

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Energy and Technology to which was referred House
3 Bill No. 429 entitled “An act relating to establishment of a communication
4 facilitator program” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and
5 recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting
6 clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. 30 V.S.A. § 218a(d) is amended to read:

8 (d) The Department of Public Service shall establish the Vermont
9 Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Council composed of the
10 following members: one representative of the Department of Public Service,
11 ~~who shall act as chair and who shall be~~ designated by the Commissioner of
12 Public Service; one representative of the Department of Disabilities, Aging,
13 and Independent Living, ~~who shall act as vice chair;~~ **two** representatives of the
14 deaf community; one member of the community of people who are hard of
15 hearing or have a speech limitation; ~~one representative of the deaf-blind~~
16 ~~community;~~ one representative of a company providing local exchange
17 service within the State; and one representative of an organization currently
18 providing telecommunications relay services. The members of the Council
19 shall select a chair from among the members who use the telecommunications
20 relay service. The representative of the Department of Public Service shall
21 serve as the vice chair. The members of the Council who are not officers or

1 employees of the State shall receive per diem compensation and expense
2 reimbursement in amounts authorized by 32 V.S.A. § 1010(b). The costs of
3 ~~such~~ the compensation and reimbursement, and any other necessary
4 administrative costs shall be included within the contract entered into under
5 subsection (c) of this section. The Council shall advise the Department of
6 Public Service and the contractor for telecommunications relay services on all
7 matters concerning the implementation and administration of the State's
8 telecommunications relay service.

9 Sec. 2. COMMUNICATION FACILITATOR PROGRAM; STUDY

10 The Commissioner of Public Service, in consultation with the
11 Commissioner of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, shall make
12 findings and recommendations regarding the establishment a communication
13 facilitator program in Vermont that would enable members of the DeafBlind
14 community to make telephone calls. The Commissioner shall solicit input
15 from representatives or members of the DeafBlind community in Vermont and
16 shall take into consideration similar programs offered in other jurisdictions.
17 The Commissioner's findings shall include the administrative and
18 implementation costs of the program; the number of individuals in the
19 DeafBlind community in Vermont; expected participation in the program; and
20 an assessment of whether there are grant opportunities to help defray program
21 costs. The Commissioner's recommendations shall include a funding source

1 for the program. The Commissioner shall report his or her findings and
2 recommendations on or before December 15, 2018 to the House Committees
3 on Energy and Technology and on Human Services and the Senate Committees
4 on Finance and on Health and Welfare.

5 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

6 This act shall take effect on passage.

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12 (Committee vote: _____)

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Representative _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE