



**Vermont Child Poverty Council
Annual Progress Report
December 2015**

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I. Statutory Authority and Responsibilities of the Vermont Child Poverty Council

The Vermont Child Poverty Council (Council) was established in 2007 “to examine child poverty in Vermont and to make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on methods of improving the financial stability and well-being of children.” (See Appendix 1: 2007 Acts and Resolves No. 68.) The General Assembly amended the charge of the Council most recently during the 2014 legislative session, expanding the Council’s membership and extending the Council’s ability to meet into the legislative session. (See Appendix 2: 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 104.)

The General Assembly created the Council in recognition that Vermont faced a growing problem with regard to children living in poverty. Vermont has addressed the importance of individual responsibility through welfare reform, among other policies, but it has not fully addressed the societal structures and economic forces that create and perpetuate poverty. The Council’s task is, in part, to take a comprehensive look at these structural issues to determine what Vermont can do to alleviate financial pressures on families and how to create an environment in which families can succeed.

The Council comprises legislators, advocates, and other stakeholders. The enabling legislation as amended requires that the Council include “the following members or their designees: (A) the President Pro Tempore of the Senate; (B) the Speaker of the House of Representatives; (C) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare; (D) the Chair of the House Committee on Human Services; (E) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education; (F) the Chair of the House Committee on Education; (G) the Commissioners for Children and Families; of Health; and of Labor; and the Secretaries of Human Services and of Education; and (H) one representative each from Voices for Vermont’s Children, the Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council, Vermont Legal Aid, and the Vermont Superintendents Association.”¹ The Council must report annually “on yearly progress toward benchmarks, updates to [its ten-year plan to reduce the number of Vermont’s children living in poverty by 50%], and recommendations for budgetary and policy changes in order to accomplish the goals of [Act 68].”²

II. Summary of Council Activities

After the conclusion of the legislative session in May, the Council reconvened on July 21, 2015. The Council met a total of five times during the General Assembly’s adjournment.

The Council reviewed its 2014 Annual Progress Report (2014 report), which contained recommendations concerning the Council’s legislative priorities for assisting children living in poverty.³ The Council considered each recommendation in the 2014 report to identify whether

¹ 2007 Acts and Resolves No. 68, Sec. 1, as amended.

² *Id.*

³ The 2014 report was published in January of 2015. The Council as a whole made three recommendations in the 2014 report; additional recommendations were endorsed by one or more of the Council’s subcommittees.

legislative action was taken or whether progress was otherwise achieved.⁴ The Council heard testimony from a diverse array of stakeholders on a number of issues within its jurisdiction, such as prekindergarten education, driver's license restoration, workforce development, and the impact of incarceration on families. It also discussed additional actions that the General Assembly and Governor might take in the future to address the Council's unmet goals.

Testimony that the Council found particularly noteworthy was from the Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence. It stated that in 2014 while Vermont's domestic and sexual violence shelters housed 7,251 victims and 1,348 children, 346 people were turned away due to lack of capacity.⁵ This testimony further indicated that nationally as many as 44% of victims of domestic violence stay in abusive relationships due to lack of housing alternatives. This highlighted for the Council the risks to low-income families associated with housing shortages.

The Council's subcommittees on Housing and Homelessness, on Education, on Economic Security and Empowerment, and on Health and Nutrition met independently to consider the topics set forth in the 2014 report and to make new recommendations to achieve the Council's goals during the upcoming legislative session.

III. Council Findings and Recommendations

The Council finds that in 2014 approximately 15.8% of Vermont children lived in households with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) threshold, 7.6% of whom were in deep poverty.⁶ The FPL threshold for 2014 for a family of two adults and two children was \$24,008.00 and \$16,317.00 for a family of one adult and one child.

In drawing on the work of its subcommittees and the testimony of witnesses, the Council makes the following recommendations to the General Assembly. (See Appendix 3: 2015 Witness List.)

The 2014 report is available at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/GENERAL-303505-v1-Vermont-Child-Poverty-Council-Report-January-2015.pdf>.

⁴ A summary of legislative responses to the recommendations in the Council's 2014 report is available at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/WorkGroups/Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council/Progress%20on%20Eliminating%20Child%20Poverty%20in%20Vermont/W~Jennifer%20Carbee~Legislative%20Update%20on%20Council's%202014%20Recommendations~7-21-2015.pdf>.

⁵ Written testimony from Auburn Watersong and Gilan M. Merwanji, Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence to the Vermont Child Poverty Council, Nov. 12, 2015. The testimony is available at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/WorkGroups/Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council/Housing/W~Gilan%20Merwanji~The%20relationship%20between%20survivors%20and%20Vermont's%20ho using%20crisis~11-12-2015.pdf>.

⁶ Written testimony from Sara Teel, Voices for Vermont's Children to the Vermont Child Poverty Council, Oct. 16, 2015. The testimony is available at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/WorkGroups/Vermont%20Child%20Poverty%20Council/Voices%20for%20Vermont's%20Children/W~Sara%20Teel~Vermont%20Children's%20Economic%20Well-Being%20-%20Today's%202014%20Poverty%20Estimates~10-16-2015.pdf>.

A. *Encourage the committees of jurisdiction to take testimony on the importance of afterschool programming in mitigating the achievement gap between students from low- and high-income families.*

Afterschool enrichment refers to learning programs occurring before and after school, during summer vacation, and during holidays or school vacations. Data indicate that students who do not participate in enrichment activities outside core school hours fall behind their peers in terms of academic achievement. Affluent students more readily have access to learning opportunities outside the classroom, whereas students from low-income families without the same types of opportunities suffer by comparison academically.⁷ Yet, Vermont Afterschool reports that “income differences in math achievements have been shown to be eliminated for students who had consistent afterschool activities from K–5th grade.” There are currently 458 afterschool enrichment programs in Vermont serving 21,000 students, however, there remains a 33% unmet need for afterschool programming throughout the State.

The Council believes that improving access to high quality afterschool programming is essential to mitigate the achievement gap between students from low- and high-income families. It urges the committees of jurisdiction to investigate the link between high quality afterschool opportunities and academic achievement for students. The Council further requests that the General Assembly as a whole provide funding to the Expanded Learning Opportunity Special Fund to expand afterschool programs in all communities, and particularly those with a high percentage of students from low-income families.

B. *Require all Vermont agencies and recipients of State funds to share responsibility for addressing child poverty and for improving the financial stability and well-being of Vermont’s children.*

Growing up in poverty can have tremendous negative consequences for children throughout their lives. Because strategies to reduce the impacts of poverty are most effective when assistance is offered to very young children and their families, the Council applauds the poverty prevention efforts of Head Start, schools and organizations offering afterschool programming and home visiting programs, and other nonprofit organizations devoted to creating opportunities for young Vermont children and their families. The Council would like to challenge all State departments to hold themselves accountable for funding antipoverty efforts and to work together across agencies to coordinate relevant budgets and policies. To this end, the Council recommends that the General Assembly work with the Governor to assess and improve interagency collaboration and shared responsibility concerning antipoverty initiatives and policies that affect low-income families. Additionally, the Council recommends that, as part of any administrative rules process or State grant funding process, the General Assembly require that the source agency assess and consider its own or each applicant’s efforts to address child poverty and homelessness in Vermont and to reduce the burdens of transportation and child care on low-income workers. To

⁷ *Policy Agenda 2015: Ensuring Access and Equity in Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) Across Vermont*, Vermont Afterschool, Inc., available at <http://197yqv2yy2wnqk9ni14nx82z.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/VTA-Policy-Agenda-2015.pdf>.

begin, the Council suggests that the General Assembly consider how child poverty is affected by each policy it pursues.

C. Encourage the General Assembly to continue the work it began last year on establishing dental therapists and requiring employee-earned sick leave by passing S.20 and H.187, respectively.

Last year the General Assembly began working on two bills that the Council believes are crucial to its mission: S.20, An act relating to establishing and regulating dental therapists,⁸ and H.187, An act relating to absence from work for health care and safety.⁹

S.20 creates a mid-level oral health care provider, called a dental therapist, to increase access to dental care. Despite a large and growing need for affordable dental care, Vermont lacks dentists and offers only limited access to low-cost dental services. In consideration of this problem, Vermont Technical College (VTC) has created a dental therapist curriculum. Currently at VTC, an individual can earn a bachelor's degree and become a dental hygienist in three years. An additional year of training would be required to become a dental therapist. If enacted, dental therapists would work under a collaborative agreement with a supervising dentist and could perform dental procedures within the scope of practice allowed by law and according to the conditions set forth in the agreement, which might limit the scope of practice or require that some procedures be conducted under direct supervision. Also, the bill currently provides that dental therapists would be permitted to practice only in settings or areas with a significant volume of low-income, uninsured, or underserved patients. Last year S.20 was considered by the Senate Committees on Finance, on Government Operations, and on Health and Welfare prior to passage in the Senate. It was then committed to the House Committee on Human Services where it remains.

If enacted, H.187 would enable an employee covered by the legislation to accrue a minimum number of hours of paid sick leave annually for his or her own health care needs or to attend to the health care needs of an immediate family member. This would operate to strengthen Vermont families, protect public health, reduce workers' compensation costs, and reduce the strain on hospital emergency departments. Last year H.187 was considered by the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on General, Housing and Military Affairs prior to passage in the House. It was then referred to the Rules Committee where it remains.

⁸ S.20 as passed the Senate: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/BILLS/S-0020/S-0020%20As%20Passed%20by%20the%20Senate%20Official.pdf>.

⁹ H.187 as passed the House: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/BILLS/H-0187/H-0187%20As%20Passed%20by%20the%20House%20Official.pdf>.

IV. Subcommittee Recommendations

Each subcommittee met independently to identify and investigate its highest priorities. Please note that the Council as a whole did not discuss or adopt every proposed recommendation listed in this section.

A. Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Housing and Homelessness

1. The General Assembly should take up and pass H.211, An act relating to establishing a homeless bill of rights and prohibiting discrimination against people without homes.¹⁰ The General Assembly should consider amending the bill (1) to provide additional support for the transportation of homeless school children, to enable continued enrollment at their school of origin consistent with applicable State and federal laws; (2) to require the construction of additional affordable housing; and (3) to address potential opposition to the construction of warming shelters.

2. The General Assembly should support an increase in the funds available to help pay overdue rent owed by individuals at risk of becoming homeless through eviction. Assistance with up to three months of overdue rent is one of several forms of financial and rental assistance related to homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing that may be provided by community organizations that receive funding from the Office of Economic Opportunity's Housing and Opportunity Grant Program. Such assistance increases housing stability and can prevent children from becoming homeless.

3. The General Assembly should work with the Governor to adopt and implement the recommendations of the Governor's Council on Pathways from Poverty concerning housing and homelessness.¹¹ These recommendations include:
 - a. fully funding the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board;

 - b. transitioning funding from temporary housing in motels to community-based solutions such as the Vermont Rental Subsidy Program, the Housing and Opportunity Grant Program, Family Supportive Housing, Mental Health Vouchers, and AHS Central Office Direct Service and Service Coordination Grants;

 - c. creating incentives for private, for-profit landlords to bring substandard or vacant rental housing up to code and back into the rental housing market; and

 - d. implementing a \$2.00 occupancy fee on lodging, that can be used to support affordable housing and homelessness prevention programs.

¹⁰ H.211 as introduced: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/BILLS/H-0211/H-0211%20As%20Introduced.pdf>.

¹¹ The November 2015 report of the Council on Pathways from Poverty is available at <http://governor.vermont.gov/sites/governor/files/2015%20Poverty%20Council%20report%20to%20Governor%20FINAL.pdf>.

B. *Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Education*

1. The General Assembly passed Act 45 in 2015, creating the Vermont Universal Children’s Higher Education Savings Account Program.¹² Each year, beginning in 2016, if funds are available, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) will deposit up to \$250.00 into the Program Fund on behalf of each Vermont resident child born that year. For a child with limited family income, VSAC will double the initial deposit and annually match any money deposited into a Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan account for the child, up to \$250.00 per child per year. VSAC will also provide ongoing financial education for all Program beneficiaries and families. Under the act, a Program beneficiary may access the Program funds, plus interest, allocated to him or her for approved postsecondary education costs at an approved institution. The act creates a Program Fund Advisory Committee to identify and solicit funds for the Program and to advise VSAC on fund disbursement.

The Council commends the General Assembly on the passage of this act, and looks to the Administration to ensure that the Program has a strong start. It recommends that the committees of jurisdiction solicit testimony from the Administration as to the progress made in preparation for the Program’s 2016 commencement.

2. Suspension and expulsion should be reserved for the most severe disciplinary action and imposed only when the safety and learning of other students and staff are at risk. Schools must act to limit exclusions for those who are removed as well as to provide a productive learning environment for others. The General Assembly should work with the Agency of Education to support proven strategies such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT), and Restorative Justice in providing structures and professional development that reduce and prevent behavior incidents. The Council notes that when students from historically disadvantaged categories are excluded, it may undermine their educational growth as well as negatively affecting those students who rely on school attendance for one or more daily meals. The Council recommends the following initiatives to track school discipline and reduce instances of school exclusion:

a. The Agency of Education should continue its work developing a uniform statewide data system to collect, track, and publicly report on school discipline. This data should be disaggregated by income, race and ethnicity, age, gender, disability, English-language proficiency, and homelessness status. It should be cross-tabulated by both student offense type and frequency of incidences of suspension.

b. The committees of jurisdiction should solicit testimony from stakeholders concerning school discipline in Vermont, including testimony on the following topics:

i. how schools can reduce exclusionary discipline, increase safety for students and teachers, and improve achievement scores through improved school climate; and

¹² 2015 Act 45 is available at

<http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/ACTS/ACT045/ACT045%20As%20Enacted.pdf>.

ii. how schools can ensure: students' rights, particularly the right to an academic environment free from bullying, hazing, and harassment; family cooperation; and ongoing education for students who must be temporarily excluded from the school building for safety reasons.

3. The Agencies of Education and of Human Services have established a formal workgroup to address the interagency components of Act 46 which seek ways in which schools and external partners may coordinate services among connections, resources, and full-service community schools. The results of their report will be shared with the General Assembly this legislative session. The U.S. Department of Education defines full-service community schools as follows:

Full-Service Community Schools provide comprehensive academic, social, and health services for students, students' family members, and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children. These services may include: high-quality early learning programs and service; remedial education, aligned with academic supports and other enrichment activities, providing students with a comprehensive academic program; family engagement, including parental involvement, parent leadership, family literacy, and parent education programs; mentoring and other youth development programs; community service and service learning opportunities; programs that provide assistance to students who have been chronically absent, truant, suspended, or expelled; job training and career counseling services; nutrition services and physical activities; primary health and dental care; activities that improve access to and use of social service programs and programs that promote family financial stability; mental health services; and adult education, including instruction of adults in English as a second language.

The collaboration between the Agencies of Education and of Human Services will result in a report of their findings. The Council encourages the committees of jurisdiction to review this forthcoming report and pursue any recommendations aimed at better integrating education and social services for students and families in schools. The Council believes that the findings and recommendations in the report may inform a possible future pilot project.

C. *Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Economic Security and Empowerment*

1. The Subcommittee recommends that barriers to employment be eliminated with safe, affordable child care and transportation options. Specific manners of achieving this end include:

a. Increasing investments in Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program through incremental increases that raise the base rate to 75% of the current market rate and expand eligibility to 300% of FPL, or implementing other feasible measures to increase the affordability of child care for Vermonters.

- b. Creating and funding a comprehensive, large-scale study on transportation issues for elders, those with disabilities, and the low-income population.
 - c. Implementing a uniform driver restoration policy statewide and repealing outdated infractions unrelated to driving or safety that may result in driver's license suspension; implementing "income sensitive" fines for Vermonters on public assistance; eliminating the license reinstatement fee; and creating a high-risk insurance pool.
2. The Subcommittee encourages the General Assembly to stabilize and foster economic security for families on Reach Up in two primary ways:
- a. First, by increasing Reach Up grants to meet a higher percentage of the standard of need. The Subcommittee recommends adjusting the current Reach Up grant "ratable reduction" that meets only 49.6% of the basic need standard to at least 55%, and gradually increasing the rate over time.
 - b. Second, by restoring the fiscal year 2016 budget reduction of \$125.00 a month in Reach Up benefits for families who have a parent receiving disability benefits.
3. The Subcommittee recommends that the General Assembly focus on the following economic opportunities and "making work pay" initiatives:
- a. Increase investments in Micro Business and Individual Development Accounts, create a matched savings program with expanded uses, and provide funding for financial coaching, credit repair, and banking program initiatives.
 - b. Support successful employment policies that make "work pay" and help families seek and maintain employment, including: expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, reduce or eliminate benefit cliffs, and increase income disregards and asset limits.
 - c. The General Assembly should support passage of H.187, An act relating to absence from work for health care and safety. For more information, see the full Council's recommendations above.
4. The Subcommittee recommends that the General Assembly maintain and increase State dollars in energy assistance by:
- a. Increasing the LIHEAP Fuel Assistance Program to cover a higher average cost of heating a home.
 - b. Fully funding crisis fuel assistance needs and removing the one grant restriction to allow two grants for emergency needs.

- c. Increase the investment in the Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program to reduce the energy burden on low-income Vermonters.

D. Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Health and Nutrition

1. In order to draw down the 90% of federal funds needed to develop and implement the Agency of Human Services' integrated eligibility IT system, the General Assembly should preserve the 10% State match it earmarked for that purpose in Act 26, An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.¹³ It is anticipated that the integrated eligibility system will streamline the process for obtaining benefits across programs and help consumers identify the benefits for which they are eligible. Most important to the Subcommittee on Health and Nutrition, the new IT system will enable schools to data match more easily with the Department for Children and Families for the purpose of calculating eligibility and reimbursements under the universal school meal program. Schools participating in the universal school meal program provide meals to all students, regardless of their ability to pay, which reduces stigma and encourages healthy and nutritious food options among the student body.
2. The General Assembly should support passage of S.20, An act relating to establishing and regulating dental therapists. For more information, see the full Council's recommendations above.
3. The General Assembly should support passage of H.187, An act relating to absence from work for health care and safety. For more information, see the full Council's recommendations above.

¹³ 2015 Act No. 26, § 3(c) is available at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/ACTS/ACT026/ACT026%20As%20Enacted.pdf>.

2015 Report of the Vermont Child Poverty Council

Representative Jill Krowinski, Chair

Appendix 1. 2007 Acts and Resolves No. 68

NO. 68. AN ACT RELATING TO CHILD POVERTY IN VERMONT.

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

Sec. 1. VERMONT CHILD POVERTY COUNCIL

(a) The Vermont child poverty council is created to examine child poverty in Vermont and to make recommendations to the governor and general assembly on methods of improving the financial stability and well-being of children. The council shall develop a ten-year plan to reduce the number of children living in poverty in the state by at least 50%.

(b)(1) The council shall consist of the following members or their designees:

- (A) the president pro tempore of the senate;
- (B) the speaker of the house of representatives;
- (C) the chair of the senate committee on health and welfare;
- (D) the chair of the house committee on human services;
- (E) the chair of the senate committee on education;
- (F) the chair of the house committee on education;
- (G) the commissioners of the departments for children and families; of health; of education; and of labor; and
- (H) one representative each from Voices for Vermont's Children, the Vermont low income advocacy council, Vermont Legal Aid, and the Vermont superintendents' association.

(2) The council, at its first meeting, shall elect one of the legislative members as chair or two legislative members as cochairs. The legislative council and the joint fiscal office shall provide staff support to the council.

(3) The council shall meet up to six times while the general assembly is not in session to perform its functions under this section. In addition, during the 2007 legislative interim, the council shall hold 14 public hearings as required under subsection (d) of this section.

(c) The plan shall contain:

- (1) an identification and analysis of the occurrence of poverty in the state;
- (2) an analysis of the long-term effects of child poverty on children, their families, and their communities;
- (3) an analysis of costs of child poverty to municipalities and the state;
- (4) an inventory of state-wide public and private programs that address child poverty;
- (5) the percentage of the target population served by such programs and the current state funding levels, if any, for such programs;
- (6) an identification and analysis of any deficiencies or inefficiencies of such programs; and
- (7) procedures and priorities for implementing strategies and biannual benchmarks to achieve at least a 50% reduction in child poverty in the state by June 30, 2017. Such procedures, priorities, and benchmarks shall include improving or adequately funding:

- (A) workforce training and placement to promote career progression, for parents of children living in poverty;
 - (B) educational opportunities, including higher education opportunities, and advancement for such parents and children, including, but not limited to, pre-literacy, literacy, and family literacy programs;
 - (C) affordable housing for such parents and children;
 - (D) early care and education programs for such children and their families;
 - (E) after-school programs and mentoring programs for such children and their families;
 - (F) affordable health care access for such parents and children, including access to mental health services and family planning;
 - (G) treatment programs and services, including substance abuse programs and services, for such parents and children;
 - (H) accessible childhood nutrition programs; and
 - (I) the Reach-Up program and other public benefit programs through the agency of human services serving low income families.
- (d) In developing the working plan, the council shall first consult with experts, with parents of children living in poverty, and with providers of services to children and families living in poverty. The council shall hold one public hearing in each of the 14 counties.
- (e) Funds from private and public sources may be accepted and utilized by the council to develop and implement the plan and provisions of this section. Legislative members of the committee shall be entitled to compensation and reimbursement for expenses under section 406 of Title 2. All other members not receiving compensation for service on the committee from another source are entitled to compensation under section 1010 of Title 32.
- (f) Not later than January 1, 2008, the council shall submit the working plan to the house committees on appropriations and human services and the senate committees on appropriations and health and welfare. On January 1, 2009, and annually thereafter, until January 1, 2018, the council shall report to these committees on yearly progress toward benchmarks, updates to the plan, and recommendations for budgetary and policy changes in order to accomplish the goals of this act
- (g) The council shall cease to exist on June 30, 2018.

Approved: June 5, 2007

Appendix 2. 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 104

No. 104. AN ACT RELATING TO THE CHARGE OF THE VERMONT CHILD POVERTY COUNCIL.

(H.583)

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

Sec. 1. 2007 Acts and Resolves No. 68, Sec. 1 is amended to read:

Sec. 1. VERMONT CHILD POVERTY COUNCIL

* * *

(b)(1) The ~~council~~ Council shall consist of the following members or their designees:

(A) the ~~president pro tempore of the senate~~ President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

(B) the ~~speaker of the house of representatives~~ Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(C) the ~~chair of the senate committee on health and welfare~~ Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare;

(D) the ~~chair of the house committee on human services~~ Chair of the House Committee on Human Services;

(E) the ~~chair of the senate committee on education~~ Chair of the Senate Committee on Education;

(F) the ~~chair of the house committee on education~~ Chair of the House Committee on Education;

(G) the ~~commissioners of the departments for children and families; of health; of education; and of labor~~ Commissioners for Children and Families; of Health; and of Labor; and the Secretaries of Human Services and of Education; and

(H) one representative each from Voices for Vermont's Children, the Vermont ~~low income advocacy council~~ Low Income Advocacy Council, Vermont Legal Aid, and the Vermont ~~superintendents' association~~ Superintendents' Association.

* * *

(3) The ~~council~~ Council shall meet up to six times while the ~~general assembly~~ General Assembly is not in session to perform its functions under this section. ~~In addition, during the 2007 legislative interim, the council shall hold 14 public hearings as required under subsection (d) of this section.~~ The Council may meet an unlimited number of times during the legislative session, but legislative Council members shall not receive compensation and reimbursement for expenses pursuant to subsection (e) of this section for participation in meetings during the legislative session.

(e) Funds from private and public sources may be accepted and utilized by the ~~council~~ Council to develop and implement the plan and provisions of this section. ~~Legislative For participation in meetings during the legislative interim, legislative members of the committee~~ Council shall be entitled to compensation and reimbursement for expenses under section 406 of Title 2 2 V.S.A. § 406. ~~All other members not receiving~~

~~compensation for service on the committee from another source are entitled to compensation under section 1010 of Title 32. Nonlegislative members who are not otherwise compensated and reimbursed for their participation on the Council shall be entitled to receive compensation and reimbursement of expenses under 32 V.S.A. § 1010.~~

* * *

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

Date Governor signed bill: April 14, 2014

Appendix 3. 2015 Witness List

Mathew Barewicz, Chief, Labor Market and Information, Vermont Department of Labor

Jennifer Carbee, Legislative Counsel, Office of Legislative Council

Sarah Carpenter, Director, Vermont Housing Finance Agency

Angus Chaney, Director of Housing, Agency of Human Services

T.J. Donovan, Vermont State's Attorney, Chittenden County State Attorney

Paul Dragon, Director of Policy and Planning, Agency of Human Services

Karin Edwards, Director, Student Support, Agency of Education

Rochelle Finzel, Group Director, National Conference of State Legislatures

Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary for Educator Quality, Agency of Education

Molly Goldberg, Research Associate, Voices for Vermont's Children

Jack Hoffman, Analyst, Public Assets Institute

Chauncey Liese, Chief of Driver Improvement, Department of Motor Vehicles

Erhard Mahnke, Executive Director, Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition

Gilan Merwanji, Economic Justice and Policy Coordinator, Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

Holly Morehouse, Director, Vermont Afterschool, Inc.

Melissa Riegel-Garrett, Pre-Kindergarten Coordinator, Agency of Education

Sarah Teel, Research Director, Voices for Vermont's Children

Auburn Watersong, Associate Director of Public Policy, Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

Suzi Wizowaty, Executive Director, Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform