

Section-by-Section Summary: S.94 - As passed House Commerce

Draft 4.1 (5/1/18)

Sec. 1 – ThinkVermont Innovation Initiative (H.767)

(a) Purpose.

(1) to respond to the growth needs of Vermont small businesses with 20 or fewer employees

(2) enable the State to invest in projects with grants that can be accessed more quickly and with fewer restrictions than traditional federal initiatives.

(b) Process; grant distribution.

(1) ACCD, with VEPC, shall:

(A) adopt a schedule and process for accepting, reviewing, and approving grant proposals on a competitive basis;

(B) distribute grants across geographic areas of the State; and

(C) distribute grants across diverse industries, sectors, and business types, including for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

(2)(A) funding only for one fiscal year.

(B) A recipient is eligible in only two fiscal years.

(c) Funding; matching requirements.

(1) 10 percent of the funding through the Initiative for microgrants of not more than \$10,000.00.

(2) grant recipient must provide matching funds:

(A) for a microgrant – 25% match

(B) for all other grants – 100% match

(d) Eligibility criteria. To be eligible for a grant, a project shall:

(1) provide workforce training that is not eligible for funding through another State or federal program and that serves an immediate employer need to fill one or more job vacancies;

(2) enable a business to attract, retain, or support remote workers in Vermont;

(3) establish or enhance a facility that attracts small companies or remote workers, or both, including generator and maker spaces, co-working spaces, remote work hubs, and innovation spaces, with special emphasis on facilities that promote colocation of nonprofit, for-profit, and government entities;

(4) enable or support deployment of broadband telecommunications connectivity;

(5) leverage economic development funding outside State government, including the federal New Market Tax Credit program and Small Business Innovation Research grants;

(6) support growth in Vermont’s aerospace, aviation, or aviation technology sectors; or

(7) provide technical assistance to support small business growth.

(e) Outcomes; measures. ACCD shall adopt measures to evaluate a grant, including job growth measured at one-, three-, and five-years

(f) Appropriation. FY19 - GF \$400,000.00 to ACCD

Secs. 2-4: Promoting Remote Work, Maker, and Innovation Spaces (S.94)

As passed Senate, S.94 included Remote Worker Tax Credit. Not included by House.

Sec. 2 – Study; Report – Improving Infrastructure; Remote Work; Other Spaces

Directs the Secretary of ACCD, with DOL, DPS, BGS, and stakeholders, to study and report on or before January 15, 2019, on infrastructure and other support to:

- (1) enable workers and businesses to establish or enhance a remote presence in Vermont;
- (2) build capacity throughout the State to increase access to maker spaces, co-working spaces, remote work hubs, and innovation spaces; and
- (3) support the interconnection of current and future maker spaces, co-working spaces, remote work hubs, innovation spaces, and regional technical centers.

Sec. 3 – Study; Report – Integrated Public-Private Worksites

Directs Sec. of Administration, with ACCD and BGS, to study and report on or before January 15, 2019, on potential for using public buildings as co-work spaces for public and private sector remote workers.

Sec. 4. – Report – Broadband Availability for Remote Workers

Directs Director of Telecommunications and Connectivity, with ACCD, to study and report on or before January 15, 2019 on availability of broadband service in municipal downtowns to support co-working spaces and strategies to expand availability.

Secs. 5-15: Municipalities; Village Center Designation; Electronic Filings (H.785)

- Sec. 5 changes the length of designation of designated downtowns from five years to eight years and adds an interim review of the designation every four years.
- Sec. 6 changes the length of designation of designated village centers from 5 years to 8 years.
- Sec. 7 changes the length of designation of designated new town centers from five years to eight years and adds an interim review of the designation every four years.
- Sec. 8 authorizes the electronic delivery of documents related to intermunicipal service agreements, including proposed plans, plan amendments, and bylaws by the regional planning commissions to municipalities.

- Sec. 9 authorizes the electronic delivery of proposed regional plans or plan amendments by the regional planning commissions to municipalities.
- Sec. 10 authorizes electronic delivery of notice of public hearing for determinations of energy compliance.
- Sec. 11 authorizes the electronic delivery of proposed municipal plans or plan amendments to the local planning commissions, municipalities, the regional planning commissions, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and interested groups.
- Sec. 12 authorizes electronic delivery of newly adopted municipal plans and amendments to regional planning commissions and the DHCD.
- Sec. 13 authorizes the electronic delivery of an application for construction within a flood hazard area by a municipality to ANR.
- Sec. 14 authorizes electronic delivery of proposed municipal bylaws, amendments, or repeals to municipalities, regional planning commission, and the DHCD.
- Sec. 15 authorizes electronic delivery of final municipal bylaws, amendments, or repeals by municipalities to regional planning commission and the DHCD.

Secs. 16-18. Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Lending

- Statute authorizes ANR to provide loans to homeowners to replace failed systems drinking water systems or wastewater systems—i.e. wells and septic tanks.
- The program is a last resort for persons who cannot obtain funds from traditional borrowing
 - A loan recipient must be denied financing from at least 1 lender to be eligible;
 - Recipients cannot have a household income of more than 200% the statewide average median household income; and
 - The owner must reside in the residence on a year round basis.
- Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. § 4752 amends the definitions of potable water supply to cross reference the definition in the regulatory program. It also provides a definition of “designer”, which are people who are authorized to design potable water supply and wastewater systems.
- Sec. 17, 24 V.S.A. § 4753, allows loans to be made for systems that a designer demonstrates have a high risk of failure.
 - The program is now available only if a system fails. This change allows proactive response to permit loans for a system with a high probability of failing.
- Sec. 17 also provides that the fund must have a minimum balance of \$275,000.

- The Fund is paid for from fees on potable water supply and wastewater system permits.
- Sec. 18. 24 V.S.A. § 4763b broadens eligibility to multi-family residences or shared systems
 - Shared systems are common in Vermont and ANR engineers routinely report actual or imminent system failures and owners who cannot afford a replacement system.
 - When a loan is made for an applicant on a multi-family or shared system, the loan is only for that equitable share of the applicant's cost to repair the system

Secs. 19-20: Rural Economic Development Districts

Sec. 19 – 24 V.S.A. § 5704 – amends governance provisions to provide for the appointment of nonvoting, at-large members for district boards; for the election of officers; and to provide a definition of “voter.”

Sec. 20 – 24 V.S.A. § 5705 – amends current law to provide that the board, rather the district, shall elect its chair, vice chair, clerk, and treasurer.

Sec. 21 – Effective Date – July 1, 2018.