

1 S.281

2 Introduced by Senator Ingram

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Law enforcement; government operations; systemic racism

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the
7 Systemic Racism Mitigation Oversight and Equity Review Board to combat
8 systemic bias across the systems of State government.

9 An act relating to the Systemic Racism Mitigation Oversight and Equity
10 Review Board

11 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

12 Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. chapter 68 is added to read:

13 CHAPTER 68. SYSTEMIC RACISM MITIGATION OVERSIGHT AND

14 EQUITY REVIEW BOARD

15 § 5001. PURPOSE

16 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to create an independent board to
17 promote racial justice reform throughout the State by:

18 (1) providing education on systemic racism and how to combat it;

19 (2) mitigating systemic racism in all systems of State government and

20 public education; and

1 (3) creating a centralized platform for race-based data collection and
2 overseeing its collection and dissemination.

3 § 5002. BOARD MEMBERSHIP; AUTHORITY

4 (a) On July 1, 2018, the Systemic Racism Mitigation Oversight and Equity
5 Review Board is established and shall consist of a chair and ten other
6 members.

7 (b) The Board shall comprise the following 11 members:

8 (1) the Executive Director of the Vermont Criminal Justice Training
9 Council or designee;

10 (2) the Attorney General or designee;

11 (3) the Defender General or designee;

12 (4) the Executive Director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission
13 or designee;

14 (5) the Chief Superior Judge or designee;

15 (6) the Commissioner of Corrections or designee;

16 (7) the Commissioner for Children and Families or designee;

17 (8) two members of the House of Representatives, not both from the
18 same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

19 (9) two members of the Senate, not both from the same political party,
20 who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees.

1 (c) The terms of members shall be four years. As terms of currently
2 serving members expire, appointments of successors shall be in accord with
3 the provisions of subsection (b) of this section. Appointments of members to
4 fill vacancies or expired terms shall be made by the authority that made the
5 initial appointment to the vacated or expired term. Members of the Board shall
6 be eligible for reappointment.

7 (d) Members of the Board shall elect biennially by majority vote the Chair
8 of the Board. Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their
9 services, but shall be entitled to reimbursement for expenses in the manner and
10 amount provided to employees of the State. The Board may meet not more
11 than 12 times per year.

12 (e) Six members shall constitute a quorum of the Board. When a quorum
13 has been established, the vote of a majority of the members present at the time
14 of the vote shall be an act of the Board.

15 § 5003. DUTIES

16 (a) The Board shall conduct management and oversight of the mitigation of
17 systemic racism across the systems of State government by:

18 (1) reviewing and making recommendations on the fairness and
19 diversity policies of the Office of the Attorney General, the Vermont Bar
20 Association, the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, the General
21 Assembly, and the Office of the Governor;

1 (2) managing and overseeing the statewide collection of race-based data
2 and ensuring such data are publicly available;

3 (3) providing training for State agencies, local governments, educational
4 institutions, businesses, and the public regarding the nature and scope of racial
5 discrimination and the systemic and institutionalized nature of race-based
6 bias; and

7 (4) advise and consult with the Executive and Legislative Branches
8 of State government on the assessment of racial impact of policies and
9 legislation.

10 (b) On or before January 15, 2019, and annually thereafter, the Board shall
11 report to the General Assembly with recommendations on how to mitigate
12 systemic racism across the State.

13 Sec. 2. SYSTEMIC RACISM OVERSIGHT AND EQUITY REVIEW

14 BOARD; 2019 REPORT

15 (a) On or before January 15, 2019, the Systemic Racism Oversight and
16 Equity Review Board shall report to the General Assembly pursuant to
17 3 V.S.A. § 5003, and the report shall include a recommendation regarding any
18 staff necessary for the administration and operation of the Board's duties.

19 Sec. 3. REPEAL

20 3 V.S.A. § 168 (Racial Disparities in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice
21 System Advisory Panel) is repealed on July 1, 2019.

1 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

2 This act shall take effect on passage.