

Journal of the Senate

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2021

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 9

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Melissa Kucserik, its First Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Madam President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

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

J.R.S. 10. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 40.

By Senator Perchlik,

An act relating to the use of colored signal lamps on fire department and emergency medical service vehicles.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 41.

By Senators Lyons and Cummings,

An act relating to eliminating prohibitions and penalties on the purchase, use, and possession of tobacco products.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 42.

By Senators Campion and Sears,

An act relating to establishing the Emergency Service Provider Wellness Commission.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered**S. 36.**

Senate committee bill entitled:

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

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and, pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, Senators Kitchel, Balint, Baruth, Cummings, Nitka, Sears, Sirotkin, Starr and Westman moved that the bill be amended as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be numbered Sec. 3a to read as follows:

Sec. 3a. HOUSING; RENTAL ASSISTANCE; APPROPRIATION

Of the \$200,000,000.00 available to the State for emergency rental assistance pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260, Sec. 501, the amount of \$10,000,000.00 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide rental assistance to Vermonters in need, consistent with the requirements of the Act.

Second: By striking out Sec. 4, Accelerated Broadband Connectivity Program; extension, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

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

Sec. 13. COVID-RESPONSE ACCELERATED BROADBAND
CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

* * *

(n) Any unexpended funds under the Program as of December 20, 2020 shall be returned to the State Coronavirus Relief Fund. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Commissioner of Public Service is authorized to continue disbursing funds under the Program for any broadband project contracted for prior to December 20, 2020 and not completed on or before December 30, 2020. The Commissioner shall retain any remaining

balance of funds appropriated under this section and shall not disburse them for any other purpose without specific authorization from the General Assembly.

* * *

Third: By adding a new section to be numbered Sec. 4a to read as follows:

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

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

(b) To accomplish the purpose of this section and notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the Department of Public Service is authorized to use \$275,000.00 of the unobligated balance remaining from the appropriations for broadband programs under Act 137 and 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 154 to extend the COVID-Response Temporary Broadband Subsidy Program to cover the period from January 1, 2021 through February 28, 2021.

Fourth: By striking out Sec. 9, effective dates, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 9 to read as follows:

Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES

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

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

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

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

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

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the recommendations of amendment were severally agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In**J.R.S. 9.**

House proposal of amendment to Joint resolution entitled:

Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the budget message of the Governor.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the joint resolution as follows:

In the first Resolved clause, following “That the two Houses meet in Joint Assembly on” by striking out “Thursday, January 21, 2021, at two o’clock” and inserting in lieu thereof Tuesday, January 26, 2021, at one o’clock

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, was decided in the affirmative.

Message from the House No. 10

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Alona Tate, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Madam President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 9. An act relating to extending certain workers’ compensation amendments related to COVID-19.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Balint, the Senate adjourned until eleven o’clock and thirty minutes in the morning.