

1 S.280

2 Introduced by Senator Ingram

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Human services; child poverty; advisory council

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the
7 Child Poverty Advisory Council.

8 An act relating to the Child Poverty Advisory Council

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

10 Sec. 1. CHILD POVERTY ADVISORY COUNCIL

11 (a) Creation. There is created the Child Poverty Advisory Council to
12 examine structural issues in Vermont that create conditions that prevent
13 families from moving out of poverty. The Advisory Council shall provide
14 guidance and recommend legislation to the General Assembly that either
15 reduces or mitigates the effects of childhood poverty.

16 (b)(1) Voting membership. The Advisory Council shall be composed of
17 the following 13 voting members:

18 (A) the President Pro Tempore of the Senate or designee;

19 (B) the Speaker of the House or designee;

20 (C) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education or designee;

- 1 (D) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare or
2 designee;
- 3 (E) the Chair of the House Committee on Education or designee;
- 4 (F) the Chair of the House Committee on Human Services or
5 designee;
- 6 (G) a member appointed by Voices for Vermont's Children;
- 7 (H) a member appointed by the Vermont Low Income Advocacy
8 Council;
- 9 (I) a member appointed by Vermont Legal Aid;
- 10 (J) a member appointed by the Vermont Coalition for Disability
11 Rights;
- 12 (K) a member appointed by the Vermont Affordable Housing
13 Coalition;
- 14 (L) a nongovernmental designee of the Child and Family Trauma
15 Work Group who does not otherwise represent an organization with
16 membership on this Council; and
- 17 (M) an employee of the prekindergarten through grade 12 public
18 education delivery system in Vermont appointed jointly by the Executive
19 Directors of the Vermont Superintendents Association, the Vermont Principals'
20 Association, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Coordinators.

1 (2) Nonvoting membership. The Advisory Council shall be composed
2 of the following five nonvoting members or designees:

3 (A) the Secretary of Education;

4 (B) the Secretary of Human Services;

5 (C) the Commissioner for Children and Families;

6 (D) the Commissioner of Health; and

7 (E) the Commissioner of Labor.

8 (c) Powers and duties. The Advisory Council shall examine structural
9 issues in Vermont that create conditions that prevent families from moving out
10 of poverty and shall provide related guidance and recommendations to the
11 General Assembly. It shall serve as an educational forum for both its members
12 and the public. The Council shall use data to understand better existing and
13 emerging challenges to children and families living in poverty.

14 (d) Assistance. The Advisory Council shall have the administrative,
15 technical, and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council.

16 (e) Work products.

17 (1) Recommendations. On or before January 1 of each year, the
18 Advisory Council may submit a list of recommendations and legislative
19 priorities from the previous calendar year to the General Assembly that are
20 aimed at reducing or mitigating the effects of childhood poverty.

1 (2) Legislation. On or before November 15 of each year, the Advisory
2 Council may prepare legislation for introduction by one or more of its
3 legislative members that contains any of the Advisory Council's
4 recommendations for reducing or mitigating the effects of childhood poverty.

5 (3) Compilation of minutes. On or before January 1 of each year, the
6 Advisory Council shall submit to the General Assembly a compilation of its
7 meeting minutes from the previous calendar year, which summarizes the
8 Advisory Council's activities and decisions.

9 (f) Meetings.

10 (1) The Speaker of the House or designee shall call the first meeting of
11 the Advisory Council to occur on or before July 1 of each year.

12 (2) Each year the Council shall select a chair from among its legislative
13 members at the first meeting. The Council may select a vice chair from among
14 its legislative members.

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

16 (4)(A) The Advisory Council shall cease to exist on July 1, 2028.

17 (B) Five years prior, in 2023, the Advisory Council shall conduct a
18 midterm review of its achievements and effectiveness using results-based
19 accountability. Among any other benchmarks that the Advisory Council
20 chooses to measure pursuant to subdivision (C) of this subdivision (4), it shall
21 review, as compared to 2016:

1 (i) the number and percentage of children living in families at
2 50 percent, 100 percent, and 200 percent of the federal poverty level; and

3 (ii) the number and percentage of children living in families
4 paying more than 30 percent of their cash income for housing and related
5 expenses.

6 (C) On or before January 1, 2019, the Advisory Council shall identify
7 any additional benchmarks it plans to measure during its 2023 midterm review.

8 (g) Compensation and reimbursement.

9 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
10 Assembly, a legislative member of the Advisory Council serving in his or her
11 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
12 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for not more than six
13 meetings.

14 (2) Other members of the Advisory Council who are not employees of
15 the State of Vermont and who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed
16 for their attendance shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
17 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than six
18 meetings.

19 (3) Payments to members of the Advisory Council authorized under this
20 subsection shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

1 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

2 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.