

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Human Services to which was referred House Bill No.
3 966 entitled “An act relating to COVID-19 broadband connectivity and
4 housing initiatives” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and
5 recommends that the bill be amended by inserting Sec. X after Sec. Y to read
6 as follows:

7 Sec. X. HOUSING, RENTAL ASSISTANCE, AND SUPPORT SERVICES;
8 CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND; APPROPRIATION

9 (a) The sum of \$16,061,600.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief
10 Fund to the Department for Children and Families in fiscal year 2021 to fund
11 programs and services that support safe, stable housing opportunities for
12 Vermont households experiencing homelessness as a result of the COVID-19
13 public health emergency and related administrative costs up to X percent of
14 total appropriation. The programs and services funded by this appropriation
15 may include:

16 (1) expanding the Vermont Rental Subsidy program to provide homeless
17 families with temporary rental assistance through December 30, 2020 as a
18 bridge to public housing vouchers;

19 (2) providing or arranging for housing navigation and case management
20 services, such as identifying housing barriers, needs, and preferences;
21 developing and implementing plans to find and secure housing; conducting

1 outreach to potential landlords; assisting with relocation logistics; developing
2 permanent housing support crisis plans; and identifying other services
3 necessary for households to maintain permanent housing;

4 (3) providing financial assistance to Vermont households who are living
5 in motels to help them rapidly resolve their homelessness and enter into safe
6 housing arrangements;

7 (4) supplementing the General Assistance motel voucher program to
8 address the immediate housing needs of households who are currently living in
9 motels or hotels around the State and whose motel or hotel lodging is related to
10 a disruption to their previous housing situation as a result of the COVID-19
11 public health emergency; and

12 (5) capitalizing a housing risk pool for landlords to encourage rentals to
13 individuals experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, which would
14 help landlords lessen their risk of exposure to financial loss through December
15 20, 2020, while renting to households that have poor or no rental housing
16 history as result of financial hardship due to the COVID-19 public health
17 emergency.

18 (b) The General Assembly determines that the expenditure of monies from
19 the Coronavirus Relief Fund as set forth in this section is necessary to secure
20 safe, stable housing opportunities for Vermont households experiencing
21 homelessness, many of whom have been disproportionately impacted by

1 unemployment, business closures, or business interruptions as a result of the
2 COVID-19 public health emergency. The number of families living in State-
3 supported motels or hotels grew from approximately 300 to 1,400 over the
4 course of two months. The COVID-19 pandemic has rendered housing in
5 shelters incompatible with maintaining public health; increased the number of
6 households experiencing homelessness and in need of housing supports to
7 obtain or maintain safe, stable housing; and created a demand for diverse social
8 services to safely house these vulnerable Vermonters.

9 (c) The provision of housing programs and services is not compensable
10 under this section to the extent that the same costs or expenses have been or
11 will be covered by other federal funds.

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19 (Committee vote: _____)

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Representative _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE