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Act No. 62 (H.63). Natural resources; bottle redemption; energy; weatherization

An act relating to weatherization, a Public Utility Commission proceeding, and unclaimed beverage container deposits.

This act contains a number of provisions concerning thermal efficiency and weatherization, including authorizing Efficiency Vermont to use unallocated funds for such services (Sec. 1), encouraging the Vermont Low Income Trust for Electricity (VLITE) to invest some of its resources in the Home Weatherization Assistance Fund (Secs. 4 and 5), appropriating \$350,000.00 to Efficiency Vermont (Sec. 6), and removing restrictions concerning how up to \$5,000,000.00 can be invested for accelerated weatherization and housing improvements (Sec. 7).

Sec. 2 requires the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to conduct a proceeding to consider and make recommendations concerning various issues, including whether an all-fuels efficiency program should be created and whether efficiency programs and services should be expanded to include strategies such as storage and demand response. The PUC is required to issue a preliminary report in January 2020 and a final report in January 2021.

Secs. 12-14 concern the establishment and duties of two working groups: The Residential Building Energy Labelling Working Group and the Commercial and Multiunit Building Energy Labeling Working Group.

Finally, Secs. 8-10 amend the requirements for remittance of unclaimed beverage container deposits to the State. The act eliminates the requirement that a beverage manufacturer or distributor that collects a beverage container deposit establish a separate interest-bearing account for the container deposits. Beverage manufacturers or distributors shall remit the unclaimed deposits to the Department of Taxes quarterly according to a system of collection of similar fees or taxes. The act also clarifies the authority of the Department of Taxes to enforce the remittance of the unclaimed beverage container deposits.

Effective Date: The beverage container redemption sections take effect on June 17, 2019; all other sections take effect on July 1, 2019