



STATE OF VERMONT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL,
HOUSING, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

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MEMORANDUM

To: Representative Mary Hooper, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations

From: Representative Thomas Stevens, Chair, House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs

Date: February 23, 2022

Subject: House General Committee's response to Governor's Proposed FY23 State Budget

The House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs appreciates the opportunity to provide recommendations on the Governor's FY23 budget proposals. We have reviewed and responded to many of the sections included in the House Committee on Appropriations' January 24, 2022 budget memo. Our recommendations fall into three categories: those proposals that the House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs supports, those proposals that the Committee supports with modification or qualification, and one proposal that the Committee does not support.

**PROPOSALS SUPPORTED BY HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL,
HOUSING, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

The Committee supports the following proposals contained within the 2022 Budget Memo:

Sec. D.101(b)(1) – Transfer from Liquor Control Fund to General Fund

Direct application from DLL - Liquor Control Fund \$19,431,431.00

Sec. E.215 – Appropriation for military – administration

\$1,319,834.00 disbursed to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for the National Guard Tuition Benefit Program established in 16 V.S.A. § 2857.

Sec. E.219 – Appropriation for military – veterans' affairs

Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.219, designates \$1,000 for continuation of the Vermont Medal Program; \$4,800 for the expenses of the Governor's Veterans' Advisory Council; \$7,500 for the Veterans' Day parade; and \$10,000 to the American Legion for the Boys' State and Girls' State programs.

Sec. E.321 – General assistance housing

Authorizes Agency of Human Services to use funds appropriated to the General Assistance program in fiscal year 2023 for temporary housing in catastrophic situations and for vulnerable populations.

Sec. E.321.1 – General assistance housing; adverse weather conditions

Authorizes the Commissioner for Children and Families to provide temporary housing for a limited duration in adverse weather conditions when appropriate shelter space is not available.

Sec. E.324 – Expedited crisis fuel assistance

Permits the Commissioner for Children and Families to authorize crisis fuel assistance to those income-eligible households that have applied for an expedited seasonal fuel benefit but have not yet received it if the benefit.

Sec. E.325 – Department for Children and Families-Office of Economic Opportunity

Designates \$12,699,440 to community agencies for homeless assistance by preserving existing services, increasing services, or increasing resources available statewide.

Sec. E.326 - Department for Children and Families-Office of Economic Opportunity – weatherization assistance

Designates \$750,000 of the special fund appropriation in Sec. B.325 for the replacement and repair of home heating equipment.

Sec. XX(a)(1) and (2) – Housing and homelessness investments

(a)(1) Appropriates \$50,000,000 of ARPA funds to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) to provide affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units, manufactured homes and improved farm worker and refugee housing. (2) Appropriates \$5,000,000 to the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide grants to Vermont municipalities to support the development of affordable mixed-income rental housing.

PROPOSAL SUPPORTED BY THE COMMITTEE WITH MODIFICATION OR QUALIFICATION

Secs. XX(a)(1) – Investments in Vermont’s economy, workforce, and communities; XX(a)(3) and (4) – Housing and homelessness investments; and XX(a)(4)(A) – Water and sewer investments

While the Committee supports the concept underlying these appropriations, the Committee does not find it appropriate to provide recommendations or support for appropriations to programs that have not yet been established in statute or reviewed by the committees of jurisdiction.

PROPOSALS NOT SUPPORTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Sec. D.100(a)(2) – Appropriation from Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

The Committee disagrees with the appropriation from the Property Transfer Tax to the Housing and Conservation Trust Fund and requests that the full statutory appropriation be made. Vermont remains in the midst of a housing crisis, and the money allocated from the Property Transfer Tax remains the best tool we have to address what is now a chronic housing shortage, especially for Vermonters who make less than 80% of the area median income. The Committee recommends the full statutory allocation, of which 60% would be used to create new housing and 40% of which would be used for conservation purposes.

Sec. E.236.1 – Powers and duties of the Board of Liquor and Lottery

The Committee does not support the proposed amendments to 31 V.S.A. § 651. The Committee does not support the inclusion of these significant policy adjustments in a budget bill. The Committee does not find it appropriate to provide recommendations or support for a proposal to delegate regulatory authority to the Board of Liquor and Lottery to adopt rules permitting iLottery, e-instants, and sports betting when the proposal has not been brought to the committees of jurisdiction in the House for review.