

Journal of the House

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

At one o'clock and fifteen minutes in the afternoon the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. Stevens of Waterbury.

House Bills Introduced

House bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time, and referred to committee as follows:

H. 139

By Reps. Cordes of Lincoln, Anthony of Barre City, Burrows of West Windsor, Christie of Hartford, Cina of Burlington, Elder of Starksboro, Masland of Thetford, Mulvaney-Stanak of Burlington, Small of Winooski, Surprenant of Barnard, and Yantachka of Charlotte,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to workers' compensation benefits and protections against retaliation;

To the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

H. 140

By Reps. McCullough of Williston and Brady of Williston,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Williston;

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 141

By Reps. Till of Jericho, Anthony of Barre City, Austin of Colchester, Beck of St. Johnsbury, Brumsted of Shelburne, Colston of Winooski, Fagan of Rutland City, Hango of Berkshire, Houghton of Essex, Jerome of Brandon, Lippert of Hinesburg, McCullough of Williston, Morgan, L. of Milton, Mrowicki of Putney, Ode of Burlington, Page of Newport City, Satcowitz of Randolph, and Walz of Barre City,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to banning flavored tobacco products and e-liquids;

To the Committee on Human Services.

H. 142

By Rep. Sheldon of Middlebury,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to extended producer responsibility for packaging and paper products;

To the Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife.

H. 143

By Reps. Partridge of Windham, Coffey of Guilford, McCullough of Williston, O'Brien of Tunbridge, Page of Newport City, Rogers of Waterville, Sibilila of Dover, Sims of Craftsbury, Surprenant of Barnard, Walz of Barre City, and Yantachka of Charlotte,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to increasing special education State aid for prekindergarten students;

To the Committee on Education.

H. 144

By Rep. Austin of Colchester,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to requiring inspection of wastewater systems;

To the Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife.

Joint Resolution Referred to Committee

J.R.H. 2

Joint resolution sincerely apologizing and expressing sorrow and regret to all individual Vermonters and their families and descendants who were harmed as a result of State-sanctioned eugenics policies and practices

Offered by: Representatives Killacky of South Burlington, Ancel of Calais, Anthony of Barre City, Birong of Vergennes, Bluemle of Burlington, Brown of Richmond, Brumsted of Shelburne, Cina of Burlington, Coffey of Guilford, Colston of Winooski, Copeland Hanzas of Bradford, Cordes of Lincoln, Dolan of Essex, Dolan of Waitsfield, Donahue of Northfield, Donnally of Hyde Park,

Durfee of Shaftsbury, Gannon of Wilmington, Grad of Moretown, Hooper of Montpelier, Houghton of Essex, James of Manchester, Jerome of Brandon, Kornheiser of Brattleboro, Lippert of Hinesburg, Masland of Thetford, Mrowicki of Putney, Ode of Burlington, Partridge of Windham, Patt of Worcester, Pugh of South Burlington, Scheu of Middlebury, Sheldon of Middlebury, Sims of Craftsbury, Small of Winooski, Stevens of Waterbury, Till of Jericho, Townsend of South Burlington, Troiano of Stannard, Walz of Barre City, Webb of Shelburne, White of Hartford, Wood of Waterbury, and Yantachka of Charlotte

Whereas, in 1925, University of Vermont zoology professor Henry F. Perkins established the discredited Eugenics Survey of Vermont to measure evidence of alleged delinquency, dependency, and mental defectiveness, and this survey targeted members of Abenaki bands, Vermonters of mixed racial or French-Canadian heritage, the poor, and persons with disabilities, and

Whereas, the General Assembly adopted 1931 Acts and Resolves No. 174 (Act 174), “An Act for Human Betterment by Voluntary Sterilization,” for the purpose of eliminating from the future Vermont genetic pool persons deemed mentally unfit to procreate, and

Whereas, Act 174 resulted in the sterilization of Vermonters, and whether these individuals provided informed consent can be questioned, and

Whereas, this State-sanctioned eugenics policy was not an isolated example of oppression, but reflected the historic marginalization, discriminatory treatment, and displacement of these targeted groups in Vermont, and

Whereas, eugenics advocates promoted sterilization for the protection of Vermont’s “old stock” and to preserve the physical and social environment of Vermont for their children, and

Whereas, the Eugenics Survey advocated for assistance from State and municipal officials, and the resulting sterilization intruded on the lives of its victims and had devastating and irreversible impacts on the directly affected individuals and their families, and

Whereas, in conducting the Eugenics Survey, the surveyors were granted access to case files from State agencies and institutions, and the files were made available to police departments, social workers, educators, and town officials, and

Whereas, as a result of the opening of these files, children were removed from families, individuals were institutionalized or incarcerated, family connections were severed, and the sense of kinship and community was lost, and

Whereas, on June 21, 2019, the University of Vermont issued a formal statement of sincere apology for its “unethical and regrettable” eugenics role, and the General Assembly, on behalf of the State of Vermont, should issue a similar apology, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly sincerely apologizes and expresses its sorrow and regret to all individual Vermonters and their families and descendants who were harmed as a result of State-sanctioned eugenics policies and practices, and be it further

Resolved: That the General Assembly recognizes that further legislative action should be taken to address the continuing impact of State-sanctioned eugenics policies and related practices of disenfranchisement and ethnocide leading to genocide.

Which was read by title and, at the Speaker’s discretion pursuant to Rule 52, was treated as a bill and referred to the Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs.

Joint Resolution Adopted in Concurrence

J.R.S. 11

By Senator Balint,

J.R.S. 11. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 29, 2021, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 2, 2021.

Was taken up, read, and adopted in concurrence.

Ceremonial Reading

H.C.R. 7

House concurrent resolution designating January 27, 2021 as Homelessness Awareness Day in Vermont

Offered by: Reps. Stevens of Waterbury and Pugh of South Burlington

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, January 22, 2021 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

Adjournment

At one o'clock and thirty minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at one o'clock and fifteen minutes in the afternoon.