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H.405

Introduced by Representative Christie of Hartford

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Commerce and trade; human rights commission

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to authorize and provide funding for three positions within the Human Rights Commission and to require that all State agencies and departments collect certain data and adopt strategies to address disparities.

An act relating to promoting racial equity and protecting Vermonters

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

Sec. 1. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION; APPROPRIATION

In fiscal year 2022 the amount of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Human Rights Commission for salary and benefits for the following three positions:

- (1) One full-time equivalent Education and Outreach Coordinator.
- (2) One full-time equivalent Office Manager and Intake Specialist.
- (3) One full-time equivalent Litigator.

1 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 5003 is amended to read:

2 § 5003. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RACIAL EQUITY

3 (a) The Executive Director of Racial Equity (Director) shall work with the
4 agencies and departments to implement a program of continuing coordination
5 and improvement of activities in State government in order to combat systemic
6 racial disparities and measure progress toward fair and impartial governance,
7 including:

8 (1) overseeing a comprehensive organizational review to identify
9 systemic racism in each of the three branches of State government and
10 inventory systems in place that engender racial disparities;

11 (2) managing and overseeing the statewide collection of race-based data
12 to determine the nature and scope of racial discrimination within all systems of
13 State government; and

14 (3) developing a model fairness and diversity policy and reviewing and
15 making recommendations regarding the fairness and diversity policies held by
16 all State government systems.

17 (b) Pursuant to section 2102 of this title, the Director shall work
18 collaboratively with State agencies and departments;

19 (1) to gather relevant existing data and records necessary to carry out the
20 purpose of this chapter, including data on race, gender, and income; and

1 (2) to develop best practices for remediating systemic racial disparities
2 throughout State government.

3 (c) The Director shall work with the agencies and departments and with the
4 Chief Performance Officer to develop performance targets and performance
5 measures for the General Assembly, the Judiciary, and the agencies and
6 departments to evaluate respective results in improving systems. These
7 performance measures shall be included in the agency's or department's
8 quarterly reports to the Director, and the Director shall include each agency's
9 or department's performance targets and performance measures in his or her
10 annual reports to the General Assembly.

11 (d) The Director shall, in consultation with the Department of Human
12 Resources and the agencies and departments, develop and conduct trainings for
13 agencies and departments regarding the nature and scope of systemic racism
14 and the institutionalized nature of race-based bias. Nothing in this subsection
15 shall be construed to discharge the existing duty of the Department of Human
16 Resources to conduct trainings.

17 (e) The Director shall periodically report to the Racial Equity Advisory
18 Panel on the progress toward carrying out the duties as established by this
19 section.

1 (f) On or before January 15, 2020, and annually thereafter, the Director
2 shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations
3 demonstrating the State's progress in identifying and remediating systemic
4 racial bias within State government.

5 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

6 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.