

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Judiciary to which was referred House Bill No. 502  
3 entitled “An act relating to modernizing Vermont’s parentage laws”  
4 respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends the bill be  
5 amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu  
6 thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. FINDINGS AND INTENT

8 Current Vermont law provides detailed guidance as to the legal and physical  
9 rights and responsibilities of parents, with respect to their biological children  
10 or step-children, if they marry and divorce. However, the statutory law has not  
11 kept pace with the changing nature of today’s families, and guidance is  
12 significantly lacking with respect to unmarried parents or persons who have  
13 acted as parents, especially with respect to children who have been conceived  
14 through assisted reproductive technology. Through this act, the General  
15 Assembly seeks to assemble attorneys with particular expertise in these  
16 matters, who can examine parentage laws in other jurisdictions and develop a  
17 proposal for the General Assembly to consider during the 2018 legislative  
18 session that integrates with our existing laws best practices for providing for  
19 the best interest of the child in various types of parentage proceedings.

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1       Sec. 2. PARENTAGE STUDY COMMITTEE

2           (a) Creation. There is created the Parentage Study Committee to examine  
3           and provide recommendations with regard to modernizing Vermont's  
4           parentage laws in recognition of the changing nature of the family.

5           (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following  
6           members:

7                   (1) a judge or Justice appointed by the Administrative Judge;

8                   (2) a member appointed by the Commissioner for Children and  
9           Families;

10                   (3) an attorney appointed by the Director of the Office of Child  
11           Support;

12                   (4) two members appointed by the Vermont Bar Association who are  
13           attorneys experienced in parentage issues related to reproductive technology  
14           and surrogacy; and

15                   (5) one member who is a medical professional who is appointed by the  
16           other members of the committee.

17           (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study how Vermont's  
18           parentage laws should be updated to address various issues that have come  
19           before the courts in recent years and issues that have arisen and been addressed  
20           in other New England states on these matters, including assisted reproductive  
21           technology and de facto parentage.

1        (d) Report. On or before October 1, 2017, the Committee shall submit a  
2        written report to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary, the Senate  
3        Committee on Health and Welfare, and the House Committee on Human  
4        Services with its findings and recommendations for legislative action.

5        Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

6        This act shall take effect on passage.

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9        (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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Senator \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE