

S.285

Introduced by Senators Hardy, Balint, Baruth, Bray, Campion, Clarkson,
Hooker, Ingram, Lyons, McCormack, Parent, Perchlik and
Pollina

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: State buildings; art in State buildings; State House; State Curator

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create the
State House Artwork and Portrait Project Committee.

An act relating to the State House Artwork and Portrait Project Committee

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

Sec. 1. STATE HOUSE ARTWORK AND PORTRAIT PROJECT; STUDY
COMMITTEE; REPORT

(a) Intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly to expand the State House artwork and portrait collection to represent the diversity of leadership stories and leaders who have significantly contributed to Vermont's unique history. It is also the intent of the General Assembly that the State acquire or commission the artistic representations of diverse leadership stories or leaders that warrant inclusion in the State House portrait collection. Acquisitions and

commissions may be in the form of portraiture or other artistic media that ensure diversification of artistic forms represented in the State House art collection.

(b) Creation. There is created the State House Artwork and Portrait Project Committee to develop a plan for the acquisition or commission of artwork for the State House collection that represents Vermont's diverse history.

(c) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following members:

(1) the State Curator or designee, who shall serve as the chair;

(2) the State Archivist or designee;

(3) the State Librarian or designee;

(4) the Executive Director of the Vermont Council on the Arts or designee;

(5) the Director of the Vermont Commission on Women or designee;

(6) the Vermont Executive Director of Racial Equity or designee;

(7) the Executive Director of the Vermont Historical Society or designee;

(8) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(9) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(10) one of the Co-Chairs of the Friends of the Vermont State House Board of Trustees or designee; and

(11) a prominent Vermont visual artist, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

(d) Powers and duties.

(1) The Committee shall research and recommend leadership stories or leaders of historical significance in Vermont that warrant artistic inclusion in the State House art collection. The Committee shall make recommendations based on the following criteria:

(A) A leader shall have served as an elected official or political leader who significantly contributed to the unique history of Vermont.

(B) A leader's service as an elected official or political leader shall relate to the governance of the State or the Abenaki Nation, the legislative process, or the operation of and activities at the State House.

(C) A leadership story shall be of significance to a community, tribe, or historical moment in Vermont that serves to diversify the representation of the State's people and history in the State House art collection.

(D) All of the recommendations for inclusion in the State House art collection shall be for depictions of leadership stories or leaders who identify as women, members of marginalized racial or ethnic groups, or individuals

who identify as either lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, provided that at least 80 percent shall depict individuals who identify as women.

(2) The Committee shall engage the public in its recommendation process and consult with relevant experts, including Vermont historians, artists, and diverse community leaders.

(3) The Committee's recommendation shall include a plan for acquisition or commission of artwork or portraits for at least five leadership stories or leaders, as well as a budget to be recommended for inclusion in the 2021 Capital Construction Act. In creating this plan, the Committee shall consult with the advisory committee established in 29 V.S.A. § 47.

(e) Assistance. The Committee shall consult with the Legislative Advisory Committee on the State House established under 2 V.S.A. chapter 19 and the State House Curatorial Task Force and have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Office of the State Curator.

(f) Report. On or before January 15, 2021, the Committee shall submit a written report to the Legislative Advisory Committee on the State House, the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions, and the Senate Committee on Institutions with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

(g) Meetings.

(1) The Chair shall call the first meeting of the Committee on or before July 15, 2020.

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

(3) The Committee shall cease to exist on June 30, 2021.

(h) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee serving in his or her capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Committee who are not employees of the State shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services.

Sec. 2. 29 V.S.A. § 154 is amended to read:

§ 154. PRESERVATION OF STATE HOUSE AND HISTORIC STATE
BUILDINGS

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall give special consideration to the State House as a building of first historical

importance and significance. He or she shall preserve the State House structure and its unique interior and exterior architectural form and design, with particular attention to the detail of form and design, in addition to keeping the buildings, its furnishings, facilities, appurtenances, appendages, and grounds surrounding and attached to it in the best possible physical and functional condition. Any permanent change, alteration, addition, or removal in form, materials, design, architectural detail, furnishing, fixed in place or otherwise, interior or exterior, of the State House may not be made without legislative mandate. Emergency and immediately necessary repairs may, however, be made without legislative mandate upon prior approval of the Governor.

(2) The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall give special consideration to the State House as a place of employment for a diverse workforce and an institution of public education for students and members of the general public.

(b) [Repealed.]

Sec. 3. 29 V.S.A. § 154a is amended to read:

§ 154a. STATE CURATOR

(a) Creation. The position of State Curator is created within the Department of Buildings and General Services.

(b) Duties. The State Curator's responsibilities shall include:

(1) oversight of the general historic preservation of the State House, including maintaining the historical integrity of the State House and works of art in the State House;

(2) interpretation of the State House to the visiting public through exhibits, publications, and tours; and

(3) acquisition, management, and care of State collections of art and historic furnishings, provided that any works of art for the State House are acquired pursuant to the requirements of 2 V.S.A. § 653(a).

(c) Acquisition policy. In coordination with the Legislative Advisory Committee on the State House, created in 2 V.S.A. chapter 19, the State Curator shall adopt an acquisition policy that ensures that the acquisition of art for the State House reflects a diversity of artistic media and the diversity of the people and stories of Vermont throughout the history of the State. The policy shall have the goal of attaining gender equity among subjects and artists of work displayed in the State House, as well as diversity of race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

(d) Interpretive plan. In coordination with the Friends of the Vermont State House and the Vermont Historical Society, the State Curator shall create an interpretive plan that tells the stories of the State House art collection through accessible written, multimedia, and verbal means. The plan shall include appropriate and inclusive training of State House volunteers and staff.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.