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H.126

Introduced by Representatives Cina of Burlington, O’Sullivan of Burlington,
Sullivan of Burlington, Anthony of Barre City, Burke of
Brattleboro, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs,
Colburn of Burlington, Fegard of Berkshire, Gonzalez of
Winooski, Haas of Rochester, Hooper of Randolph, Jickling of
Randolph, Kornheiser of Brattleboro, Masland of Thetford,
McCormack of Burlington, McCullough of Williston, Nicoll of
Ludlow, Ralph of Hartland, Sheldon of Middlebury, Till of
Jericho, Troiano of Stannard, and White of Hartford

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Study committee and request for proposal; plan for transition to a
zero-waste economy

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a study
committee that shall issue an RFP to develop a plan for Vermont to transition
to a zero-waste economy.

An act relating to a zero-waste economy

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

2 Sec. 1. STUDY COMMITTEE; REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

3 (a) Creation. There is created the Zero-Waste Economy Study Committee.

4 The Committee shall prepare and issue a request for proposal (RFP) for a plan
5 as to how Vermont can transition to a zero-waste economy and shall oversee
6 the work of the selected bidder in developing the plan.

7 (b) Membership. The Study Committee shall be composed of the following
8 six members:

9 (1) two current members of the House of Representatives, not both from
10 the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

11 (2) two current members of the Senate, not both from the same political
12 party, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

13 (3) the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or
14 designee; and

15 (4) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee.

16 (c) Powers and duties. The Study Committee shall develop and issue an
17 RFP and shall select one of the bidders to develop a plan as to how Vermont
18 shall transition to a zero-waste economy. The Study Committee shall enter
19 into a contract with the selected bidder that shall require that the selected
20 bidder produce a plan that provides recommendations, guidelines, and a

1 timeline regarding transition to a 90 percent zero-waste, circular economy by
2 2050 in Vermont.

3 (1) The plan's recommendations and guidelines shall incorporate the
4 following objectives:

5 (A) to prevent waste from being generated;

6 (B) to promote sustainable materials management, with a preference
7 for highest and best uses;

8 (C) to minimize reliance on waste disposal, landfilling, and
9 incineration;

10 (D) to reduce energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and
11 other adverse environmental impacts;

12 (E) to identify possible economic and other incentives for the
13 colocation of businesses and manufacturers in designated areas to share
14 resources, reduce waste, and allow more productive use of waste and by-
15 products;

16 (F) to encourage the adoption of biologically inspired production
17 processes and materials;

18 (G) to use old sites first, before creating new ones;

19 (H) to restore ecosystems whenever possible;

20 (I) to minimize the waste of human resources and potential by
21 increasing opportunities for meaningful employment, providing flexible

1 pathways for education, training, and employment, and identifying
2 underutilized segments of the workforce;

3 (J) to use all available housing stock before building new units, to use
4 land more efficiently while protecting ecosystems, and to prevent waste in
5 housing infrastructure; and

6 (K) to engage stakeholders and the public in processes that empower
7 people on the local level to be involved in the decisions that will shape the
8 future of their region and the State.

9 (2) In developing the plan, the selected bidder shall consider the
10 following issues:

11 (A) how to move beyond full implementation of Vermont's universal
12 recycling law;

13 (B) how to improve the waste management plans for solid waste
14 districts;

15 (C) how to engage with each major region of the State to identify
16 existing local businesses, community resources, strengths, needs, and
17 challenges;

18 (D) possible incentives to increase productivity of existing
19 operations;

20 (E) how to identify gaps in local economies that could be
21 strategically filled to create closed-loop manufacturing;

1 (F) ways to encourage local energy generation and waste
2 containment;

3 (G) how to provide food for the entire population year-round by:

4 (i) eliminating food waste and promoting the recycling of food;

5 (ii) increasing the productivity of existing land;

6 (iii) creating indoor growing facilities in every region in the State;

7 and

8 (iv) promoting legal and regulatory changes to further these

9 objectives;

10 (H) whether it is viable to produce local bioreplacements for plastic
11 to sell across the State and beyond;

12 (I) how to build a sustainable, local energy grid that sells to
13 surrounding regions;

14 (J) how to capture phosphorus and other wastes from waters for
15 recycling versus on-site management of wastewater;

16 (K) how to employ the objectives of existing wastewater plans;

17 (L) strategies for replacing the entire State vehicle fleet with electric
18 vehicles; and

19 (M) how to build a green transportation infrastructure.

20 (3) In developing the plan, the selected bidder shall engage with relevant
21 stakeholders, including:

1 (A) solid waste districts;

2 (B) the Department of Environmental Conservation;

3 (C) the Vermont Chamber of Commerce;

4 (D) regional planning commissions; and

5 (E) environmental advocacy groups.

6 (d) Assistance. The Study Committee shall have the administrative and
7 legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council in developing the RFP and
8 the contract. The Study Committee shall determine the selected bidder by
9 majority vote. The Office of Legislative Council shall negotiate and enter into
10 a contract with the selected bidder, shall oversee the selected bidder's work and
11 contract fulfillment, and shall keep the Study Committee informed as to the
12 selected bidder's work and contract fulfillment.

13 (e) Report. On or before January 15, 2020, the selected bidder shall
14 provide the Study Committee with a written report setting forth findings and
15 any recommendations for legislative action.

16 (f) Meetings.

17 (1) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall call
18 the first meeting of the Study Committee to occur on or before August 1, 2019.

19 (2) The Study Committee shall select a chair from among its members at
20 the first meeting.

21 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

1 (g) Reimbursement. For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the
2 General Assembly, legislative members of the Study Committee shall be
3 entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to
4 2 V.S.A. § 406 for not more than 10 meetings.

5 (h) Appropriation. The sum of \$30,000.00 is appropriated to the General
6 Assembly from the General Fund in fiscal year 2020 for per diem
7 compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Study
8 Committee and for hiring the selected bidder.

9 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.