

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Government Operations to which was referred House  
3 Bill No. 775 entitled “An act relating to creating the State Youth Council”  
4 respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the  
5 bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in  
6 lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. FINDINGS, PURPOSE, AND INTENT

8 (a) Findings. The General Assembly finds the following:

9 (1) Young Vermonters are one of our State’s most important resources.  
10 Youths under 21 years of age represent approximately 24 percent of the  
11 Vermont population and reflect Vermont’s diversity. They are a group of  
12 dynamic, vibrant, and innovative individuals who are finding new ways to  
13 have their voices heard and effect the change they wish to see in the world.

14 (2) Multiple perspectives strengthen decision making and policy  
15 development by encouraging innovation, creativity, and change. Including the  
16 unique perspectives of young people improves State policies and programs,  
17 including youth-specific services.

18 (3) Vermont’s economy depends on the participation of young people,  
19 and empowering them to provide policy advice will help keep young  
20 Vermonters in the State. It will also diversify our economy, making it more  
21 competitive and sustainable.

1           (4) Young people have the right to be heard and respected. Almost all  
2           government policies and decisions have an impact on young people’s lives and  
3           youth have the right to influence those decisions, both individually and  
4           collectively. Furthermore, involving young people in political processes helps  
5           build trust in democratic institutions, which in turn protects Vermont’s  
6           democracy.

7           (b) Purpose. The purpose of this act is to create a State Youth Council,  
8           composed of young Vermonters who will have an official means of providing  
9           advice on policies that impact young people in Vermont.

10          (c) Intent.

11           (1) The intent of creating the State Youth Council set forth in this act is  
12           to enhance the State’s progress in reaching the population-level outcomes set  
13           forth in 3 V.S.A. § 2311(b)(6) (Vermont’s children and young people achieve  
14           their potential) and (9) (Vermont has open, effective, and inclusive  
15           government).

16           (2) The General Assembly further intends to consider the  
17           recommendations of the initial State Youth Council created in this act and to  
18           subsequently amend the Council’s appointing authority, powers, and duties  
19           accordingly.

1 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. chapter 45, subchapter 7 is added to read:

2 Subchapter 7. State Youth Council

3 § 2331. STATE YOUTH COUNCIL; MEMBERSHIP; POWERS AND  
4 DUTIES

5 (a) Creation. There is created within the Agency of Administration the  
6 State Youth Council (Council) to advise the Governor and the General  
7 Assembly on issues affecting young people in Vermont.

8 (b) Membership. The Council shall be composed of 14 Vermont resident  
9 youths between 11 and 21 years of age at the time of appointment. The  
10 interagency workgroup Youth Services Advisory Council shall appoint one  
11 member from each county.

12 (1) The Agency of Administration shall assist the Youth Services  
13 Advisory Council in notifying the public regarding the opportunity for youths  
14 to serve on the Council, and the Youth Services Advisory Council shall accept  
15 applications for service on the Council.

16 (2) The Youth Services Advisory Council shall appoint members to the  
17 Council for three-year staggered terms and shall strive to appoint Council  
18 members who represent a variety of youths in the State.

19 (3) The Council shall elect a chair from among its members.

1        (c) Powers and duties. The Council shall:

2            (1) hold at least four public hearings annually in order to take testimony  
3        on issues affecting Vermont youths;

4            (2) evaluate the State’s progress in reaching the population-level  
5        outcomes set forth in 3 V.S.A. § 2311 and recommend to the Government  
6        Accountability Committee any revisions to the population-level indicators for  
7        those outcomes the Council finds necessary to better reflect data that impacts  
8        Vermont youths; and

9            (3) provide advice to the Governor and the General Assembly on policy  
10       changes necessary to improve the lives of Vermont youths.

11           (A) The Governor shall meet annually with the Council to hear and  
12       receive the Council’s advice and recommendations on policies that impact the  
13       youths of Vermont.

14           (B) The Council shall annually report its advice and  
15       recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Government  
16       Operations and to any other standing committees it deems appropriate. The  
17       report may be in verbal form.

18           (d) Assistance. The Council shall have the administrative, technical, and  
19       legal assistance of the Agency of Administration to assist with Council  
20       directed activities. The Council shall also have support from the Youth  
21       Services Advisory Council.

1       (e) Attending meetings.

2           (1) Members of the Council may attend Council meetings by electronic  
3       or other means without being physically present at a designated meeting  
4       location as permitted under 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(2).

5           (2) The General Assembly finds that such virtual meeting attendance is  
6       particularly expedient for Council members from remote areas of the State to  
7       participate in meetings, but also encourages Council members to be physically  
8       present at meeting locations when possible due to the importance of in-person  
9       interaction.

10       (f) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Council shall be  
11       entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted  
12       under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than eight meetings per calendar  
13       year. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Agency  
14       of Administration.

15       Sec. 3. STATE YOUTH COUNCIL; INITIAL PROVISIONS

16       (a) Appointments. The Youth Services Advisory Council shall appoint the  
17       initial State Youth Council created by Sec. 2 of this act on or before  
18       November 1, 2020. The initial appointments shall be for two- and three-year  
19       terms in order to provide staggered Council member terms.

20       (b) Training. From funds appropriated to the Agency of Administration, to  
21       assist with State Youth Council directed activities and in consultation with the

1 Youth Services Advisory Council, the Agency shall provide to the State Youth  
2 Council training on general State policies and on how to formulate policy  
3 proposals.

4 (c) Duties. In addition to the State Youth Council’s duties set forth in  
5 Sec. 2 of this act, on or before January 15, 2022, the Council shall recommend  
6 to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations the manner in  
7 which its members should be appointed or elected and any other amendments  
8 to its enabling law.

9 Sec. 4. SUNSET OF STATE YOUTH COUNCIL

10 3 V.S.A. chapter 45, subchapter 7 (State Youth Council) is repealed on  
11 February 1, 2024.

12 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

13 This act shall take effect on passage.

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18 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE