

# Journal of the House

Thursday, January 20, 2022

At three o'clock in the afternoon the Speaker called the House to order.

## Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of a devotion.

## Message from the Senate No. 10

A message was received from the Senate by Mr. Marshall, its Assistant Secretary, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has considered joint resolution originating in the House of the following title:

**J.R.H. 12.** Joint resolution amending the application of temporary Joint Rule 22A.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

## House Resolution Placed on Calendar

### H.R. 15

House resolution, entitled

House resolution urging the United States Postal Service to improve immediately the reliability and timeliness of its deliveries and requesting that Congress take any necessary legislative actions to effectuate this objective

Offered by: Representatives Bongartz of Manchester, Brownell of Pownal, Burke of Brattleboro, Coffey of Guilford, Corcoran of Bennington, Durfee of Shaftsbury, Goldman of Rockingham, James of Manchester, Long of Newfane, Morrissey of Bennington, Mrowicki of Putney, Nigro of Bennington, Pajala of Londonderry, Partridge of Windham, Toleno of Brattleboro, and Whitman of Bennington

Whereas, even in the digital age, the United States Postal Service (USPS) remains essential for Vermonters and Vermont's economy, and

Whereas, the USPS is mandated to be self-sufficient while also prefunding its future retirees' health benefits far into the future, and

Whereas, to improve USPS revenues, U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and the Postal Board of Governors adopted a 10-year USPS transformation plan entitled “Delivering for America,” which focuses more on profitability and less on timely service, and

Whereas, the 10-year plan includes an intentional slowing, from three to six days, of the USPS delivery standard for first class mail, and

Whereas, this standard is resulting in deteriorating postal service nationwide, as seen in the fact that approximately 92 percent of first-class mail was delivered on time in the first quarter of 2020 while, during the same period in 2021, that figure fell to 78 percent, and

Whereas, many Vermont communities, including Barre, Bennington, Marshfield, Montpelier, Pownal, Shaftsbury, Stowe, and Williston have experienced extensive USPS delivery delays, and

Whereas, the late receipt of credit card and utility bills may result in damage to a person’s credit rating or the suspension of a basic utility service, and

Whereas, the tardy arrival of critical medications sent via USPS could be life threatening, and

Whereas, the Bennington Post Office informed an individual that the delivery of packages would be delayed until the post office had the time and/or staff to deliver them, and a full workweek after a stated delivery date had passed, the parcels still remained undelivered, and

Whereas, the shortcomings of the USPS are also impacting businesses such as Vermont News & Media, which publishes the *Bennington Banner*, the *Brattleboro Reformer*, and the *Manchester Journal*, and

Whereas, the company attributes the cancellation of over 200 newspaper subscriptions in Bennington and Windham Counties and an anticipated revenue loss of at least \$45,000 to the USPS, and this is merely one example of the negative financial effects of USPS delivery delays on Vermont corporations, and

Whereas, the USPS’s new “Delivering for America” plan is causing significant harm to the health and economic livelihoods of individuals and corporations in Vermont and nationally and should be immediately reassessed, and

Whereas, the postal problems Vermonters are encountering are due to flawed national USPS policies and are not the fault of the hard-working USPS employees in Vermont, now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That this legislative body urges the United States Postal Service to reassess its 10-year transformation plan with the goal of immediately restoring the reliability and timeliness of mail delivery to the standard that existed prior to the plan's implementation, and be it further

Resolved: That this legislative body requests that Congress take any necessary legislative action, including revising the retiree health benefit prefunding requirement, to effectuate this objective, and be it further

Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, the Postal Board of Governors, the Chair of the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Reform's Subcommittee on Government Operations, the U.S. House Majority and Minority Leaders, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Was read by title and, in the Speaker's discretion, placed on the Calendar for Action on the next legislative day pursuant to House Rule 52.

**Ceremonial Reading**

**H.C.R. 85**

House concurrent resolution designating January 20, 2022, as Homelessness Awareness Day in Vermont

Offered by: Stevens of Waterbury and Pugh of South Burlington

Having been adopted in concurrence on Wednesday, January 12, 2022 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**Second Reading; Proposal of Amendment Agreed to;  
Third Reading Ordered**

**S. 78**

**Rep. Walz of Barre City**, for the Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to binding interest arbitration for employees of the Vermont Judiciary

Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence. The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up and read the second time.

Thereupon, **Rep. Walz of Barre City** moved that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 3, effective date, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022 and shall apply to contract negotiations that commence after that date.

Which was agreed to, and third reading was ordered.

**Committee Bill; Second Reading; Third Reading Ordered**

**H. 679**

**Rep. Hooper of Montpelier** spoke for the Committee on Appropriations.

House bill, entitled

An act relating to fiscal year 2022 budget adjustments

Having appeared on the Notice Calendar and appearing on the Action Calendar, was taken up and read the second time.

Pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, **Rep. Hooper of Montpelier** demanded the Yeas and Nays, which demand was sustained by the Constitutional number. The Clerk proceeded to call the roll and the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, was decided in the affirmative. Yeas, 140. Nays, 0.

Those who voted in the affirmative are:

Achey of Middletown Springs	Goldman of Rockingham	Norris of Sheldon
Ancel of Calais	Goslant of Northfield	Norris of Shoreham
Anthony of Barre City	Grad of Moretown	Notte of Rutland City
Arrison of Weathersfield	Graham of Williamstown	Noyes of Wolcott
Austin of Colchester	Gregoire of Fairfield	O'Brien of Tunbridge
Bartholomew of Hartland	Hango of Berkshire	Ode of Burlington
Beck of St. Johnsbury	Harrison of Chittenden	Pajala of Londonderry
Birong of Vergennes	Helm of Fair Haven	Parsons of Newbury
Black of Essex	Higley of Lowell	Partridge of Windham
Bluemle of Burlington	Hooper of Montpelier	Patt of Worcester
Bock of Chester	Hooper of Randolph	Pearl of Danville
Bongartz of Manchester	Hooper of Burlington	Peterson of Clarendon
Bos-Lun of Westminster	Houghton of Essex	Pugh of South Burlington
Brady of Williston	Howard of Rutland City	Rachelson of Burlington
Briglin of Thetford	James of Manchester	Rogers of Waterville
Brown of Richmond	Jerome of Brandon	Rosenquist of Georgia
Brownell of Pownal	Jessup of Middlesex	Satcowitz of Randolph
Brumsted of Shelburne	Killacky of South Burlington	Scheu of Middlebury
Burditt of West Rutland	Kimbell of Woodstock	Scheuermann of Stowe
Burke of Brattleboro	Kitzmiller of Montpelier	Shaw of Pittsford
Burrows of West Windsor	Kornheiser of Brattleboro	Sheldon of Middlebury
Campbell of St. Johnsbury	LaClair of Barre Town	Sibilia of Dover
Canfield of Fair Haven	LaLonde of South Burlington	Sims of Craftsbury
		Small of Winooski

Chase of Colchester	Lanpher of Vergennes	Squirrell of Underhill
Christie of Hartford	Lefebvre of Newark	Stebbins of Burlington
Cina of Burlington	Lefebvre of Orange	Stevens of Waterbury
Coffey of Guilford	Leffler of Enosburgh	Strong of Albany
Colburn of Burlington	Lippert of Hinesburg	Sullivan of Dorset
Colston of Winooski	Long of Newfane *	Surprenant of Barnard
Conlon of Cornwall	Marcotte of Coventry	Taylor of Colchester
Copeland Hanzas of Bradford	Martin of Franklin	Terenzini of Rutland Town
Corcoran of Bennington	Masland of Thetford	Till of Jericho
Cordes of Lincoln	Mattos of Milton	Toleno of Brattleboro
Cupoli of Rutland City	McCarthy of St. Albans City	Toof of St. Albans Town
Dickinson of St. Albans Town	McCormack of Burlington	Townsend of South Burlington
Dolan of Essex	McCoy of Poultney	Troiano of Stannard
Dolan of Waitsfield	McCullough of Williston	Vyhovsky of Essex
Donahue of Northfield	McFaun of Barre Town	Walz of Barre City
Donnally of Hyde Park	Morgan, L. of Milton	Webb of Shelburne
Durfee of Shaftsbury	Morgan, M. of Milton	White of Bethel
Elder of Starksboro	Morris of Springfield	White of Hartford
Emmons of Springfield	Morrissey of Bennington	Whitman of Bennington
Fagan of Rutland City	Mrowicki of Putney	Williams of Granby
Feltus of Lyndon	Mulvaney-Stanak of Burlington	Wood of Waterbury
Gannon of Wilmington	Murphy of Fairfax	Yacovone of Morristown
Garofano of Essex	Nicoll of Ludlow	Yantachka of Charlotte
	Nigro of Bennington	

Those who voted in the negative are: none

Those members absent with leave of the House and not voting are:

Brennan of Colchester	Page of Newport City	Smith of Derby
Labor of Morgan	Palasik of Milton	Smith of New Haven
Martel of Waterford	Seymour of Sutton	

**Rep. Long of Newfane** explained her vote as follows:

“Madam Speaker:

In addition to balancing our budget mid-year, H.679 offers an opportunity to address current critical needs, including ongoing pandemic response. I vote yes to support important investments in housing, workforce retention, and providing services to Vermonters who have been deeply impacted by COVID-19. This Budget Adjustment helps Vermonters facing crises like food insecurity or a lack of childcare all while setting us up for a more sustainable financial future. ”

**Adjournment**

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