

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Appropriations to which was referred House Bill No.
3 857 entitled “An act relating to timber harvesting” respectfully reports that it
4 has considered the same and concurs with the amendment of the Senate
5 Committee on Natural Resources and Energy with the following amendments:

6 First: By striking out Secs. 5–8 (Harvest Notification) in their entirety and
7 by inserting in lieu thereof the following:

8 Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

9 Sec. 6. [Deleted.]

10 Sec. 7. [Deleted.]

11 Sec. 8. [Deleted.]

12 Second: In Sec. 12 (Policy for Fire Suppression Reimbursement), before
13 “On or before January 1, 2017” by inserting (a)
14 and by adding a subsection (b) to read as follows:

15 (b) The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall submit the
16 reimbursement policy developed under subsection (a) of this section to the
17 Senate and House Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and the
18 Senate and House Committees on Appropriations.

19 Third: By striking out Sec. 18 (Forest Integrity Study) in its entirety and
20 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

1 Sec. 18. STUDY AND REPORT; LAND USE REGULATION; FOREST
2 INTEGRITY

3 (a) Creation. There is created a Study Committee on Land Use Regulation
4 and Forest Integrity to study potential revisions to 10 V.S.A. chapter 151
5 (Act 250) and to 24 V.S.A. chapter 117, subchapter 7 (bylaws) to protect
6 contiguous areas of forestland from fragmentation and promote habitat
7 connectivity between forestlands.

8 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
9 members:

10 (1) the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or designee.

11 (2) the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development or
12 designee.

13 (3) the Chair of the Natural Resources Board or designee;

14 (4) a current officer of a municipality, appointed by the Vermont League
15 of Cities and Towns;

16 (5) a representative of the Vermont Association of Planning and
17 Development Agencies, appointed by that Association;

18 (6) a representative of the Vermont Natural Resources Council,
19 appointed by that Council, to represent the Council and to provide input from
20 the Vermont Forest Roundtable;

1 (7) a representative of the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board
2 established under 6 V.S.A. § 4606, appointed by that Board;

3 (8) a representative of the Vermont Forest Products Association,
4 appointed by that Association; and

5 (9) a representative of the Vermont Woodlands Association, appointed
6 by that Association.

7 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study potential revisions to
8 Act 250 and 24 V.S.A. chapter 117, subchapter 7 (bylaws) to protect
9 contiguous areas of forestland from fragmentation and promote habitat
10 connectivity between forestlands. This study shall include the following:

11 (1) a review of the relevant provisions of Act 250 and 24 V.S.A.
12 chapter 117 as they exist on passage of this act;

13 (2) a development and review of options to revise Act 250 and the bylaw
14 provisions of chapter 117 to protect forestland from fragmentation and promote
15 habitat connectivity;

16 (3) an evaluation of the impact of those options on land use;

17 (4) a recommendation on whether to make such revisions and the reason
18 for the recommendation and, if the recommendation is affirmative, the
19 revisions that the Committee suggests be made; and

20 (5) a review of the definitions added by Sec. 15 of this act to 24 V.S.A.
21 § 4303 and the amendments made by Secs. 16 and 17 of this act to 24 V.S.A.

1 §§ 4348a and 4382, a recommendation on whether to make revisions to these
2 provisions and the reasons for the recommendation and, if the recommendation
3 is affirmative, the revisions that the Committee suggests be made.

4 (d) Assistance. For purposes of scheduling meetings, preparing its
5 recommendation on whether to make statutory revisions, and preparing any
6 recommended legislation, the Committee shall have the assistance of the
7 Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. The Committee also shall be
8 entitled to the technical and professional assistance of the Department of
9 Housing and Community Development and the Natural Resources Board. The
10 Committee shall be entitled to assistance from the Department of Taxes,
11 including assistance from consultant economists with expertise on tax and
12 finance issues related to forestlands. If the Committee recommends legislative
13 changes, the Committee shall have the assistance of the Office of Legislative
14 Council and the Joint Fiscal Office for the purpose of preparing recommended
15 draft legislation and fiscal analysis.

16 (e) Report. On or before January 1, 2017, the Committee shall submit its
17 written recommendation and any proposed legislation to the House Committee
18 on Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources, the House and Senate Committees on
19 Natural Resources and Energy, and the House Committee on Agriculture and
20 Forest Products.

1 (f) Meetings.

2 (1) The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall call the
3 first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before July 15, 2016.

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

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

7 Fourth: In Sec. 21 (Effective Dates) in subsection (b), by striking out “5-7
8 (harvest notification pilot program, 8 (harvest notification rulemaking).” where
9 it appears

10

11 (Committee vote: _____)

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Senator _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE