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H.XXX

Introduced by Committee on Judiciary

Date:

Subject: Coronavirus Relief Fund; House Judiciary Committee

Recommendations

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes recommendations for appropriations from the Coronavirus Relief Fund for judiciary-related issues.

An act relating to Coronavirus Relief Fund appropriations for judiciary-related issues

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

Sec. 1. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAMS;  
CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND; APPROPRIATION

(a) The sum of \$130,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to the Department of Corrections in fiscal year 2021 for purposes of remote operations of the Vermont Network’s Domestic Violence Accountability Programs.

(b) The General Assembly determines that the expenditure of monies from the Coronavirus Relief Fund as set forth in this section:

1           (1) is necessary because Domestic Violence Accountability Programs  
2           are a crucial element in the treatment of domestic violence offenders to reduce  
3           their likelihood of committing future offenses; and

4           (2) is due to from COVID-19 because the pandemic has required these  
5           treatment groups to immediately transition to remote operations without any  
6           funding to support the process.

7           Sec. 2. INCARCERATED AND REENTERING VCTIMS OF DOMESTIC  
8           AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE; CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND;  
9           APPROPRIATION

10           (a) The sum of \$197,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief  
11           Fund to the Department of Corrections in fiscal year 2021 for purposes of  
12           supporting incarcerated and reentering victims of domestic and sexual  
13           violence.

14           (b) The General Assembly determines that the expenditure of monies from  
15           the Coronavirus Relief Fund as set forth in this section:

16           (1) is necessary because community support services are an integral part  
17           of recovery for victims of domestic and sexual violence; and

18           (2) is due to from COVID-19 because during the pandemic the  
19           Department of Corrections has been forced to isolate some incarcerated  
20           individuals and limit the in-person contacts of offenders reentering the  
21           community, resulting in a reduced access to support services that can be

1 ameliorated by establishing remote contact systems and more extensive use of  
2 support personnel.

3 Sec.3. LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC AND  
4 SEXUAL VIOLENCE; CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND;  
5 APPROPRIATION

6 (a) The sum of \$80,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief  
7 Fund to the Vermont Center for Crime Victim’s Services in fiscal year 2021  
8 for purposes of providing no cost legal representation to victims of domestic  
9 and sexual violence through the Vermont Network’s Justice for Victims Legal  
10 Clinic.

11 (b) The General Assembly determines that the expenditure of monies from  
12 the Coronavirus Relief Fund as set forth in this section:

13 (1) is necessary because victims of domestic and sexual violence must  
14 participate in court proceedings in order for justice to be served; and

15 (2) is due to COVID-19 because the pandemic has made it more difficult  
16 for victims to find attorneys and understand how they may participate remotely  
17 in judicial proceedings.

18 Sec. 4. FORENSIC NURSING PROGRAM REMOTE ACCESS BY  
19 VICTIM’S ADVOCATES; CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND;  
20 APPROPRIATION

21 (a) The sum of \$160,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief  
22 Fund to the Vermont Center for Crime Victim’s Services in fiscal year 2021

1 for purposes of providing victim’s advocates with remote access to the  
2 Forensic Nursing Program.

3 (b) The General Assembly determines that the expenditure of monies from  
4 the Coronavirus Relief Fund as set forth in this section:

5 (1) is necessary because the presence of victim’s advocates during  
6 forensic examinations of sexual violence victims is necessary for their  
7 recovery; and

8 (2) is due to COVID-19 because victim’s advocates are restricted by  
9 hospitals from being physically present with victims during the pandemic as an  
10 infection control strategy.

11 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

12 This act shall take effect on passage.