

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to
3 which was referred Senate Bill No. 85 entitled “An act relating to simplifying
4 government for small business” respectfully reports that it has considered the
5 same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the
6 enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. SIMPLIFYING GOVERNMENT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

8 (a) The Secretary of State, in collaboration with the Department of Labor,
9 the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Department of
10 Taxes, the Agency of Digital Services, and other stakeholders, shall review and
11 consider the necessary procedural and substantive steps and shall submit to the
12 General Assembly on or before December 15, 2018, a design proposal,
13 including a timeline, for an easily navigable portal for businesses,
14 entrepreneurs, and citizens to access information about starting and operating a
15 business in Vermont, with an emphasis on small business, and to enable
16 registration with all required State entities with a single login without
17 duplicating data entry.

18 (b) The Secretary shall consider and integrate to the extent feasible features
19 that:

20 (1) enhance the State’s website to simplify registration and offer a clear
21 compilation of State permitting rules;

1 (2) simplify the mechanism for making payments to the State, by
2 allowing a person to pay amounts he or she owes to the State for taxes, fees, or
3 other charges, to a single recipient within government;

4 (3) simplify annual filing requirements by allowing a person to make a
5 single filing to a single recipient within government and simply to check a box
6 if nothing substantive has changed from the prior year; and

7 (4) provide mentoring, assistance with navigating the process, and
8 generally offering more direct support to small businesses, whether by
9 designating an existing position or creating a new position within either the
10 Office of the Secretary of State or another government entity, and to offer
11 technical guidance, information, and other support to persons who are forming
12 or operating a small business;

13 (5) after registration, guide the user through secondary requirements and
14 send follow-up e-mail with links to additional services, frequently asked
15 questions, and a point of contact to discuss questions or explore any assistance
16 needed;

17 (6) provide guidance and links to State, partner organization, and federal
18 programs and initiatives;

19 (7) provide links to other Vermont-based businesses of interest; and

20 (8) create a tool set for ongoing communication and updates, including
21 digital channels such as e-mail, social media, and other communications.

1 Sec. 2. 11 V.S.A. § 1625a is added to read:

2 § 1625a. ONE-STOP WEB PORTAL SURCHARGE

3 (a) In addition to the fee imposed on a business organization at the time of
4 filing its annual report pursuant to the applicable section of this title or
5 Titles 11A-11C of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, the Secretary of State shall
6 collect a surcharge in the amount of \$2.00, which the Secretary shall maintain
7 in a segregated account and use for the purpose of developing and
8 implementing a one-stop navigable portal for businesses, entrepreneurs, and
9 citizens to access information about starting a business in Vermont and to
10 provide ongoing support to businesses in interfacing with State government.

11 (b) The Secretary shall focus the services available pursuant to this section
12 primarily on businesses with fewer than 20 employees.

13 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

14 This act shall take effect on passage.

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19 (Committee vote: _____)

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Senator _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE