be used to ensure that the housing qualifies or program funds remain as an affordable housing resource for all future owners of the housing. The allocating agency shall issue a letter of approval if it finds that the applicant meets the priorities, criteria, and other provisions of subdivision ~~(2)(B)~~ of this ~~subsection~~ subdivision (b)(1). The burden of proof shall be on the applicant.

~~(2)(B)~~ Upon receipt of a completed application, the allocating agency shall award an allocation of affordable housing tax credits with respect to a project ~~under this section shall be granted~~ to an applicant, provided the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the ~~committee~~ allocating agency all of the following:

~~(A)(i) The owner of the project has received from the allocating agency a binding commitment for, a reservation or allocation of, or an out-of-cap determination letter for, Section 42 credits, or meets the requirements of the allocation plan for development or financing of units to be owner-occupied;~~

~~(B)(ii) The project has received community support.~~

~~(2) Down payment assistance program.~~

~~(A) The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall have the authority to allocate affordable housing tax credits to finance down payment assistance loans that meet the following requirements:~~

~~(i) the loan is made in connection with a mortgage through an Agency program;~~

~~(ii) the borrower is a first-time homebuyer of an owner-occupied primary residence; and~~

~~(iii) the borrower uses the loan for the borrower's down payment or closing costs, or both.~~

~~(B) The Agency shall require the borrower to repay the loan upon the transfer or refinance of the residence.~~

~~(C) The Agency shall use the proceeds of loans made under the program for future down payment assistance.~~

~~(c) Amount of credit. A taxpayer who makes an eligible cash contribution shall be entitled to claim against the taxpayer's individual income, corporate, franchise, or insurance premium tax liability a credit in an amount specified on the taxpayer's credit certificate. The first-year allocation of a credit amount to a taxpayer shall also be deemed an allocation of the same amount in each of the following four years.~~

~~(d) Availability of credit. The amount of affordable housing tax credit allocated with respect to a project shall be available to the taxpayer every year for five consecutive tax years, beginning with the tax year in which the eligible cash contribution is made. Total tax credits available to the taxpayer shall be the amount of the first-year allocation plus the succeeding four years' deemed allocations.~~

~~(e) Claim for credit. A taxpayer claiming affordable housing tax credits shall submit with each return on which such credit is claimed a copy of the allocating agency's credit allocation to the affordable housing project and the taxpayer's credit certificate. Any unused affordable housing tax credit may be carried forward to reduce the taxpayer's tax liability for no more than 14~~

succeeding tax years, following the first year the affordable housing tax credit is allowed.

(f) ~~[Deleted.] [Repealed.]~~

(g)(1) In any fiscal year, the allocating agency may award up to:

(A) \$400,000.00 in total first-year credit allocations to all applicants for rental housing projects, for a total aggregate limit of \$2,000,000.00 over any given five-year period that credits are available under this subdivision; and may award up to

(B) \$300,000.00 per year in total first-year credit allocations for owner-occupied unit applicants financing or down payment loans consistent with the allocation plan, including for new construction and manufactured housing, for a total aggregate limit of \$1,500,000.00 over any given five-year period that credits are available under this subdivision.

(2) In fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018, the allocating agency may award up to \$125,000.00 in total first-year credit allocations for loans through the down payment assistance program created in subdivision (b)(2) of this section for a total aggregate limit of \$375,000.00 over the five-year period that credits are available under this subdivision.

(h) In any fiscal year, total first year allocations plus succeeding year deemed allocations shall not exceed \$3,500,000.00 The aggregate limit for all credit allocations available under this section in any fiscal year is \$3,875,000.00.

** * * Cloud Tax * * **

Sec. G.8. PREWRITTEN SOFTWARE ACCESSED REMOTELY

Charges for the right to access remotely prewritten software shall not be considered charges for tangible personal property under 32 V.S.A. § 9701(7).

** * * Wood Products Manufacturer Incentive * * **

Sec. G.9. 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 179, Sec. G.100(b) is amended to read:

(b) Sec. E.100.6 (wood products manufacture incentive) shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2014 and apply to tax year years 2014 and 2015.

Sec. G.10. VERMONT ENTERPRISE FUND; FUNDS TRANSFER

(a) Transfers. The amount of \$425,000.00 is transferred from the Vermont Enterprise Fund created in 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 179, Sec. E.100.5 as follows:

(1) \$125,000.00 to the General Fund for the Down Payment Assistance Program established in Sec. G.7 of this act.

(2) \$100,000.00 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to implement a targeted marketing and business expansion initiative for Quebec-based businesses, including conducting business outreach activities, promoting partnerships with Vermont businesses throughout the State, and facilitating site selection and collocation at sites throughout the State.

(3) \$200,000.00 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the purpose of implementing economic development marketing pursuant to Secs. D.1–D.3 of this act.

(b) Reports.

(1) On or before September 30, 2015 and on or before March 31, 2016, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall deliver a status report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on the activities in the Down Payment Assistance Program funded in subdivision (a)(1) of this section.

(2) On or before September 30, 2015 and on or before March 31, 2016, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall deliver a status report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on the marketing and business expansion initiative for Quebec-based businesses funded in subdivision (a)(2) of this section.

Sec. G.11. 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 179, Sec. E.100.5 is amended to read:

Sec. E.100.5 VERMONT ENTERPRISE FUND

* * *

(h) This section shall sunset on June 30, ~~2016~~ 2017 and any remaining balance in the Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

H. Effective Dates

Sec. H.1. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and the following sections shall take effect on passage:

(1) Sec. A.3 (blockchain technology study);

(2) Sec. B.1 (Uniform Commercial Code, Article 4A);

(3) Secs. C.1–C.2 (Vermont Strong Scholars);

(4) Sec. C.5 (Vermont Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities);

(5) Secs. C.6–C.8 (Vermont ABLE Savings Program);

- (6) Sec. C.9 (Medicaid for working people with disabilities);
 - (7) Sec. C.10 (Vermont career technical education report);
 - (8) Secs. D.5–D.6 (Domestic Export Program);
 - (9) Secs. E.1–E.2 (Vermont Economic Development Authority);
 - (10) Sec. E.3 (extending sunset of Treasurer’s credit facility for local investments and Treasurer’s local investment advisory committee);
 - (11) Sec. F.1 (deference to regional planning);
 - (12) Secs. F.2–F.4 (Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone);
 - (13) Sec. F.5 (Act 250; implementation of settlement patterns criteria; criterion 9(L)); and
 - (14) Sec. F.9 (certificate of public good; methane digesters).
- (b) The following sections shall take effect on July 1, 2015:
- (1) Sec. A.1 (business rapid response to declared State disasters);
 - (2) Sec. A.16 (Vermont liquor control system study)
 - (3) Sec. C.3 (Workforce Education and Training Fund revisions);
 - (4) Secs. D.1–D.3 (Tourism and Marketing initiative);
 - (5) Secs. E.4 (increase in license exemption for commercial lending);
 - (6) Sec. E.5 (peer-to-peer lending study);
 - (7) Sec. E.6 (media production database);
 - (8) Sec. F.6 (municipal land use; neighborhood development area);
 - (9) Sec. F.7 (Act 250; primary agricultural soils);
 - (10) Sec. F.8 (conservation easements);
 - (11) Sec. G.5 (employee relocation tax credit study);
 - (12) Secs. G.6–G.7 (Down Payment Assistance Program);
 - (13) Sec. G.8 (prewritten software accessed remotely);
 - (14) Sec. G.9 (wood products manufacturer incentive); and
 - (15) Secs. G.10–G.11 (Vermont Enterprise Fund).
- (c) In Sec. A.4, in 7 V.S.A. § 2, subdivisions (27) (definition; “special events permit”), (28) (definition; “fourth-class license”), and (39) (definition, “public library or museum permit”) shall take effect on July 1, 2015. The remaining provisions of Sec. A.4 (alcoholic beverages; definitions) shall take effect on January 1, 2016.

(d) Secs. A.5–A.15 (fortified wines) shall take effect on January 1, 2016.

(e) Secs. B.2–B.9 (Uniform Commercial Code; Article 7) shall take effect on passage and shall apply as follows:

(1) This act shall apply to a document of title that is issued or a bailment that arises on or after the effective date of this act.

(2) This act does not apply to a document of title that is issued or a bailment that arises before the effective date of this act even if the document of title or bailment would be subject to this act if the document of title had been issued or bailment had arisen on or after the effective date of this act.

(3) This act does not apply to a right of action that has accrued before the effective date of this act.

(4) A document of title issued or a bailment that arises before the effective date of this act and the rights, obligations, and interests flowing from that document or bailment are governed by any statute or other rule amended or repealed by this act as if amendment or repeal had not occurred and may be terminated, completed, consummated, or enforced under that statute or other rule.

(f)(1) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, other than 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(c) (extension of time to meet first or second year award targets), Secs. G.1–G.4 (Vermont Employment Growth Incentive) shall take effect retroactively as of January 1, 2015.

(2) In Sec. G.2, 32 V.S.A. § 5930b(c)(extension of time to meet first or second year award targets) shall take effect on July 1, 2015.