

1 S.36

2 Introduced by Committee on Appropriations

3 Date: January 19, 2021

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
18 and 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

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* * * Broadband Access * * *

~~Sec. 4. ACCELERATED BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM;
EXTENSION
Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Commissioner of
Public Service is authorized to continue disbursing funds under the
Accelerated Broadband Connectivity Program established by 2020 Acts and
Resolves No. 137, Sec. 13, for any broadband project contracted for prior to
December 20, 2020 and not completed on or before December 30, 2020.~~

Sec. 4. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 137, Sec. 13 is amended to read:

*Sec. 13. COVID-RESPONSE ACCELERATED BROADBAND
CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM*

* * *

(n) Any unexpended funds under the Program as of December 20, 2020 shall be returned to the State Coronavirus Relief Fund. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Commissioner of Public Service is authorized to continue disbursing funds under the Program for any broadband project contracted for prior to December 20, 2020 and not completed on or before December 30, 2020. The Commissioner shall retain any remaining balance of funds appropriated under this section and shall not disburse them for any other purpose without specific authorization from the General Assembly.

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*Sec. 4a. COVID-RESPONSE TEMPORARY BROADBAND SUBSIDY
PROGRAM; EXTENSION*

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the COVID-Response Temporary Broadband Subsidy Program established under 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 137, Sec. 13(d) be extended for an additional two months covering the period beginning on January 1, 2021 and ending on February 28, 2021.

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
5 to 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.~~

Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that, notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214:

(1) Sec. 1(e)(1) (extraordinary relief to long-term care facilities) shall take effect retroactively on November 1, 2020;

(2) Secs. 1(e)(2) (adult day programs) and 6 (judicial filing fees) shall take effect retroactively on December 1, 2020;

(3) Sec. 1(e)(3) (transfer authority) shall take effect retroactively on July 1, 2020; and

(4) Secs. 4 (broadband access) and 7 (hazard pay reports) shall take effect retroactively on December 15, 2020.