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Act No. 61 (H.16). Executive branch; Secretary of State, Vermont State Archives and Records Administration; State boards and commissions

An act relating to boards and commissions

This act makes miscellaneous amendments regarding State boards and commissions. Many of this act's provisions stem from 2018 Sp. Sess. Act No. 2, which established the temporary Sunset Advisory Commission to propose amendments regarding or the repeal of the various State boards and commissions and required the Secretary of State to maintain an online inventory of them. In addition to technical clean-up, the act's substantive amendments include the following:

- *VSARA registry.* Sec. 1 specifies that it is the Secretary of State's Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) that will be maintaining information regarding State boards and commissions in a registry. This section also requires VSARA to track the original creation of State boards and commissions created by State law and any amendments to those laws so that the General Assembly may consider eliminating them after five years; it also more specifically defines a "State board or commission." Sec. 2 provides that VSARA's requirement to maintain a registry of State boards and commissions will begin on January 1, 2023.
- *Per diems and expense reimbursement.* For multiple State boards and commissions whose enabling law is amended by this act, the act standardizes language regarding members' per diem compensation and expense reimbursement, including by cross-referencing Sec. 4's 32 V.S.A. § 1010 and specifying the State entity that is required to pay these costs.
- *Repeals.* The following sections repeal these seven State boards and commissions: Sec. 8. State and Regional Economic Development and Planning Services Oversight Panel; Sec. 9. Development Cabinet; Sec. 11. Film and New Media Advisory Board; Sec. 12. Vermont Rehabilitation Corporation; Sec. 13. State Natural Resources Conservation Council Board of Adjustment; Sec. 16. Sustainable Agriculture Council; Sec. 17. Vermont Transportation Authority.
- *Reports.* Sec. 14 eliminates an annual Pesticide Advisory Council report on the State's progress in reaching pesticide use targets, but still requires the Council to measure that progress. Sec. 15 provides the Vermont Milk Commission with discretion to report as needed on its activities, rather than requiring an annual Commission report.

- *Capitol Complex Commission.* Sec. 18 adds two legislative appointees to the Capitol Complex Commission, prohibits any Commission member from being a legislator, and requires that at least two members be residents of the City of Montpelier.
- *Vermont Enhanced 911 Board.* Sec. 19 requires the Secretary of Administration to report to committees of jurisdiction by January 15, 2020 with a recommendation regarding to which agency or department the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board should report beginning in Fiscal Year 2021.
- *Contract negotiations.*
 - Sec. 21 permits an impasse in collective bargaining negotiations between the State of Vermont and its employees or the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs and its employees to be resolved by an arbitrator when requested by either party as an alternative to requiring such an impasse to be submitted to the Vermont Labor Relations Board. The other aspects of the dispute resolution process for these contract negotiations remain the same as in current law.
 - Sec. 22 provides that if an impasse in contract negotiations between a municipality and its unionized public safety employees is not resolved through mediation and fact finding, the dispute is required to be submitted to arbitration. This section does not apply to bargaining units that include both municipal public safety employees and other municipal employees. Sec. 23 defines "municipal public safety employees" as municipal fire, police, and emergency medical employees.
 - Sec. 24 provides that Secs. 21-23 apply to contract negotiations that begin on or after July 1, 2019.

Effective Date: July 1, 2019