

Sen. Cummins 3/25/16

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Jeanette White, Chair, Senate Committee on Government Operations
Donna Sweaney, Chair, House Committee on Government Operations

DATE: January 6, 2016

SUBJECT: 2016 Reports Repeal Bill

2 V.S.A. § 20(d) states:

(d) Unless otherwise provided by law, whenever an agency is required by law to submit an annual, biennial, or other periodic report to the general assembly, that requirement shall no longer be required after five years or after five years from July 1, 2009, whichever date is later. The legislative council, pursuant to section 424 of this title, may revise the Vermont Statutes Annotated accordingly.

This statutory section requires legislatively enacted reports from State agencies to be repealed after five years. This section is limited to periodic reports from State agencies to the General Assembly. The automatic repeal provision was enacted in the 2009 legislative session with the intent to pare the number of ongoing reports to those that are essential for legislative committees to advance their work.

Identified on the attached spreadsheet are reports that are subject to the automatic repeal provision in 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), are subject to repeal in 2016 or 2017, and which cover subject matter within your committee's jurisdiction. We are asking committees to review reports that are or will be five or more years old during the 2016 and 2017 legislative sessions so that a reports review is only conducted every other year.

It should be noted that even if a report requirement is repealed, the information that report provides would remain available to committees. Committees may continue to request information at their discretion. There should be no reduction in accountability from any State agency. **The question is whether a legislatively required ongoing report is necessary.** Eliminating unnecessary ongoing reports would allow staff to redirect their efforts to more substantive work.

We suggest that the pertinent question for each committee is, "Have you used and will you need to use these reports in legislative decisions?"

Please review the spreadsheet and identify those reports you have used or will need to use in legislative decisions; these should be exempted from the automatic repeal provision. For those

few cases where the report is so fundamental that it should never be repealed, you may so indicate, and the statutory language will be amended to reflect that. Three columns are provided for your response:

- 1) The report is no longer useful and therefore should be repealed;
- 2) The report is useful but not of permanent importance and therefore should continue until a future reports review in 2020; or
- 3) The report is fundamental and therefore should be permanently required.

For each report, please mark only one column.

Please return the survey to us at the Senate and House Committees on Government Operations by January 22, 2016. Failure to respond by January 22 will be taken to mean that the report requirement should expire. We will then prepare the necessary legislative language to retain the reports that are useful in legislative decisions.

Thank you for your cooperation.