

# State of Vermont

## Senate Chamber



Montpelier, Vermont

### Senate Concurrent Resolution

By Senator Baruth,

**S.C.R. 19.** Senate concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Vermont outdoor advertising law of 1968.

*Whereas*, nearly a century ago, the General Assembly first addressed the aesthetic impact of outdoor advertising billboards, when it enacted 1921 Acts and Resolves No. 44, “An Act to Control the Use of Billboards” that established a largely permissive regulatory scheme but limited a billboard’s size to no greater than six square feet, and

*Whereas*, 1925 Acts and Resolves No. 32 amended the 1921 act to prohibit billboards “within fifty feet of any public park, playground, square or cemetery,” except on-premises advertising and municipal or State traffic, directional, or public safety signs, and

*Whereas*, in 1937, following the placement of seven billboards in Springfield, billboard opponents formed the Vermont Association for Billboard Restriction, and the Springfield billboards proved short-lived, and

*Whereas*, in a 1943 ruling, *Kelbro, Inc. v. Myrick*, 113 Vt. 64, the Vermont Supreme Court rejected a challenge to the State’s billboard regulatory scheme, describing it as “a regulation of the use of the streets and other public thoroughfares,” and “not so much a regulation of private property,” and

*Whereas*, 1957 Acts and Resolves No. 275 created a 750-foot exclusion zone for advertising adjacent to a limited-access highway, serving as a limitation, but hardly a prohibition, and

*Whereas*, opposition to billboards continued into the 1960s, culminating in the General Assembly’s 1968 adoption of a comprehensive ban on traditional highway billboards, 1968 Acts and Resolves No. 333, that also repealed the existing, far more limited, outdoor advertising statutes and made Vermont the first state to ban traditional off-premises advertising billboards, and

*Whereas*, Act 333 enabled Vermont to preserve the scenic landscape views from the State’s highways, replacing traditional billboards with limited informational and directional signs that promote tourism and public safety, and ending the presence of the large, and at times distracting, billboards that had lined Vermont’s highways since at least the early 1920s, and

*Whereas*, Act 333 has helped maintain Vermont’s unique character and provided a precedent for other jurisdictions to remove billboards, and

*Whereas*, occasional efforts to weaken the principles of Act 333 have not derailed this historic law that in 2018 is marking a half-century in force, *now therefore be it*

***Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:***

That the General Assembly commemorates the 50th anniversary of Vermont’s outdoor advertising law of 1968.