

1 S.36

2 Introduced by Committee on Appropriations

3 Date:

4 Subject: Appropriations; Coronavirus Relief Fund; housing; health care  
5 providers; broadband access

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to authorize the  
7 continued use of Coronavirus Relief Fund monies for certain purposes, provide  
8 for additional funding to the Everyone Eats Program, allow flexibility for  
9 certain reporting requirements, and express legislative intent to use other  
10 sources of federal funds whenever possible in order to make Coronavirus  
11 Relief Fund monies available for eligible expenses.

12 An act relating to modifications to the use of certain Coronavirus Relief  
13 Fund appropriations

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

15 \* \* \* Health Care Provider Stabilization Grant Program;

16 Extraordinary Relief; Transfers \* \* \*

17 Sec. 1. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 136, Sec. 7, as amended by 2020 Acts and  
18 Resolves No. 154, Sec. B.1121, is further amended to read:

19 Sec. 7. AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; HEALTH CARE PROVIDER  
20 STABILIZATION GRANT PROGRAM

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\* \* \*

(e) Extraordinary relief to long-term care facilities; adult day programs; transfer authorized. Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, the Agency of Human Services may:

(1) disburse funds appropriated by this section to any long-term care facility in urgent need of extraordinary financial relief in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in the facility;

(2) disburse funds appropriated by this section to any adult day service provider during the remainder of fiscal year 2021, if the Agency determines that the funds are necessary to ensure the provider’s sustainability and funds are available for this purpose; and

(3) transfer funds appropriated by this section to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for distribution to health care providers receiving financial assistance through the Economic Recovery program.

(f) Reports.

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\* \* \* Housing \* \* \*

Sec. 2. DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES; HOUSING  
FOR HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS;  
CONTINUED USE OF FUNDS IN FISCAL YEAR 2021

1        In light of the extension of time to use monies from the Coronavirus Relief  
2        Fund pursuant to Sec. 1001 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021,  
3        Pub. L. No. 116-260, the Department for Children and Families may continue  
4        to use monies remaining from the Coronavirus Relief Fund appropriation to the  
5        Department in 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 137, Sec. 12, for programs and  
6        services that support safe, stable housing opportunities for Vermont  
7        households experiencing homeless as a result of the COVID-19 public health  
8        emergency and related administrative costs during the remainder of fiscal year  
9        2021.

10        Sec. 3. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 137, Sec. 11(a)(4) is amended to read:

11                (4) Rental assistance; eviction protection. ~~\$25,000,000.00~~  
12                ~~\$27,800,000.00~~ to the Department of Housing and Community Development  
13        for a grant to the Vermont State Housing Authority, which shall administer the  
14        distribution of funds to landlords on behalf of tenants in need of rental  
15        arrearage assistance.

16     \* \* \*

17     \* \* \* Broadband Access \* \* \*

18        Sec. 4. ACCELERATED BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM;  
19                EXTENSION

20                Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Commissioner of  
21        Public Service is authorized to continue disbursing funds under the

1 Accelerated Broadband Connectivity Program established by 2020 Acts and  
2 Resolves No. 137, Sec. 13, for any broadband project contracted for prior to  
3 December 20, 2020 and not completed on or before December 30, 2020.

4 \* \* \* Everyone Eats \* \* \*

5 Sec. 5. AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT;  
6 EVERYONE EATS

7 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to continue funding the  
8 Restaurants and Farmers Feeding the Hungry Program, known as Everyone  
9 Eats, through the end of fiscal year 2021 to the extent that sufficient Federal  
10 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds are made available to meet  
11 Program needs.

12 (b) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall use the excess  
13 receipts authority under 32 V.S.A. § 511 to make interdepartmental transfers  
14 from the FEMA account to the Agency of Commerce and Community  
15 Development for the purpose of funding the Everyone Eats Program through  
16 the end of fiscal year 2021.

17 \* \* \* Access to Justice; Judicial Filing Fees \* \* \*

18 Sec. 6. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 120, Sec. A.49(a)(9) is amended to read:

19 (9) Agency of Human Services: ~~\$300,000~~ \$375,000 is appropriated to  
20 the Agency of Human Services to be granted to Vermont Legal Aid for  
21 increased costs of providing access to justice services in response to the

1 COVID-19 pandemic. Up to 50% of this amount shall be used to cover the  
2 cost of per use electronic judicial filing fees though ~~December 30, 2020~~ March  
3 31, 2021 to ensure all court users have timely access to justice as the judicial  
4 system resumes operations relying on greater digital remote online processes to  
5 ensure public health and safety after closure due to COVID-19.

6 \* \* \* Front-Line Employees Hazard Pay Grant Program; Reporting \* \* \*

7 Sec. 7. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 136, Sec. 6(f) is amended to read:

8 (f) Each covered employer that receives a grant shall, not later than 90 days  
9 after receiving the grant ~~and in no event later than~~ or by December 15, 2020,  
10 whichever is earlier, report to the Agency on a standard form provided by the  
11 Secretary the amount of grant funds used to provide hazard pay to eligible  
12 employees and the amount of any remaining grant funds that were not spent;  
13 provided, however, that the Agency may allow a grace period for reporting, in  
14 the Agency's discretion. All unspent grant funds shall be returned to the  
15 Agency pursuant to a procedure adopted by the Secretary.

16 \* \* \* Prioritizing Use of Non-CRF Funds; Legislative Intent \* \* \*

17 Sec. 8. PRIORITIZING USE OF NON-CORONAVIRUS RELIEF

18 FEDERAL FUNDS; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

19 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to use federal funds from  
20 sources other than the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), including federal funds  
21 provided to the State in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L.

1 No. 116-260, instead of using CRF monies whenever possible in order to apply  
2 CRF monies to other eligible purposes in light of the extension for using CRF  
3 monies from December 30, 2020 to December 31, 2021 in Sec. 1001 of the  
4 federal act.

5 (b) On or before February 28, 2021, the Secretary of Administration, in  
6 consultation with the Commissioner of Finance and Management and the  
7 Secretaries of Human Services and of Commerce and Community  
8 Development, shall report to the House and Senate Committees on  
9 Appropriations regarding the application of federal funds from the  
10 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260, for eligible  
11 expenditures previously covered using CRF monies that were appropriated for  
12 emergency housing, rental arrearage assistance, utility arrearage assistance,  
13 nutrition assistance, and other social or human services purposes identified by  
14 the Secretaries and Commissioner.

15 \* \* \* Effective Dates \* \* \*

16 Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES

17 This act shall take effect on passage, except that, notwithstanding 1 V.S.A.

18 § 214:

19 (1) Secs. 1(e)(1) (extraordinary relief to long-term care facilities),  
20 1(e)(2) (adult day programs), and 6 (judicial filing fees) shall take effect  
21 retroactively on December 1, 2020;

1           (2) Sec. 1(e)(3) (transfer authority) shall take effect retroactively on  
2           July 1, 2020; and  
3           (3) Secs. 4 (broadband access) and 7 (hazard pay reports) shall take  
4           effect retroactively on December 15, 2020.