Introduced by Representatives Masland of Thetford, Cina of Burlington, Lippert of Hinesburg, Murphy of Fairfax, and Smith of Derby

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: General provisions; Native American Indian people; Office of Native American Affairs

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create the Office of Native American Affairs with the purpose of providing aid and assistance to Native Americans.

An act relating to creating the Office of Native American Affairs

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

Sec. 1. 1 V.S.A. § 857 is added to read:

§ 857. OFFICE OF NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS; DIRECTOR; DUTIES

(a) The Office of Native American Affairs is created within the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Office shall be headed by a director appointed by the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development.

(b) In addition to the duties elsewhere set forth by law, the Director of the Office of Native American Affairs shall:
(1) acquaint himself or herself and the employees of the Office with the federal, State, and local laws enacted for the benefit of Native Americans and their heirs and beneficiaries; collect data and information as to facilities and services available to them; and cooperate with informational or service agencies throughout the State to inform Native Americans and their heirs and beneficiaries regarding the existence or availability of:

(A) educational training and retraining services and facilities;

(B) health, medical, rehabilitation, and housing services and facilities;

(C) employment and reemployment services; and

(D) provisions of federal, State, and local laws affording rights, privileges, and benefits to Native Americans and their families and dependents, and other related matters;

(2) assist Native Americans and their heirs and beneficiaries in the presentation, proof, and establishment of any claims, privileges, rights, and other benefits that they may have pursuant to federal, State, or local laws; and

(3) cooperate with all national, State, and local governmental and private agencies in securing services and benefits to Native Americans and their families and dependents.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.