

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 a company providing
16 local exchange service within the State; and one representative of an
17 organization currently providing telecommunications relay services. The
18 Council shall elect from among its members a chair and vice chair. Meetings
19 shall be convened at the call of the Chair or a majority of the members of the
20 Council. The Council shall meet not more than six times a year. The members
21 of the Council who are not officers or employees of the State shall receive per
22 diem compensation and expense reimbursement in amounts authorized by 32

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

7 Sec. 2. COMMUNICATION FACILITATOR PROGRAM; STUDY

8 The Commissioner of Public Service, in consultation with the
9 Commissioner of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, shall make
10 findings and recommendations regarding the establishment a communication
11 facilitator program in Vermont that would enable members of the DeafBlind
12 community to make telephone calls. The Commissioner shall solicit input
13 from representatives or members of the DeafBlind community in Vermont and
14 shall take into consideration similar programs offered in other jurisdictions.
15 The Commissioner's findings shall include the administrative and
16 implementation costs of the program; the number of individuals in the
17 DeafBlind community in Vermont; expected participation in the program; and
18 an assessment of whether there are grant opportunities to help defray program
19 costs. The Commissioner's recommendations shall include a funding source
20 for the program. The Commissioner shall report his or her findings and
21 recommendations on or before December 15, 2018 to the House Committees

1 on Energy and Technology and on Human Services and the Senate Committees
2 on Finance and on Health and Welfare.

3 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

4 This act shall take effect on passage.

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10 (Committee vote: _____)

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Representative _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE