

House Calendar

Thursday, March 18, 2021

72nd DAY OF THE BIENNIAL SESSION

House Convenes at 1:15 PM

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ACTION CALENDAR

Third Reading

H. 87

An act relating to establishing a classification system for criminal offenses

H. 145

An act relating to amending the standards for law enforcement use of force

H. 154

An act relating to the failure of municipal officers to accept office

H. 218

An act relating to the sale of unpasteurized raw milk

Amendment to be offered by Reps. Rosenquist of Georgia and Hango of Berkshire to H. 218

That the bill be amended in Sec. 1, 6 V.S.A. chapter 152, in section 2778, in subsection (b), by adding a subdivision (5) to read:

(5) Prior to delivery of raw milk to a farm stand or CSA organization for sale, the producer shall test the milk for Escherichia coli, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, and Campylobacter using polymerase chain reaction pathogen testing. If the results of the test indicate the presence of Escherichia coli, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, or Campylobacter, the producer shall dispose of the milk and not sell it to a consumer, farm stand, or CSA organization.

H. 428

An act relating to hate-motivated crimes and misconduct

Favorable with Amendment

H. 101

An act relating to the implementation of 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173 by providing grant funding to build systems-driven, sustainable literacy support for all students with measurable outcomes

Rep. Webb of Shelburne, for the Committee on Education, recommends the bill be amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is to provide assistance to supervisory unions in their implementation of 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173 by providing grant funding to build systems-driven, sustainable literacy support for all students with measurable outcomes.

Sec. 2. FINDINGS

(a) In 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 148, the General Assembly directed the Agency of Education to contract with a consulting firm to review current practices and recommend best practices for the delivery of special education services in school districts. The Agency of Education contracted with the District Management Group, which issued in November 2017 its report entitled “Expanding and Strengthening Best-Practice Supports for Students who Struggle” (Report).

(b) This Report made the following five recommendations on best practices for the delivery of special education services:

(1) ensure core instruction meets most needs of most students;

(2) provide additional instructional time outside core subjects to students who struggle rather than providing interventions instead of core instruction;

(3) ensure students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers;

(4) create or strengthen a systems-wide approach to supporting positive student behaviors based on expert support; and

(5) provide specialized instruction from skilled and trained experts to students with more intensive needs.

(c) In enacting 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173, the General Assembly’s goal was to enhance the effectiveness, availability, and equity of services provided to all students who require additional support in Vermont’s school districts, recognizing that changing the models for delivery of services and funding for students who require additional support is a significant change for school systems and their constituencies and that they will require time and assistance in making necessary accommodations.

(d) In Act 173, the General Assembly provided additional staff and resources to the Agency of Education to support its work with supervisory unions and schools that are transitioning to the best practices recommended in the Report.

(e) Further support for supervisory unions and schools that are transitioning to the best practices recommended in the Report are necessary, particularly in the area of teaching literacy to students in prekindergarten through grade 3, given that proficiency in reading is an essential foundational skill for educational success.

(f) According to the 2019 assessment of reading proficiency by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 37 percent of Vermont students in fourth grade were proficient in reading, and that percentage has declined from 2002 (39 percent) and 2017 (43 percent).

(g) Ensuring that students in prekindergarten through grade 3 learn to read at a proficient level advances the best practices recommended in the Report, in particular ensuring core instruction meets most needs of most students and ensuring that students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers.

Sec. 3. LITERACY GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) “Eligible applicant” means a supervisory union, or, if multiple supervisory unions choose to collaborate in applying together for the grant funding, those supervisory unions.

(2) “Grant” means a grant provided under this section.

(3) “Participating supervisory union” means each supervisory union that applies for the grant funding under the same application.

(4) “Participating supervisory union leadership team” means the superintendent or designee of each participating supervisory union and two representatives of schools within each participating supervisory union appointed by its superintendent.

(5) “Program” means the Literacy Grant Program created by this section.

(b) Program creation and grant authorization.

(1) The Literacy Grant Program is created to enable supervisory unions to adopt best practices in teaching literacy instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 3.

(A) In recognition that literacy proficiency is a foundational learning skill, this Program is designed to assist supervisory unions implement 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173 by providing students with the literacy skills necessary to ensure that core instruction meets most needs of most students

and that students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers.

(B) Supervisory unions are encouraged to work together in a sustained and targeted manner to improve literacy outcomes by applying together for the grant funding or otherwise working collaboratively in a manner that uses resources in an effective and efficient manner.

(C) Subject to the terms of the Program, grants shall be awarded to eligible applicants for three consecutive years.

(2)(A) The Agency of Education shall inform supervisory unions of the availability of grants under this act and provide technical assistance to eligible applicants in applying for these funds.

(B) The Agency, in providing information and technical assistance, shall focus on eligible applicants that have a relative higher percentage of:

(i) students who have over recent years scored lower on literacy assessments;

(ii) students who come from families eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch; or

(iii) discrepancies in outcome data on literacy for students from historically underserved populations, including, to the extent that data is available in compliance with privacy laws, students who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; students who are English language learners; and students on individualized education programs.

(C) The Agency of Education shall also advise supervisory unions of other sources of funding that may be available to advance the purpose of this act.

(c) Application for, and approval of, grant funding.

(1) On or before July 15, 2021, the Agency of Education shall develop the application for the grant program and post the application on the Agency's website.

(2) The application for the grant shall include:

(A) the members of the participating supervisory union leadership team and a description of its governance structure;

(B) the person or persons who will disperse the grant funds among the participating supervisory unions, a description of the fiscal controls to ensure proper accounting of these funds, and the eligible applicant's Program budget;

(C) the literacy indicators and outcomes the eligible applicant seeks to improve, which shall include each of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and may include any other areas of current best practices in teaching literacy;

(D) the priority problems of practice in teaching and improving literacy outcomes, including shared problems of practice across the participating supervisory unions;

(E) the eligible applicant's plan for improving literacy teaching and outcomes, including how the proposed plan will strengthen the applicant's process towards ensuring that:

(i) core literacy instruction meets most needs of most students;
and

(ii) students who struggle with literacy proficiency receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers;

(F) how the eligible applicant will implement its plan for literacy teaching and outcomes and a description of how it will achieve the purpose of this act;

(G) how literacy results and outcomes will be measured and reported;

(H) how the eligible applicant will improve its Tier 1 education under 16 V.S.A. § 2902 through this process; and

(I) how systems and processes developed through the grant funding will be sustained.

(3) The Agency shall develop application scoring criteria that incorporate the factors under subdivision (b)(2)(B) of this section and are consistent with subdivisions (2)(A)–(I) of this subsection (c). On or before July 31, 2021, the Agency shall send a copy of the grant application and scoring criteria, review process, and selection criteria to the House and Senate Committees on Education.

(4) Eligible applicants shall submit applications for grant funding to the Agency of Education, which shall review those applications. Following the application review process, the Agency shall recommend applications to the Secretary for funding based on the review scores, funding dollars available, and the Agency's view of the applicant's need for literacy instructional support as compared with other applicants. The Secretary shall make the final grant funding determination.

(5) Based on the Secretary's determination, the Agency of Education shall, on or before September 1, 2021, award the first year of grant funding, up to \$100,000.00 per application, to successful applicants. The amount of this funding shall be based on the applicant's proposed budget, total availability of funds, and the applicant's need for literacy instructional support as compared with other applicants. If the amount appropriated for this purpose is insufficient to fully fund the grants under that section, then the grant amounts that are awarded shall be prorated.

(6) The Agency of Education shall, on or before each of September 1, 2022 and 2023, award the second year and third year of grant funding, respectively, of up to \$100,000.00 per eligible applicant per year. The amount of this funding shall be based on the applicant's proposed budget, total availability of funds, and the Secretary's assessment of the eligible applicant's progress towards implementing its action plan to improve literacy teaching and outcomes under subdivision (2)(F) of this subsection. The Secretary may deny or reduce second- or third-year grant funding if the Secretary finds that the applicant has made insufficient progress towards implementing its action plan. If the amount appropriated for this purpose is insufficient to fully fund the grants under that section, then the grant amounts that are awarded shall be prorated.

(d) Use of grant funds.

(1) Grant funds shall be used to:

(A) establish the participating supervisory union leadership team and its governance structure;

(B) implement the eligible applicant's action plan to improve literacy teaching and outcomes under subdivision (c)(2)(F) of this section; and

(C) measure the literacy results and outcomes under subdivision (c)(2)(G) of this section.

(2) Grant funds may be used to:

(A) build literacy instructional leadership capacity to lead the improvement of the quality of literacy teaching and for the improvement of student learning;

(B) implement an instructional coaching model, as described in the guidelines for implementing effective coaching systems issued by the Agency of Education in March 2016 (Coaching Guidelines);

(C) implement a systems' coaching model, as described in the Coaching Guidelines;

(D) support educators in using collaborative data systems to promote continuous improvement of literacy teaching and outcomes;

(E) provide focused training on the literacy indicators and outcomes the eligible applicant seeks to improve, which, if offered, shall include each of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and any other areas of focus in teaching literacy;

(F) employ universal design for literacy learning, which is a framework to improve teaching and learning for all students based on scientific research on how people learn;

(G) employ evidence-based structured literacy instruction, including for students at risk for dyslexia or diagnosed with dyslexia; and

(H) employ any other proven method that builds sustainable systemwide improvement in literacy delivery and outcomes.

(3) Required activities shall not be duplicative of existing programs and activities.

(4) Grant funds may be used for hiring additional staff, providing additional compensation to existing staff, or contracting with another entity or entities to aid in the implementation activities under subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(e) Evaluation and reporting.

(1) Not later than 30 calendar days after the one-year anniversary of receiving a grant award under this section, the eligible applicant shall submit to the Agency of Education a report that describes progress and concerns with the implementation of the eligible applicant's action plan to improve literacy teaching and outcomes under subdivision (c)(2)(F) of this section.

(2) On or before January 15, 2025, the Agency of Education shall report to the General Assembly and the Governor on the impact of the grant program. The report shall be made publicly available on the Agency of Education's website.

Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated from federal funds to the Agency of Education for fiscal year 2022 for the literacy grants to be funded on or before September 1 of each of 2021, 2022, and 2023 under Sec. 3 of this act.

(b) The Agency of Education may set aside:

(1) not more than \$16,000.00 for informational and technical assistance for eligible applicants as defined under Sec. 3(a)(2) of this act; and

(2) not more than \$16,000.00 for the evaluations required under Sec. 3(e)(1) of this act.

Sec. 5. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; STAFFING

The following position is created in the Agency of Education: one full-time, director level, classified position to serve as the Statewide Literacy Coordinator in the Office of the Secretary. The person hired as the Statewide Literacy Coordinator shall hold a masters' level degree, or have equivalent expertise based on work experience, in the field of evidenced-based literacy instruction. There is appropriated to the Agency of Education from the General Fund for fiscal year 2022 the amount of \$150,000.00 for salary, benefits, and operating expenses for this position.

Sec. 6. 16 V.S.A. § 2903a is added to read:

§ 2903a. ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LITERACY

(a) Creation. There is created the Advisory Council on Literacy. The Council shall advise the Agency of Education, the State Board of Education, and the General Assembly on how to improve proficiency outcomes in literacy for students in prekindergarten through grade 12 and how to sustain those outcomes.

(b) Membership. The Council shall be composed of the following 14 members:

(1) eight members who shall serve as ex officio members:

(A) the Statewide Literacy Coordinator at the Agency of Education;

(B) a member appointed of the Standards Board for Professional Educators who is knowledgeable in licensing requirements for teaching literacy, appointed by the Standards Board;

(C) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association or designee;

(D) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or designee;

(E) the Executive Director of the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators or designee;

(F) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals' Association or designee;

(G) the Executive Director of the Vermont Independent Schools Association or designee; and

(H) the Executive Director of the Vermont-National Education Association or designee;

(2) six members who shall serve two-year terms:

(A) a representative appointed by the Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association;

(B) three teachers appointed by the Vermont-National Education Association who teach literacy, one of whom shall be a special education literacy teacher and two of whom shall teach literacy to students in prekindergarten through grade three; and

(C) two community members who have struggled with literacy proficiency or supported others who have struggled with literacy proficiency, appointed by the Agency of Education in consultation with the Vermont Family Network.

(c) Members with two-year terms.

(1) A member with a term limit shall serve a term of two years and until a successor is appointed. A term shall begin on January 1 of the year of appointment and run through December 31 of the last year of the term. Terms of these members shall be staggered so that not all terms expire at the same time.

(2) A vacancy created before the expiration of a term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the unexpired portion of the term.

(3) A member with a term limit shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. A member appointed to fill a vacancy created before the expiration of a term shall not be deemed to have served a term for the purpose of this subdivision.

(d) Powers and duties. The Council shall advise the Agency of Education, the State Board of Education, and the General Assembly on how to improve proficiency outcomes in literacy for students in prekindergarten through grade 12 and how to sustain those outcomes and shall:

(1) advise the State Board of Education on how to update section 2903 of this title and the statewide literacy plan required by that section and how to maintain that plan;

(2) advise the Agency of Education on what services the Agency should provide to school districts to support implementation of the plan and on staffing levels and resources needed at the Agency to support the Statewide Literacy Coordinator;

(3) develop a plan for collecting literacy-related data that informs:

(A) literacy instructional practices;

(B) teacher professional development in the field of literacy;

(C) what proficiencies and other skills should be measured through literacy assessments and how those literacy assessments are incorporated into local assessment plans; and

(D) how to identify school progress in achieving literacy outcomes, including closing literacy gaps for students from historically underserved populations;

(4) recommend best practices for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 literacy instruction within the multitiered system of supports required under section 2902 of this title to best improve and sustain literacy proficiency; and

(5) review literacy assessments and outcomes and provide ongoing advice as to how to continuously improve those outcomes and sustain that improvement.

(e) Report. Notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), annually on or before December 15, the Council shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education with its findings, any recommendations for legislative action, and progress toward outcomes identified in this section. The report shall contain an executive summary, which shall not exceed two pages.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Secretary of Education shall call the first meeting of the Council to occur on or before August 1, 2021.

(2) The Statewide Literacy Coordinator at the Agency of Education shall chair the Council, provided that until that position is filled, the Council shall select a chair from among its members.

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

(4) The Council shall meet not more than eight times per year.

(g) Assistance. The Council shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Education.

(h) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Council shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than eight meetings of the Council per year.

Sec. 7. APPROPRIATION; ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LITERACY

The sum of \$6,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund in fiscal year 2022 to the Agency of Education for per diem and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Advisory Council on Literacy created under Sec. 6 of this act.

Sec. 8. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; ANNUAL BUDGET REQUEST

The Agency of Education shall, in its annual budget request to the General Assembly, include the amount of \$6,000.00 for per diem and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Advisory Council on Literacy created under Sec. 6 of this act.

Sec. 9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
LITERACY

(a) The Advisory Council on Literacy, created in Sec. 6 of this act, is established on August 1, 2021.

(b) Members of the Council shall be appointed on or before August 1, 2021 and, for members with a term limit, their service on the Council from the date of appointment through December 31, 2021 shall not be counted toward their term limit.

(c)(1) In order to stagger the terms of the members of the Council, the initial terms of the following members shall be for one year:

(A) two of the teachers appointed under subdivision (b)(2)(B) of this section; and

(B) the two community members appointed under subdivision (b)(2)(C) of this section.

(2) After the expiration of the initial term set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, Council member terms shall be as set forth in 16 V.S.A. § 2903a(c) in Sec. 6 of this act.

Sec. 10. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; LITERACY PLAN

Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 2903(b), on or before December 1, 2021, the Agency of Education shall, in collaboration with the Advisory Council on

Literacy created by Sec. 6 of this act, update the statewide literacy plan required under 16 V.S.A. § 2903(b).

Sec. 11. TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS; REVIEW

(a) On or before December 1, 2021, the Agency of Education in collaboration with the Standards Board for Professional Educators shall review:

(1) teacher preparation programs to assess to what extent these programs prepare teacher candidates to use “evidence-based literacy instruction”; and

(2) licensing and re-licensing criteria as it pertains to literacy instruction.

(b) “Evidence-based literacy instruction” means reading, writing, and spelling instruction that is supported by high-quality research that meets rigorous standards and is proven to translate effectively to classroom practices.

Sec. 12. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

Rep. Scheu of Middlebury, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committee on Education and when further amended as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 4, appropriation of funds, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

(a) The sum of \$3,090,000.00 is appropriated from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(1), Pub. L. No. 117-2 to the Agency of Education for fiscal year 2022 for the literacy grants to be funded on or before September 1 of each of 2021, 2022, and 2023 under Sec. 3 of this act.

(b) The Agency of Education may set aside:

(1) not more than one percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) of this section for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for informational and technical assistance for eligible applicants as defined under Sec. 3(a)(2) of this act; and

(2) not more than two percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) of this section for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for the evaluations required under Sec. 3(e)(1) of this act.

Second: By striking out Sec. 5, Agency of Education; staffing, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 5. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; STAFFING

(a) The following position is created in the Agency of Education: one full-time, director level, classified position to serve as the Statewide Literacy Coordinator in the Office of the Secretary. The person hired as the Statewide Literacy Coordinator shall hold a masters' level degree, or have equivalent expertise based on work experience, in the field of evidenced-based literacy instruction.

(b) There is appropriated to the Agency of Education from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(4), Pub. L. No. 117-2 for fiscal year 2022 the amount of \$450,000.00 for salary, benefits, and operating expenses for fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for this position.

Third: By striking out Sec. 7, Appropriation, Advisory Council on Literacy, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 7. APPROPRIATION; ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LITERACY

The sum of \$18,000.00 is appropriated from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(4), Pub. L. No. 117-2 in fiscal year 2022 to the Agency of Education for per diem and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Advisory Council on Literacy for fiscal years 2022, 2023 and 2024 created under Sec. 6 of this act.

Fourth: By striking out Sec. 8 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 8. REPEAL; ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LITERACY

16 V.S.A. § 2903a (Advisory Council on Literacy) as added by this act is repealed on June 30, 2024.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

Amendment to be offered by Reps. Webb of Shelburne, Arrison of Weathersfield, Austin of Colchester, Brady of Williston, Brown of Richmond, Conlon of Cornwall, Cupoli of Rutland City, Hooper of Randolph, James of Manchester, Toof of St. Albans Town and Williams of Granby to H. 101

That the report of the Committee on Education be amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 6, 16 V.S.A. § 2903a, Advisory Council on Literacy, by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) Membership. The Council shall be composed of the following 15 members:

(1) eight members who shall serve as ex officio members:

(A) the Statewide Literacy Coordinator at the Agency of Education;

(B) a member of the Standards Board for Professional Educators who is knowledgeable in licensing requirements for teaching literacy, appointed by the Standards Board;

(C) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association or designee;

(D) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or designee;

(E) the Executive Director of the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators or designee;

(F) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals' Association or designee;

(G) the Executive Director of the Vermont Independent Schools Association or designee; and

(H) the Executive Director of the Vermont-National Education Association or designee; and

(2) seven members who shall serve two-year terms:

(A) a representative appointed by the Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association;

(B) three teachers appointed by the Vermont-National Education Association who teach literacy, one of whom shall be a special education literacy teacher and two of whom shall teach literacy to students in prekindergarten through grade three;

(C) two community members who have struggled with literacy proficiency or supported others who have struggled with literacy proficiency, appointed by the Agency of Education in consultation with the Vermont Family Network; and

(D) one member appointed by the Agency of Education who has expertise in working with students with dyslexia.

Second: By striking out Sec. 7, appropriation; Advisory Council on Literacy, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 7. APPROPRIATION; ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LITERACY

The sum of \$21,000.00 is appropriated from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(4), Pub. L. No. 117-2 in fiscal year 2022 to the Agency of Education for per diem and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Advisory Council on Literacy for fiscal years 2022, 2023 and 2024 created under Sec. 6 of this act.

Third: By striking out Sec. 8, Agency of Education; annual budget request, in its entirety and renumbering the remaining sections to be in numerical order.

H. 106

An act relating to equitable access to a high-quality education through community schools

Rep. James of Manchester, for the Committee on Education, recommends the bill be amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE

This act shall be called the “Community Schools Act.”

Sec. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

(a) Findings. The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Every child should be able to grow up and have the opportunity to achieve their dreams and contribute to the well-being of society. Every child deserves a public school that fully delivers on that promise.

(2) According to the National Center for Education Statistics, more than half of the nation’s schoolchildren live in low-income households, meaning they qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, a percentage that has risen steadily in recent decades. According to the Vermont Agency of Education, an average of 38 percent of students across all supervisory unions during the 2019–2020 school year qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. As a result, some schoolchildren face more challenges than others in succeeding in school and in life.

(3) Community schools facilitate the coordination of comprehensive programs and services that are carefully selected to meet the unique needs of students and families, such as substance misuse, lack of stable housing, inadequate medical and dental care, hunger, trauma, and exposure to violence, so students can do their best.

(4) According to research reports from the Learning Policy Institute, the four key pillars of the community schools approach, which are integrated student supports, expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities,

active family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practices, promote conditions and practices found in high-quality schools as well as address out-of-school barriers to learning.

(5) This research also shows that community school interventions can result in improvements in a variety of student outcomes, including attendance, academic achievement (including reducing racial and economic achievement gaps), and high school graduation rates, and can meet the Every Student Succeeds Act standard of “evidence-based” approaches to support schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support and intervention.

(6) Research also shows that these programs offer a strong return on investment. According to impact studies, each dollar invested in a community coordinator position returns approximately \$7.00 in net benefits to the school (Return on Investment of a Community School Coordinator: A Case Study; APEX and Community School Partnership; 2019). Every dollar invested in programs and support (including medical, dental, and social services; afterschool and summer enrichment; parent engagement; and early childhood services) can yield up to \$15.00 in return (Community Schools as an Effective School Improvement Strategy: A Review of the Evidence; Anna Maier, Julia Daniel, Jeannie Oakes, and Livia Lam; 2017).

(7) According to the Learning Policy Institute, “establishing community schools” is one of 10 recommended strategies for restarting and rethinking the role of public education in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Community schools serve as resource hubs that provide a broad range of easily accessed, well-coordinated supports and services that help students and families with increasingly complex needs.

(8) Community schools have been established in many states and settings, from New York City to Chicago and Los Angeles. But the approach has also been successful in rural communities. In McDowell County, West Virginia (population 22,000), community schools are part of a public-private partnership, a collaboration between state government, nonprofit agencies, businesses, and philanthropic foundations, that aims to “make educational improvement the route to a brighter economic future.” The national nonprofit Rural School and Community Trust is an active advocate for expanding this model in rural areas, calling the relationship between good schools and thriving communities “crucial.” In Vermont, a growing number of schools are implementing or exploring the model, from Molly Stark Elementary in Bennington, which offers school-based health services, extended hours, summer school, and family learning activities, to the school-based health center in Winooski.

(b) Purpose. This law is enacted to support a demonstration grant program for the implementation of community school programs that provide students with equitable access to a high-quality education.

Sec. 3. COMMUNITY SCHOOLS; DEMONSTRATION GRANT
PROGRAM

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) “Community school coordinator” means a person who:

(A) is a full-time or part-time staff member serving in an eligible school or in a school district or supervisory union with an eligible school and appointed in accordance with Vermont law; and

(B) is responsible for the identification, implementation, and coordination of a community school program, subject to the operational and reporting structure of the community school coordinator’s employer.

(2) “Community school program” means a program offered at a public elementary or secondary school that includes all four of the following:

(A) integrated student supports, which address out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers, coordinated by a community school coordinator, which may include access to services such as medical, dental, vision care, and mental health services, or access to counselors to assist with housing, transportation, nutrition, immigration, or criminal justice issues;

(B) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities, which may include before-school, afterschool, weekend, and summer programs, that provide additional academic instruction, individualized academic support, enrichment activities, and learning opportunities that emphasize real-world learning and community problem-solving and that may include art, music, drama, creative writing, hands-on experience with engineering or science, tutoring and homework help, and recreational programs that enhance and are consistent with the school’s curriculum;

(C) active family and community engagement, which brings students’ families and the community into the school as partners in children’s education and makes the school a community hub, providing adults with a facility to access educational opportunities they want, which may include coordinating services with outside providers to offer English as a second language classes, green card or citizenship preparation, computer skills, art, financial literacy, career counseling, job skills training, services for substance

misuse, and other programs that bring community members into the building for meetings or events; and

(D) collaborative leadership and practices, which build a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility using strategies that shall, at a minimum, leverage the multitiered system of supports and include a community school coordinator and a representative of families in the community, and may include school, school district, and other leadership or governance teams; teacher learning communities; and other staff to manage the multiple, complex, joint work of school and community organizations.

(3) “Demonstration grant” means a grant provided to an eligible applicant under this section.

(4) “Eligible applicant” means either a school district with an eligible school or supervisory union with an eligible school.

(5) “Eligible school” means a public elementary or secondary school that:

(A) has a student body where at least 40 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq.; or

(B) has been identified for comprehensive or equity support and intervention under Section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or otherwise identified by the State as in need of additional support.

(b) Demonstration grant authorization. The Secretary of Education is authorized to provide annual demonstration grants of up to \$110,000.00 a year for a period of three years for each eligible applicant to:

(1) hire a community school coordinator to develop and implement a community school program; or

(2) designate a community school coordinator from existing personnel and augment work already being performed to develop and implement a community school program.

(c) Grant administration.

(1) The Secretary of Education shall administer the demonstration grant program under this section. The Secretary shall develop the demonstration grant application, determine grant amounts, and provide grant funding on or before September 1 of each of 2021, 2022, and 2023 to successful applicants. The Secretary may deny or reduce second- and third-year grant funding if the

Secretary finds that the applicant has made insufficient progress towards developing and implementing a community school program.

(2) The Agency of Education shall inform supervisory unions of the availability of demonstration grants under this act and provide technical assistance to eligible applicants in applying for these funds. The Agency of Education shall also advise eligible applicants of other sources of funding that may be available to advance the purpose of this act.

(d) Use of grant funding.

(1) An eligible applicant shall use the demonstration grant funding to hire a community school coordinator to develop and implement a community school program or to designate a community school coordinator from existing personnel and augment work already being performed to develop and implement a community school program.

(2) If the funding is used to hire a community school coordinator, then during the first year of demonstration grant funding, the community school coordinator shall conduct a needs and assets assessment of the school to determine what is necessary to develop a community school program and an action plan to implement the community school program. During the second and third years of demonstration grant funding, the community school coordinator shall oversee the implementation of the community school program.

(e) Evaluation.

(1) At the end of each year of grant funding, each eligible applicant that received grant funding shall undergo an evaluation designed by the Agency of Education.

(2) On or before each of December 15, 2022 and 2024, the Agency of Education shall report to the General Assembly and the Governor on the impact of the demonstration grant program. The report shall be made publicly available on the Agency of Education's website.

Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

(a) The Secretary of Education shall use \$1,529,000.00 of the amount allocated to the Agency of Education from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund pursuant to Section 313 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 for the demonstration grants to be funded on or before September 1 of each of 2021, 2022, and 2023 under Sec. 3 of this act.

(b) The Agency of Education may set aside:

(1) not more than one percent of funds for informational assistance and technical assistance, such as assistance with applying for grant funding and use of grant funding, for eligible applicants under Sec. 3 of this act; and

(2) not more than two percent of funds for the evaluations required under Sec. 3 of this act.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee Vote: 9-2-0)

Rep. Scheu of Middlebury, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committee on Education and when further amended as follows:

By striking out Sec. 4, appropriation of funds, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

(a) The Secretary of Education shall use \$3,399,000.00 of the amount allocated to the Agency of Education from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 pursuant to Section 2001(f)(1), 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2 for the demonstration grants to be funded on or before September 1 of each of 2021, 2022, and 2023 under Sec. 3 of this act.

(b) The Agency of Education may set aside:

(1) not more than one percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) of this section for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for informational and technical assistance, such as assistance with applying for grant funding and use of grant funding, for eligible applicants as defined under Sec. 3 of this act; and

(2) not more than two percent of the funds appropriated under subsection (a) of this section for each of fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for the evaluations required under Sec. 3 of this act.

(Committee Vote: 8-3-0)

H. 426

An act relating to addressing the needs and conditions of public school facilities in the State.

(Rep. Arrison of Weathersfield will speak for the Committee on Education.)

Rep. Scheu of Middlebury, for the Committee on Appropriations,

recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 3, School facilities conditions assessment; Agency of Education; Department of Buildings and General Services, by striking out subsection (d) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

(d) The total cost for the assessment described in this section shall not exceed \$2,500,000.00, of which the Secretary is authorized to expend as follows:

(1) Of the initial expenditures, not more than the \$627,500.00 shall be used from the amount allocated to the Agency of Education from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act pursuant to Secs. 18003(e), 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-136.

(2) Of the remaining expenditures, not more than \$1,872,500.00 shall be used from the amount allocated to the Agency of Education Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund pursuant to Section 313(e) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260.

Second: In Sec. 7, Agency of Education; creation of positions, in subsection (a) by striking out “Two full-time exempt positions are” and inserting in lieu thereof “One limited-service position funded through January 15, 2023 is” and by striking out “existing positions” and inserting in lieu thereof “an existing position”, and by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

(b) In fiscal year 2022, the Agency of Education is authorized to use not more than \$127,500.00 from the amount allocated to the Agency of Education Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund pursuant to Section 313(e) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260. for the position described in subsection (a) of this section.

(Committee Vote 11-0-0)

Favorable

H. 434

An act relating to establishing the Agricultural Innovation Board.

(Rep. Norris of Shoreham will speak for the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.)

Rep. Toleno of Brattleboro, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommends the bill ought to pass.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

NOTICE CALENDAR
Favorable with Amendment
H. 159

An act relating to creating the Better Places Program

Rep. Marcotte of Coventry, for the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, recommends the bill be amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Tourism and Marketing * * *

Sec. 1. TOURISM AND MARKETING; APPROPRIATION

(a) The tourism and hospitality sector has suffered widespread disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, with restaurant, lodging, entertainment, specialty retail and related businesses, as well as cultural attractions, suffering job losses and an uncertain ability to remain operational due to the travel restrictions imposed and the revenue losses that have been experienced.

(b) When travel is safe again, Vermont will have a strategic opportunity coming out of the pandemic to encourage visitation due our abundance of open space, strong cultural and outdoor recreation assets, and careful management of the virus.

(c) In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Tourism and Marketing to promote Vermont's travel, recreation, culinary, arts, culture, agritourism, and heritage experiences to attract visitors, and stimulate visitor spending with local attractions and small businesses in rural communities and throughout the State.

* * * Technology-Based Economic Development * * *

Sec. 2. TECHNOLOGY-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM; APPROPRIATION

(a) In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to design and implement a technology-based economic development program, consistent with the following:

(1) Small business innovation research; small business technical transfer; technical assistance. A total of \$200,000.00 to provide technical assistance to first-time applicants pursuing a federal SBIR or STTR grant.

(2) SBIR; STTR; Phase I and Phase II matching grants. A total of \$400,000.00 to provide a 50 percent State matching grant, up to \$50,000.00, to businesses that receive a federal SBIR/STTR Phase I or Phase II grant.

(3) Industry research partnership program. A total of \$200,000.00 to provide a 100 percent matching grant to Vermont small businesses:

(A) to purchase services and technical assistance from universities and research institutions, including research and development assistance, technology assessments, product prototyping, lab validation, and overcoming development hurdles; and

(B) to establish better relationships among Vermont businesses and higher education researchers, speed time-to-market for new technologies, and help keep Vermont companies relevant in the marketplace.

(4) University of Vermont Office of Engagement. A total of \$200,000.00 for a pass-through grant to the University of Vermont Office of Engagement to leverage the research services and data science capabilities of the University.

* * * Postsecondary CTE System * * *

Sec. 3. 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 6 is amended to read:

Sec. 6. POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
SYSTEM

(a) Findings; purpose.

(1) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

(A) Like many rural states, Vermont faces demographic realities that have resulted in an historically low unemployment rate and created obstacles for employers that seek to hire and retain enough fully trained employees.

(B) Notwithstanding this high employer demand, due to rapidly changing technology and evolving business needs, potential employees may lack the particular skills and training necessary to qualify for available jobs.

(C) In order to assist employers and employees in matching demand to requisite skills, Vermont has a broad diversity of postsecondary workforce education and training programs offered by multiple providers, including programs administered or funded by State government, educational institutions, and business-lead groups such as the Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project. The State should continue to work closely with these providers to identify and meet the needs of employers and employees.

* * *

(b) Postsecondary CTE System.

(1) The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Agency of Education, the Vermont State Colleges, and the Vermont Adult Technical Education Association, ~~and any~~ shall:

(A) consultant the Department hires for that purpose, issue a request for proposals and hire a consultant on or before September 1, 2021; and

(B) shall consider and report to the General Assembly on the design, implementation, and costs of an integrated postsecondary career and technical education system that achieves the results specified in subdivision (a)(2) of this section.

(2) In performing their work, the Department, stakeholders, and ~~any~~ the consultant shall conduct a broad-based stakeholder engagement process to solicit input from interested parties, and State agencies and departments shall provide necessary information and assistance within their relative areas of expertise.

(c) Report. On or before January 15, ~~2020~~ 2022, the Department of Labor shall submit a preliminary report on the status of its work and a final report on or before December 15, 2022 with any recommendations for legislative action to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

(d) In performing its work to create an integrated postsecondary career and technical education system, the Department shall recognize issues faced by persons with historical barriers to employment or who are underrepresented in the workforce, including persons who have faced discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, refugee status, and national origin; persons in recovery; persons with a history of incarceration; and persons with disabilities.

Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION

In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$75,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Labor to implement Sec. 3 of this act.

* * * Group Insurance; Northern Borders Regional Commission * * *

Sec. 5. 3 V.S.A. § 631 is amended to read:

§ 631. GROUP INSURANCE FOR STATE EMPLOYEES; SALARY DEDUCTIONS FOR INSURANCE, SAVINGS PLANS, AND

CREDIT UNIONS

(a)(1) The Secretary of Administration may contract on behalf of the State with any insurance company or nonprofit association doing business in this State to secure the benefits of franchise or group insurance. Beginning July 1, 1978, the terms of coverage under the policy shall be determined under section 904 of this title, but it may include:

(A) life, disability, health, and accident insurance and benefits for any class or classes of State employees; and

(B) hospital, surgical, and medical benefits for any class or classes of State employees or for those employees and any class or classes of their dependents.

(2)(A)(i) As used in this section, the term “employees” includes any class or classes of elected or appointed officials, State’s Attorneys, sheriffs, employees of State’s Attorneys’ offices whose compensation is administered through the State of Vermont payroll system, except contractual and temporary employees, and deputy sheriffs paid by the State of Vermont pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 290(b). The term “employees” shall not include members of the General Assembly as such, any person rendering service on a retainer or fee basis, members of boards or commissions, or persons other than employees of the Vermont Historical Society, ~~the Vermont Film Corporation~~, the Vermont State Employees’ Credit Union, Vermont State Employees’ Association, and the Vermont Council on the Arts, and the Northern Border Regional Commission, whose compensation for service is not paid from the State Treasury, or any elected or appointed official unless the official is actively engaged in and devoting substantially full-time to the conduct of the business of his or her public office.

(ii) For purposes of group hospital-surgical-medical expense insurance, the term “employees” shall include employees as defined in subdivision (i) of this subdivision (2)(A) and former employees as defined in this subdivision who are retired and are receiving a retirement allowance from the Vermont State Retirement System or the State Teachers’ Retirement System of Vermont and, for the purposes of group life insurance only, are retired on or after July 1, 1961, and have completed 20 creditable years of service with the State before their retirement dates and are insured for group life insurance on their retirement dates.

(iii) For purposes of group hospital-surgical-medical expense insurance only, the term “employees” shall include employees as defined in subdivision (i) of this subdivision (2)(A) and employees who are receiving a retirement allowance based upon their employment with the Vermont State

Employees' Association, the Vermont State Employees' Credit Union, the Vermont Council on the Arts, as long as they are covered as active employees on their retirement date, and:

- (I) they have at least 20 years of service with that employer; or
- (II) have attained 62 years of age, and have at least 15 years of service with that employer.

(B) The premiums for extending insurance coverage to employees shall be paid in full by the Vermont Historical Society, ~~the Vermont Film Corporation~~, the Vermont State Employees' Association, the Vermont State Employees' Credit Union, the Vermont Council on the Arts, and the Northern Border Regional Commission, or their respective retirees. Nothing herein creates a legal obligation on the part of the State of Vermont to pay any portion of the premiums required to extend insurance coverage to this group of employees.

* * *

* * * Better Places Program * * *

Sec. 6. FINDINGS; INTENT AND PURPOSE

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated our economy through business closures and job losses, and physical distancing requirements have exacerbated social isolation and impacted Vermonters' quality of life and sense of community.

(2) Public spaces are essential for supporting economic activity and health and well-being throughout the pandemic and for building engaged, equitable, and resilient communities in the future.

(3) Vermont's downtowns and villages increasingly depend on inviting public spaces that are robustly programmed to restore our distinct sense of place; strengthen community pride and identity; and attract businesses, jobs, and talent.

(4) Placemaking projects intentionally leverage the power of the arts and cultural assets to strengthen the economic and social fabric of communities and allow for growth and transformation that builds upon local and regional character, culture, and quality of place.

(5) Research shows that community-driven placemaking projects increase economic and civic vitality and create spaces where commerce thrives, social connections flourish, civic participation increases, and residents

are empowered to take ownership of their future to build healthier and equitable local economies.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to:

(1) enhance the livability and unique sense of place in Vermont's downtowns and villages by providing funding, training, and resources to support investments in public spaces and local placemaking projects that build prosperous, equitable, healthy, and resilient communities;

(2) promote healthy, safe, equitable, and vibrant downtowns, villages, and neighborhoods for people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, and incomes by increasing public space and placemaking investments in local communities;

(3) strategically coordinate and simplify the funding process from multiple community development funders, streamline the grantmaking and distribution process, democratize community access to grant funds, and provide communities a nimble, flexible source to quickly fund and launch community-driven placemaking projects to make positive and enduring change locally; and

(4) help local leaders identify, develop, and implement placemaking projects by creating the Better Places Program to advance local recovery efforts, rebuild local economies, boost local capacity, and reconnect Vermonters to one another—critical elements that help communities recover quickly and build prosperous and resilient communities in the future.

Sec. 7. 24 V.S.A. § 2799 is added to read:

§ 2799. BETTER PLACES PROGRAM; CROWD GRANTING

(a)(1) There is created the Better Places Program within the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Better Places Fund, which the Department shall manage pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5.

(2) The purpose of the Program is to utilize crowdfunding to spark community revitalization through collaborative grantmaking for projects that create, activate, or revitalize public spaces.

(3) The Department may administer the Program in coordination with and support from other State agencies and nonprofit and philanthropic partners.

(b) The Fund is composed of the following:

(1) State or federal funds appropriated by the General Assembly;

(2) gifts, grants, or other contributions to the Fund; and

(3) any interest earned by the Fund.

(c) As used in this section, “public space” means an area or place that is open and accessible to all people with no charge for admission and includes village greens, squares, parks, community centers, town halls, libraries, and other publicly accessible buildings and connecting spaces such as sidewalks, streets, alleys, and trails.

(d)(1) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall establish an application process, eligibility criteria, and criteria for prioritizing assistance for awarding grants through the Program.

(2) The Department may award a grant to a municipality, a nonprofit organization, or a community group with a fiscal sponsor for a project that is located in or serves a designated downtown, village center, new town center, or neighborhood development area that will create a new public space or revitalize or activate an existing public space.

(3) The Department may award a grant to not more than one project per calendar year within a municipality.

(4) The minimum amount of a grant award is \$5,000.00 and the maximum amount of a grant award is \$50,000.00.

(5) The Department shall develop matching grant eligibility requirements to ensure a broad base of community and financial support for the project, subject to the following:

(A) A project shall include in-kind support and matching funds raised through a crowdfunding approach that includes multiple donors.

(B) An applicant may not donate to its own crowdfunding campaign.

(C) A donor may not contribute more than \$10,000.00 or 35 percent of the campaign goal, whichever is less.

(D) An applicant shall provide matching funds raised through crowdfunding of not less than 25 percent and not more than 50 percent of the grant award, provided that the Department may adjust the matching requirements within this range if necessary due to demand and availability of funds.

(e) The Department of Housing and Community Development, with the assistance of a fiscal agent, shall distribute funds under this section in a manner that provides funding for projects of various sizes in as many geographical areas of the State as possible.

(f) The Department of Housing and Community Development may use up to 15 percent of any appropriation to the Fund from the General Fund to assist with crowdfunding, administration, training, and technological needs of the Program.

(g) Beginning on January 15, 2022 and annually thereafter, the Department of Housing and Community Development shall submit to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development an annual report regarding the activities and progress of the Program. The report shall:

(1) summarize the Program activities in the preceding year and report on the number of awarded grants and the total grant funds allocated;

(2) report on partner resources and contributions to the Program; and

(3) report on any measurable economic activity, which may include the number of jobs created, the number of visitors, the approximate number of square feet to be activated or redeveloped, and the number of volunteers engaged in the project.

* * * Downtown Tax Credit Program * * *

Sec. 8. 32 V.S.A. § 5930aa is amended to read:

§ 5930aa. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) “Qualified applicant” means an owner or lessee of a qualified building involving a qualified project, but does not include a State or federal agency or a political subdivision of either; or an instrumentality of the United States.

(2) “Qualified building” means a building built at least 30 years before the date of application, located within a designated downtown or village center, or neighborhood development area, which, upon completion of the project supported by the tax credit, will be an income-producing building not used solely as a single-family residence. Churches and other buildings owned by religious organization may be qualified buildings, but in no event shall tax credits be used for religious worship.

(3) “Qualified code improvement project” means a project:

(A) to install or improve platform lifts suitable for transporting personal mobility devices, limited use or limited application elevators, elevators, sprinkler systems, and capital improvements in a qualified building, and the installations or improvements are required to bring the building into

compliance with the statutory requirements and rules regarding fire prevention, life safety, and electrical, plumbing, and accessibility codes as determined by the Department of Public Safety;

(B) to abate lead paint conditions or other substances hazardous to human health or safety in a qualified building; or

(C) to redevelop a contaminated property in a designated downtown ~~or~~, village center, or neighborhood development area under a plan approved by the Secretary of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 6615a.

(4) “Qualified expenditures” means construction-related expenses of the taxpayer directly related to the project for which the tax credit is sought but excluding any expenses related to a private residence.

(5) “Qualified façade improvement project” means the rehabilitation of the façade of a qualified building that contributes to the integrity of the designated downtown ~~or~~, designated village center, or neighborhood development area. Façade improvements to qualified buildings listed, or eligible for listing, in the State or National Register of Historic Places must be consistent with Secretary of the Interior Standards, as determined by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

* * *

Sec. 9. 32 V.S.A. § 5930ee is amended to read:

§ 5930ee. LIMITATIONS

Beginning in fiscal year 2010 and thereafter, the State Board may award tax credits to all qualified applicants under this subchapter, provided that:

(1) the total amount of tax credits awarded annually, together with sales tax reallocated under section 9819 of this title, does not exceed \$3,000,000.00 \$4,750,000.00.

* * *

(5) credit under any one subsection of 5930cc of this subchapter may not be allocated more often than once every two years with respect to the same building; ~~and~~

(6) credit awarded under section 5930cc of this subchapter that is rescinded or recaptured by the State Board shall be available for the State Board to award to applicants in any subsequent year, in addition to the total amount of tax credits authorized under this section;

(7) the total amount of tax credits awarded annually to qualified projects located within neighborhood development areas does not exceed \$750,000.00; and

(8) no credit shall be awarded to a qualified project located within a neighborhood development area after July 1, 2026.

Sec. 10. 24 V.S.A. § 2793a is amended to read:

§ 2793a. DESIGNATION OF VILLAGE CENTERS BY STATE BOARD

* * *

(c) A village center designated by the State Board pursuant to subsection (a) of this section is eligible for the following development incentives and benefits:

* * *

~~(4) The following State tax credits for projects located in a designated village center:~~

~~(A) A State historic rehabilitation tax credit of ten percent under 32 V.S.A. § 5930cc(a) that meets the requirements for the federal rehabilitation tax credit.~~

~~(B) A State façade improvement tax credit of 25 percent under 32 V.S.A. § 5930cc(b).~~

~~(C) A State code improvement tax credit of 50 percent under 32 V.S.A. § 5930cc(e) The Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Program described in 32 V.S.A. § 5930aa et seq.~~

* * *

Sec. 11. 24 V.S.A. § 2793e is amended to read:

§ 2793e. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS; DESIGNATION OF
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREAS

* * *

(f) Neighborhood development area incentives for developers. Once a municipality has a designated neighborhood development area or has a Vermont neighborhood designation pursuant to section 2793d of this title, any proposed development within that area shall be eligible for each of the benefits listed in this subsection. These benefits shall accrue upon approval by the district coordinator, who shall review the density requirements set forth in subdivision (c)(7) of this section to determine benefit eligibility and issue a

jurisdictional opinion under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 on whether the density requirements are met. These benefits are:

(1) ~~The~~ the application fee limit for wastewater applications stated in 3 V.S.A. § 2822(j)(4)(D);

(2) ~~The~~ the application fee reduction for residential development stated in 10 V.S.A. § 6083a(d);

(3) ~~The~~ the exclusion from the land gains tax provided by 32 V.S.A. § 10002(p); and

(4) eligibility for the Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Program described in 32 V.S.A. § 5930aa et seq.

* * *

Sec. 12. 24 V.S.A. § 2794 is amended to read:

§ 2794. INCENTIVES FOR PROGRAM DESIGNEES

(a) Upon designation by the Vermont Downtown Development Board under section 2793 of this title, a downtown development district and projects in a downtown development district shall be eligible for the following:

(1) Priority consideration by any agency of the State administering any State or federal assistance program providing funding or other aid to a municipal downtown area with consideration given to such factors as the costs and benefits provided and the immediacy of those benefits, provided the project is eligible for the assistance program.

(2) ~~The following State tax credits:~~

~~(A) A State historic rehabilitation tax credit of 10 percent under 32 V.S.A. § 5930ee(a) that meets the requirements for the federal rehabilitation tax credit.~~

~~(B) A State façade improvement tax credit of 25 percent under 32 V.S.A. § 5930ee(b).~~

~~(C) A State code improvement tax credit of 50 percent under 32 V.S.A. § 5930ee(e)~~ The Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Program described in 32 V.S.A. § 5930aa et seq.

* * *

Sec. 13. REPORT

On or before January 15, 2026, the Department of Housing and Community Development shall report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development, on General, Housing, and Military Affairs, and on

Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Finance on:

(1) the number and location of new neighborhood development areas designated after the passage of this act;

(2) the amount of tax credits allocated annually to projects located within neighborhood development areas under 32 V.S.A. § 5930aa et seq. and the location of those projects;

(3) for any housing produced within neighborhood development areas using tax credits under 32 V.S.A. § 5930aa et seq., the number of housing units produced, the development cost per unit, and the average rent per unit;

(4) whether to extend the sunset in 32 V.S.A. § 5930ee(8); and

(5) any recommended changes to the programs.

* * * International Business Attraction and Investment Program * * *

Sec. 14. FINDINGS

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) Business investment by Canada-based businesses provides the opportunity to generate increased employment, increase the range of job opportunities for Vermonters, and increase the dynamism of our communities.

(2) From the past work of the Department of Economic Development, we know that small- and mid-sized businesses in Quebec, Ontario, and other provinces in the region have a natural inclination to explore Vermont as the site for expansion in the U.S. market.

(3) Developing a program to attract businesses and investment from Canada-based businesses and engaging the services of a foreign trade representative to provide local recruitment support can allow the State and its businesses to tap resources of institutions, enterprises, and people to a greater degree and to develop lead generation services, expansion monitoring, in-market representation, market intelligence, and the ability to engage and nurture high-growth companies primed for expansion.

(4) It is the intent of the General Assembly to fund the services of a foreign trade representative for two years in order to begin the work of cultivating relationships with Canada-based partners and developing prospects for attracting business relocation and investment in Vermont.

Sec. 15. APPROPRIATION; REPORT

(a) In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide funding for up to two years to contract with a foreign trade representative consistent with Sec. 14 of this act.

(b) On or before January 15, 2022, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning:

- (1) the terms of the contract; and
- (2) metrics to evaluate success of the contract and the representative.

(b) On or before January 15, 2023, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning:

- (1) the type and number of business contacts and engagement;
- (2) the type of businesses, jobs, and wages brought to the State; and
- (3) recommendations concerning the continuation or expansion of the program.

* * * Workforce Development and Education * * *

Sec. 16. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

(a) Findings.

(1) Due to the COVID-19 the public health emergency, the Vermont State Colleges have experienced a significant decrease in applications, and the board of directors has voted to freeze tuition for the 2021–2022 academic year both to keep students costs low and to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19 on enrollment.

(2) Deposit activity, a signal of anticipated enrollment for the fall 2021 semester, has declined between five and 20 percent at two of the four VSC institutions, and FAFSA filing for Vermont is down seven percent year over year.

(3) While the enrollment gap is narrowing from earlier in the fall, it is still significantly wider than normal due to the complexities of how the pandemic is affecting Vermont’s high schools and high school students, for

example, due to remote learning and the necessity for guidance counselors to broaden the reach of their services to struggling students.

(4)(A) The federal Pell Grant eligibility for first time, full-time Vermont students is high, signifying that families are financially distressed.

(B) In the fall of 2019, the percentage of first-time, full-time students who were Pell eligible were as follow: CCV (57 percent); CU (39 percent); NVU (49 percent); and VTC (41 percent).

(C) These students, already economically disadvantaged, are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and related economic crisis.

(5) In addition to increasing the needs of Vermont's secondary and post-secondary students, the COVID-19 pandemic has also placed significant burden on the Vermont workforce, which can benefit from expanded opportunities available at the Vermont State Colleges.

(b) Purpose. The purpose of this act is to provide funding for Vermonters:

(A) who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic through layoffs, furloughs, or reduced hours or due to being employed in an industry that has been severely affected; and

(B) who are pursuing education and training and require educational assistance and other support due to economic harm and lost opportunities arising from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(b) Appropriation. In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$20,500,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont State Colleges, in coordination with the Department of Labor, for workforce development and education to Vermonters, as follows:

(1) Welcome home scholarships. \$4,000,000.00 to provide scholarships of \$5,000.00 per year or \$2,500.00 per semester for full-time students enrolled for 12 or more credits, or \$3,000.00 per year or \$1,500.00 per semester for part-time students, to Vermonters transferring from out-of-state institutions or returning to school after exiting in 2020–2021. This program's mission is to incentivize students to come home to Vermont by transferring to VSCS institutions and to complete their degree if they left school without finishing in 2020–2021.

(2) Degree completion program. \$3,000,000.00 to provide scholarships for up to 30 credits towards a credential of value for adult learners who have earned at least 40 credits towards an undergraduate degree and have a gap in attendance of at least two years.

(3) Critical occupations; graduate internship scholarships. \$2,000,000.00 to provide scholarships for up to 12 credits and incentive payments of \$15.00 per hour for up to 240 hours per semester for graduate students who are required to fulfill an internship, practicum, or clinical requirement for a graduate degree in education or mental health counseling.

(4) Critical occupations; undergraduate internship scholarships. \$1,000,000.00 to provide incentive payments of \$15.00 per hour for up to 240 hours per semester for undergraduate students who are required to fulfill an internship, practicum, or clinical requirement for an undergraduate degree in education or allied health.

(5) Free tuition for critical occupation careers. \$5,500,000.00 to provide free last dollar tuition for one year of undergraduate studies for critical occupation careers, including bookkeeping certificate, IT service desk specialist certificate, certified production technician, graphic design certificate, software and web development program, practical nursing program, electrical and plumbing apprenticeships, child care, nursing programs, mental health counseling, paramedicine, dental hygiene, certificate in accounting, small business management, radiologic science, and respiratory therapy.

(6) Workforce development 2.0. \$3,000,000.00 to provide funding for up to six credits or two courses, including wraparound services, for Vermonters whose employment was impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency since March 13, 2020.

(7) Long-term care facility LPN program. \$2,000,000.00 to provide funding for tuition and wraparound services for students to pursue a practical nursing certificate program.

(d) Report. On or before January 15, 2022, the Vermont State Colleges shall submit to the General Assembly a progress report concerning the implementation of this section.

Sec. 17. MICROBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM; EMBRACE

(a) The General Assembly finds that the Microbusiness Development Program has demonstrated the capability to help individuals lift themselves out of poverty by providing the technical support and financial assistance necessary to start and sustain entrepreneurial enterprises.

(b) In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$200,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department for Children and Families, Office of Economic Opportunity for pass-through grants to the Community Action Agencies to provide funding for the regional Microbusiness Development Programs pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 3722.

(c) In fiscal year 2022, the amount \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated to the Department for Children and Families, Office of Economic Opportunity, to be granted to the Community Action Agencies for the Statewide Community Action Network's Economic Micro Business Recovery Assistance for the COVID-19 Epidemic (EMBRACE) to assist the most disadvantaged Vermont microbusiness owners impacted by COVID-19 business closure orders with access to grants and technical assistance.

Sec. 18. STATE BIPOC BUSINESS NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

(a) Intent.

(1) Racial wealth disparities are a function of not only access to income, but also the ability to start and sustain a business, access land, and own property.

(2) Vermont embraces its responsibility to course correct the historical impact of economic exploitation and exclusion from opportunity due to race and ethnicity for American descendants of slavery and the broader Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color community.

(3) In order to rectify this history of inequity, it is the intent of this General Assembly to acknowledge and address wealth disparity and cultural disempowerment by creating economic opportunity and cultural empowerment, using new systems that empower Vermonters who have historically suffered from discrimination and lacked equal access to public or private economic benefits due to race, ethnicity, geography, language preference, and immigrant or citizen status.

(b) Findings.

(1) The Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity conducted a survey of BIPOC businesses after the Emergency Recovery Grant programs closed. The survey analysis included three core recommendations: form a state BIPOC Commission, create a BIPOC business association, and improve data collection and the State's understanding of BIPOC business needs.

(2) The Committee sought information from over a dozen BIPOC business and community and State leaders to learn what BIPOC businesses need to be economically successful in Vermont. Core findings included:

(A) allow BIPOC businesses to lead and define the formation of a BIPOC business network;

(B) offer more support to BIPOC businesses by assisting them in procuring State contracts, securing capital investment and customer cultivation, and finding technical support;

(C) improve language access and cultural competency practices within State economic development programs and strengthen connections to BIPOC businesses; and

(D) improve State data collection to better serve the variety of identities represented within the BIPOC community.

(c) BIPOC business network.

(1) In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$100,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide funding for a contractor of not more than \$100,000.00 to convene BIPOC businesses, organizations, and community leaders and other business organizations, and representatives from State government to create a set of recommendations on how to launch a State BIPOC business network.

(2) On or before January 15, 2022, the contractor shall deliver to the Agency and to legislative committees of jurisdiction a report summarizing its process, deliberations, and a set of recommendations on how the State can support the formation of a BIPOC business network, including financial resources needed and policy changes.

(3) Applications for the contract shall be reviewed and selected by the Executive Director of Racial Equity, the Racial Equity Advisory Panel, and the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development.

Sec. 19. 10 V.S.A. § 2 is added to read:

§ 2. BIPOC BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design and implement the Economic Advancement Program and dedicate at least one full-time equivalent employee to oversee the following responsibilities:

(1) cultivate and support BIPOC businesses, including:

(A) technical assistance;

(B) grants and loans;

(C) business-to-business mentorship program;

(D) business procurement contract assistance;

(E) financial management, digital growth, and marketing;

(F) start-up support;

(G) capital investment opportunities; and

(H) networking;

(2) provide training to business technical assistance providers to reduce bias in service delivery;

(3) create a data collection system to allow the Department to analyze trends, sectors, and outcomes for BIPOC businesses to better inform economic development policy that benefits BIPOC businesses; and

(4) create an outreach program that includes language access for the not fewer than three of the most commonly used languages within Vermont other than English on all the programs offered to Vermont businesses within the Agency.

Sec. 20. ENTREPRENEURS' SEED CAPITAL FUND

(a) Entrepreneurs' Seed Capital Fund. The Entrepreneurs' Seed Capital Fund, created by the Vermont Economic Development Authority pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 291, is a \$5.1 million revolving "evergreen" capital fund in operation since 2010 serving Vermont's entrepreneurs and early-stage technology-enabled companies for job growth, income potential, and wealth creation. Since inception, the Fund's portfolio companies have now raised in excess of \$182 million. The Fund is professionally managed by the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies (VCET).

(b) Appropriation. The amount of \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Entrepreneurs' Seed Capital Fund to provide risk stage seed capital to Vermont businesses that have experienced economic disruption either through reduced business, new business formation, or through an unmanageable increase in new business due to the COVID-19 crisis.

(c) Fast Capital Investment Program; categories. Notwithstanding any provision of 10 V.S.A. § 290 to the contrary, the Fund shall invest in businesses consistent with the following:

(1) The Fund shall invest in rapid seed and early growth stage employers that have a viable plan for recovery and growth.

(2) The Fund shall make expedited investments using simplified investment terms and instruments, including stock, convertible notes, forgivable loans, royalty financing, or grants with equity warrants.

(3) The expected range per new investment is \$20,000.00 to \$100,000.00 from this appropriation.

(4) The Fund shall prioritize sourcing and funding on BIPOC-, veteran-, and women-owned businesses.

(5) In continuing to serve the Vermont innovation ecosystem and notwithstanding the expedited program timeline, the Fund shall pursue co-

investment participation from local and regional investors, including Vermont venture funds, family offices, community foundations, accredited individual “angel” investors, lending institutions, and other relevant sources.

(d) Eligibility. For-profit Vermont businesses are eligible under the Fast Capital Investment Program except where other significant State appropriated Coronavirus Relief Fund program resources have been directed. These excluded sectors include:

(A) traditional in-person retail operations;

(B) lodging, hospitality, and real estate operations; and

(C) restaurants and food service operations.

Sec. 21. 10 V.S.A. § 291(b)(3) is amended to read:

(3)(A) Before the Fund makes any investments, the Fund shall have and maintain a board of five advisors who shall be appointed as follows: two shall be appointed by the Authority, two shall be appointed by the Fund manager, and one shall be appointed jointly by the Authority and the Fund manager.

(B) The appointing authorities shall coordinate their appointments to ensure that the Board comprises advisors with diverse professional and personal backgrounds and experiences, including representation of women and BIPOC identified individuals.

(C) The Board of Advisors shall represent solely the economic interest of the State with respect to the management of the Fund and shall have no civil liability for the financial performance of the Fund.

(D) The Board of Advisors shall be advised of investments made by the Fund and shall have access to all information held by the Fund with respect to investments made by the Fund.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 22. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to community and economic development and workforce revitalization”

(Committee Vote: 9-0-2)

Rep. Ancel of Calais, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and when further amended as follows:

By striking out Secs. 8–13, downtown tax credit program, and their reader assistance heading, in their entireties and by renumbering the remaining sections to be numerically correct.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

H. 313

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to alcoholic beverage laws

Rep. Birong of Vergennes, for the Committee on General; Housing; and Military Affairs, recommends the bill be amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 7 V.S.A. § 204 is amended to read:

§ 204. APPLICATION AND RENEWAL FEES FOR LICENSES AND
PERMITS; DISPOSITION OF FEES

(a) The following fees shall be paid when applying for a new license or permit or to renew a license or permit:

* * *

(6) For a third-class license, \$1,095.00 for an annual license and \$550.00 for a six-month license. For a stand-alone third-class license, the issuing municipality may assess an additional \$50.00 local processing fee.

* * *

(b) Except for fees collected for first-, second-, and third-class licenses, the fees collected pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be deposited in the Liquor Control Enterprise Fund. The other fees shall be distributed as follows:

(1) Third-class license fees: 55 percent shall go to the Liquor Control Enterprise Fund; and 45 percent shall go to the General Fund and shall fund alcohol abuse prevention and treatment programs. The local processing fee for stand-alone third-class licenses shall be retained by the issuing municipality.

* * *

Sec. 2. 7 V.S.A. § 230 is added to read:

§ 230. SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FOR OFF-PREMISES
CONSUMPTION

(a) The Board of Liquor and Lottery and the local control commissioners may authorize:

(1) first- and third-class licensees to sell malt beverages, vinous beverages, and spirits-based prepared drinks for off-premises consumption. All sales of alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption must be accompanied by a food order.

(2) second-class licensees to provide curbside pickup of unopened containers of the alcoholic beverages that the licensee is permitted to sell from the licensed premises pursuant to section 222 of this subchapter.

(3) fourth-class licensees to provide curbside pickup of unopened containers of the alcoholic beverages that the licensee is permitted to sell from the licensed location pursuant to section 224 of this subchapter.

(b) For any alcoholic beverage sold pursuant to subdivision (a)(1) of this section, the first- or third-class licensee shall provide the alcoholic beverage in a container:

(1) with a securely affixed tamper-evident seal; and

(2) bearing a label that:

(A) states that the beverage contains alcohol; and

(B) lists the ingredients and serving size.

(c) A licensee may sell alcoholic beverages pursuant to this section between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

(d) The Board of Liquor and Lottery may adopt rules and forms necessary to implement this section.

Sec. 3. 7 V.S.A. § 253 is amended to read:

§ 253. FESTIVAL PERMITS

* * *

(b)(4) A festival required to be permitted under this section is any event that is open to the public for which the primary purpose is to serve one or more of the following: malt beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or spirits.

(c) A festival permit holder is permitted to conduct an event that is open to the public at which one or more of the following are served: malt beverages, vinous beverages, fortified wines, or spirits.

(d) The permit holder shall ensure the following:

(1) Attendees at the festival shall be required to pay an entry fee of not less than \$5.00.

(2)(A) Malt beverages for sampling shall be offered in glasses that contain not more than 12 ounces with not more than 60 ounces served to any patron at one event.

(B) Vinous beverages for sampling shall be offered in glasses that contain not more than five ounces with not more than 25 ounces served to any patron at one event.

(C) Fortified wines for sampling shall be offered in glasses that contain not more than three ounces with not more than 15 ounces served to any patron at one event.

(D) Spirits for sampling shall be offered in glasses that contain not more than one ounce with not more than five ounces served to any patron at one event.

(E) Patrons attending a festival where combinations of malt, vinous, fortified wines, or spirits are mutually sampled shall not be served more than a combined total of six U.S. standard drinks containing 3.6 fluid ounces or 84 grams of pure ethyl alcohol.

(3) The event shall be conducted in compliance with all the requirements of this title.

(e)(1) A festival permit holder may purchase invoiced volumes of malt or vinous beverages directly from a manufacturer or packager licensed in Vermont, or a manufacturer or packager that holds a federal Basic Permit or Brewers Notice or evidence of licensure in a foreign country that is satisfactory to the Board.

(2) The invoiced volumes of malt or vinous beverages may be transported to the site and sold by the glass to the public by the permit holder or its employees and volunteers only during the event.

(e)(f) A festival permit holder shall be subject to the provisions of this title, including section 214 of this title, and the rules of the Board regarding the sale of the alcoholic beverages and shall pay the tax on the malt or vinous beverages pursuant to section 421 of this title.

(e)(g) A person shall be granted ~~no~~ not more than four festival permits per year, and each permit shall be valid for ~~no~~ not more than four consecutive days.

Sec. 4. 7 V.S.A. § 256 is amended to read:

§ 256. PROMOTIONAL TASTINGS FOR LICENSEES

(a)(1) At the request of a first- or second-class licensee, a holder of a manufacturer's, rectifier's, or wholesale dealer's license may distribute without charge to the first- or second-class licensee's management and staff, provided they are of legal age ~~and are off duty for the rest of the day~~, two ounces per person of vinous or malt beverages for the purpose of promoting the beverage.

(2) At the request of a holder of a third-class license, a manufacturer or rectifier of spirits or fortified wines may distribute without charge to the third-class licensee's management and staff, provided they are of legal age ~~and are off duty for the rest of the day~~, one-quarter ounce of each beverage and ~~no~~ not more than a total of one ounce to each individual for the purpose of promoting the beverage.

(3) No permit is required for a tasting pursuant to this subsection, ~~but written notice of the event shall be provided to the Division of Liquor Control at least two days prior to the date of the tasting.~~

* * *

Sec. 5. REPEAL

7 V.S.A. § 230 is repealed on July 1, 2023.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0

Rep. Mattos of Milton, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committee on General; Housing; and Military Affairs and when further amended as follows:

By striking out Sec. 6 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 6. FEE REDUCTION FOR RENEWAL OF FIRST- AND THIRD-
CLASS LICENSES BY CLUBS; TEMPORARY PROVISION

Notwithstanding 7 V.S.A. § 204(a)(4) and (6), in the year 2021, the first- and third-class license renewal fees shall be waived for any club as defined in 7 V.S.A. § 2.

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021, except that Sec. 6 (Fee reduction for first- and third-class licenses) shall take effect on passage.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

Favorable

H. 431

An act relating to miscellaneous energy subjects.

(Rep. Sims of Craftsbury will speak for the Committee on Energy and Technology.)

Rep. Kornheiser of Brattleboro, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends the bill ought to pass.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

Consent Calendar

Concurrent Resolutions

The following concurrent resolutions have been introduced for approval by the Senate and House and will be adopted automatically unless a Senator or Representative requests floor consideration before the end of the session of the next legislative day. Requests for floor consideration in either chamber should be communicated to the Secretary's office and/or the House Clerk's office, respectively. For text of resolutions, see Addendum to House Calendar and Senate Calendar.

H.C.R. 27

House concurrent resolution recognizing July 2021 as Park and Recreation Month in Vermont and designating July 16, 2021 as Vermont Park and Recreation Professionals Day

H.C.R. 28

House concurrent resolution honoring Dr. William Ashe for his leadership and service on behalf of Vermonters with developmental and intellectual disabilities

Information Notice

CROSSOVER DATES

The Joint Rules Committee established the following Crossover deadlines:

(1) All **Senate/House** bills must be reported out of the last committee of reference (including the Committees on Appropriations and Finance/Ways and Means, except as provided below in (2)) on or before **Friday, March 12**,

2021, and filed with the Secretary/Clerk so that they may be placed on the Calendar for Notice the next legislative day- Committee bills must be voted out of Committee by Friday, March 12, 2021.

(2) All **Senate/House** bills referred pursuant to Senate Rule 31 or House Rule 35(a) to the Committees on Appropriations and Finance/Ways and Means must be reported out by the last of those committees on or before **Friday, March 19, 2021**, and filed with the Secretary/Clerk so that they may be placed on the Calendar for Notice the next legislative day.

Note: The Senate will not act on bills that do not meet these crossover deadlines, without the consent of the Senate Rules Committee.

Exceptions to the foregoing deadlines include the major money bills (the general Appropriations bill (“The Big Bill”), the Transportation Capital bill, the Capital Construction bill and the Fee/Revenue bills.

Grants and Positions that have been submitted to the Joint Fiscal Committee by the Administration, under 32 V.S.A. §5(b)(3)

JFO #3036 - \$3,800,000 to the VT Dept of Health from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to increase and sustain the public health approach to suicide prevention. This grant includes funding for three (3) limited service positions. Two (2) positions in the Dept of Health: Public Health Programs Administrator and Public Health Analyst II. One (1) position in the Dept of Mental Health: Marketing and Outreach Coordinator. Grant amount is \$760,000 per year for 5 years. *[JFO received 2/16/2021]*

JFO #3037 - \$135,000 to the VT Dept of Mental Health from Vibrant Emotional Health for the development of the 988-implementation plan to ensure compliance with the federal mandate for universal access to suicide and prevention services by July 16, 2022. *[Note: One (1) limited service position is included within JFO #3036]. [JFO received 2/16/2021]*

JFO #3038 - \$40,000 to the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. ACCD is a sub-grantee of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and is awarded a maximum of \$40,000; original funds are from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Funds will be used for work related to the West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy project. *[JFO received 2/18/2021]*

JFO #3039 - \$1,000,000 to the VT Dept of Public Safety from the U.S. Dept of Justice to develop and implement approaches to address a range of criminal justice system problems. The majority of funds will be awarded as sub-grants to organizations with expertise in this subject matter. *[JFO received 3/3/2021]*

JFO #3040 - Two (2) limited service positions, both Financial Manager I, to ensure financial record compliance for the anticipated \$200 million in COVID-19 related public assistance awards to the VT Agency of Human Services from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Positions will be funded through previously approved JFO grant #3015. *[Note: Grant #3015 is a public assistance grant to reimburse eligible costs borne by state, local and non-profit entities in the COVID-19 emergency response – further info can be found here: https://lifo.vermont.gov/custom_reports/grants/default.html]* *[JFO received 3/8/2021, expedited review requested on 3/9/2021]*

JFO #3041 - \$100,000 to the VT Dept. of Fish and Wildlife from Ducks Unlimited to fund a 25-year stewardship of 136 acres in Addison County. The land was donated by Ducks Unlimited with the condition that the Department perform stewardship duties. The yearly projected cost in materials and staff time is \$4,000. *[JFO received 3/08/2021]*

JFO #3042 - \$50,000 to the VT Judiciary from the State Justice Institute to secure consulting services of the National Center for State Courts to advise on the creation of an Access and Resource Center (ARC) which would serve self-represented parties and others looking for support navigating the justice process. *[Note: The budget materials include a \$5,000 Judiciary cash match and \$20,000 of in-kind match.]* *[JFO received 3/08/2021]*