

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Commerce and Economic Development to which was  
3 referred House Bill No. 703 entitled “An act relating to promoting workforce  
4 development” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and  
5 recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting  
6 clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. IMMEDIATE STRATEGIES AND FUNDING FOR EXPANDING  
8 THE LABOR FORCE; INCREASING THE NUMBER OF  
9 PARTICIPANTS AND PARTICIPATION RATES;  
10 APPROPRIATIONS

11 In fiscal year 2023, the following amounts are appropriated from the  
12 General Fund to the following recipients for the purposes specified:

13 (1) \$5,000,000.00 to the University of Vermont Office of Engagement,  
14 in consultation with the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, to  
15 administer a statewide forgivable loan program of \$5,000.00 per graduate for  
16 recent college graduates across all Vermont higher education institutions who  
17 commit to work in Vermont for two years after graduation.

18 (2) \$1,000,000.00 to the State Refugee Office to administer as grants to  
19 refugee- or New American-focused programs working in Vermont to support  
20 increased in-migration or retention of recent arrivals.

1           (3) \$387,000.00 to Vermont Technical College to develop a skilled meat  
2           cutter training and apprenticeship facility.

3           Sec. 2. CTE FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE; FINDINGS

4           (a) Vermont’s career and technical education (CTE) system is critical to  
5           ensuring that all Vermonters have access to the high-quality resources they  
6           need to explore a wide variety of career pathways, earn a postsecondary  
7           credential of value, and establish a productive career.

8           (b) CTE is a vital component of our educational system, supporting and  
9           delivering on the goals established by the General Assembly in 2013 Acts and  
10           Resolves No. 77 (flexible pathways), 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 189  
11           (workforce development), and in achieving our attainment goal, which is that  
12           70 percent of working-age Vermonters have a credential of value by 2025  
13           (10 V.S.A. § 546).

14           (c) CTE is also an equity lever, providing every student access to critical  
15           workforce training, postsecondary coursework, and the real-world skills and  
16           networks that prepare our youth to continue to earn and learn during and after  
17           high school.

18           (d) As of the fall semester of the 2021–2022 school year, students were  
19           enrolling in CTE programs at a higher rate than at the beginning of the  
20           pandemic, increasing from 4,160 to 4,565. In the 2020–2021 school year,  
21           Vermont’s CTE system awarded Tier II credentials of value to 459 students.

1       (e) Since 2015, through legislative initiatives such as 2015 Acts and  
2       Resolves No. 51, 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 69, 2018 Acts and Resolves  
3       No. 189, 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, and most recently 2021 Acts and  
4       Resolves No. 74, the General Assembly and other stakeholders in education  
5       and in State government have been working to identify, understand, and  
6       resolve long-standing concerns related to the functioning of the CTE system.

7       (f) In 2018, the Agency of Education embarked on a collaborative process  
8       that included students, legislators, and communities across the State to develop  
9       a strategic vision and aspirational goals to help guide the transformation of the  
10       CTE system.

11       (g) The State Board of Education adopted the Agency of Education’s  
12       vision and goals for CTE that “all Vermont learners attain their postsecondary  
13       goals by having access to career and technical education systems that are  
14       equitable, efficient, integrated and collaborative.”

15       (h) 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 189 committed Vermont to a redesign of  
16       its workforce development and training system, including the approval of up to  
17       four pilot sites or projects to examine the way our CTE system is funded and  
18       governed.

19       (i) In a report dated June 14, 2021, the Agency of Education reported on its  
20       progress, which was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The report  
21       presented possible alternatives to our current funding structure, which is

1 widely seen as a barrier to enrollment. However, these alternatives were based  
2 on an examination of only the CTE school district funding model and did not  
3 include the study of governance models. The report recommended completing  
4 this study of CTE funding and governance models to propose actionable  
5 implementation steps for the State.

6 (j) The Agency of Education’s State plan for federal Perkins funds is  
7 aligned to the vision and goals created through collaborative processes that  
8 included a public comment period. Processes required in the federal  
9 legislation like the biennial Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment will  
10 strengthen the role of CTE in each region and help to focus the use of limited  
11 federal funds to improve the system.

12 Sec. 3. FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES OF  
13 CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN VERMONT

14 (a) There is appropriated to the Agency of Education for fiscal year 2023  
15 the amount of \$180,000.00 from the General Fund to contract for services to:

16 (1) complete a systematic examination of the existing funding structures  
17 of career technical education (CTE) in Vermont and how these structures  
18 impede or promote the State’s educational and workforce development goals;

19 (2) examine CTE governance structures in relationship to those funding  
20 structures;

1           (3) examine the implications of the existing funding and governance  
2           structures for kindergarten through grade 12 schools and adult education;

3           (4) consider the CTE funding and governance structures in other states;  
4           and

5           (5) identify and prioritize potential new models of CTE funding and  
6           governance structures to reduce barriers to enrollment and to improve the  
7           quality, duration, impact, and access to CTE statewide.

8           (b) In performing its work, the contractor shall consult with the consultant  
9           and any other stakeholders involved in completing the report on the design,  
10           implementation, and costs of an integrated and coherent adult basic education,  
11           adult secondary education, and postsecondary career and technical education  
12           system pursuant to 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. H.3.

13           (c)(1) On or before March 1, 2023, the Agency of Education shall issue a  
14           written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education, the House  
15           Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, and the Senate  
16           Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on the  
17           status of its work under subsection (a) of this section.

18           (2) On or before July 1, 2023, the Agency of Education shall develop an  
19           implementation plan, including recommended steps to design and implement  
20           new funding and governance models, and issue a written report to the House  
21           and Senate Committees on Education, the House Committee on Commerce and

1 Economic Development, and the Senate Committee on Economic  
2 Development, Housing and General Affairs describing the results of its work  
3 under subsection (a) of this section and making recommendations for  
4 legislative action.

5 Sec. 4. INVESTMENT IN THE UP-SKILLING OF PRIVATE SECTOR  
6 EMPLOYERS TO SUPPORT THE EVOLUTION OF BUSINESS  
7 AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS; APPROPRIATIONS

8 In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$500,000.00 is appropriated from the  
9 General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to  
10 regrant a performance-based contract to the Vermont Professionals of Color  
11 Network for statewide delivery of business coaching and other forms of  
12 training to BIPOC business owners, networking and special convenings, and  
13 career fairs, workshops and paid internships, career guidance, and other  
14 support for BIPOC workers across the State.

15 Sec. 5. REGIONAL WORKFORCE EXPANSION SYSTEM

16 (a) Regional Workforce Expansion System. The amount of \$3,000,000.00  
17 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Labor to launch  
18 and lead a coordinated regional system to support the State's workforce  
19 expansion efforts that is designed to:

20 (1) support employers in tailoring their work requirements, conditions,  
21 and expectations to better access local workers;

1           (2) collaborate with local education and training providers and regional  
2           workforce partners, to create and regularly distribute data related to local labor  
3           force supply and demand; and

4           (3) create and share work-based learning and training opportunities with  
5           secondary and postsecondary students, local workforce expansion partners, and  
6           others interested in starting or advancing in their career.

7           (b) System infrastructure.

8           (1) The Vermont Department of Labor shall make investments that  
9           improve and expand regional capacity to connect supply (workers) and  
10           demand (employment) in real-time.

11           (2) The Department shall place in the Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro,  
12           Rutland, St. Albans and St. Johnsbury areas, six state-funded Workforce  
13           Expansion Specialists who are limited-service, full-time-employees and who  
14           shall report to the Workforce Development Division.

15           (c) Coordination.

16           (1) The Department shall co-convene regular, regional meetings of  
17           education, training, business, and service provider partners; coordinate local  
18           workforce information collection and distribution, assist with pilot projects,  
19           provide targeted sector support, and develop localized career resources such as  
20           information for career counseling, local job fairs, career expos, available to a  
21           wide range of stakeholders.

1           (2) The Department shall develop labor market information reports by  
2           CTE district to support discussion and decision making that will address local  
3           labor market challenges and opportunities and support a regional approach to  
4           solving local or unique labor supply challenges.

5           (d) Report. On or before December 15, 2024, the Department shall provide  
6           a narrative update on the progress made in hiring staff, establishing  
7           interagency agreements, developing regional information exchange systems,  
8           and serving jobseekers and employers to the House and Senate Committees of  
9           Jurisdiction. The report shall also recommend ongoing metrics that can be  
10           easily recorded and reported at the local and State levels on a regular basis to  
11           meet multiple information needs.

12           (e) Implementation. The Department of Labor shall begin implementing  
13           the Regional Workforce Expansion System on or before August 1, 2022.

14           Sec. 6. JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS; WORKFORCE  
15           DEVELOPMENT; PILOT PROGRAM

16           (a) Findings.

17           (1) Justice-involved individuals are persons who hold a conviction  
18           record and may or may not have served time in a corrections facility.

19           (2) 95 percent of incarcerated individuals will be released to their  
20           communities and between 78–83 percent of those released are between 25 and  
21           54 years of age, which is prime working age.



1           (3) 63 percent of incarcerated individuals in the Vermont Southern State  
2           Correctional Facility reported job training as the most helpful program to meet  
3           their needs.

4           (b) Policy; appropriations.

5           (1)(A) In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$417,000.00 is appropriated  
6           from the General Fund to the Department of Corrections to address vocational  
7           enhancement needs.

8           (B) The Department shall use funds to transition vocational training  
9           space within existing correctional facilities to support continued education and  
10           vocational training and placement in the community.

11           (C) The Department may allocate funds over three years, consistent  
12           with the following:

13           (i) \$267,000 for transition development, to include equipment,  
14           renovation of vocational space, and/or mobile lab in one or more sites.

15           (ii) \$100,000 for training partner support.

16           (iii) \$50,000 for development of curriculum.

17           (2) In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from  
18           the General Fund to the Department of Corrections to subgrant to the Vermont  
19           Works for Women, which may be allocated over not more than three years, to  
20           establish a community-based pilot reentry program at the Chittenden

1 Correctional Facility that will provide continuity of services for justice-  
2 involved women and:

3 (A) expand VWV's current employment readiness program within  
4 the Chittenden facility by building pathways for coordinated transition to  
5 employment;

6 (B) focus on the first six months after individuals are released from  
7 the facility;

8 (C) coordinate with local community resources, parole and probation  
9 offices, and supports to ensure successful transition into the community;

10 (D) assist individuals in successfully transitioning into new jobs; and

11 (E) work with employers to support successful hiring and best  
12 practices to support justice involved employees.

13 (c) Report. On or before January 15, 2023, the Department of Corrections  
14 shall create and submit a report on Workforce and Education Training  
15 Programs in Correctional Facilities to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight  
16 Committee; the House Committees on Corrections and Institutions and on  
17 Commerce and Economic Development; and the Senate Committees on  
18 Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Judiciary. The  
19 report shall:

20 (1) identify program design, logistical needs, and policy changes to  
21 current Department of Corrections facility-based training and educational

1 programs necessary to successfully support justice involved individuals'  
2 reentry into their communities, including changes to programs that better  
3 support individuals' skill development, knowledge, and support needed to  
4 qualify and secure a position in a critical occupation in Vermont;

5 (2) identify disparities of outcomes for justice-involved BIPOC  
6 individuals in facility-based training and educational programming and  
7 successful reentry into the community and solutions for addressing the  
8 disparities;

9 (3) provide an update on the Department of Corrections Vocational  
10 Enhancement work funding in FY23; and

11 (4) provide an update on what aspects of the Reentry Pilot Program  
12 could and should be replicated in other correctional facilities in Vermont.

13 Sec. 7. REPEALS

14 10 V.S.A. §§ 544 and 545 are repealed.

15 Sec. 8. WORK-BASED LEARNING AND TRAINING PROGRAM

16 (a) Vermont Work-Based Learning and Training Program. The  
17 Department of Labor shall develop the statewide Work-Based Learning and  
18 Training Program that serves transitioning secondary and postsecondary  
19 students and Vermonters seeking work-based experience as part of a career  
20 change and is designed to:

1           (1) support Vermonters who are graduating from postsecondary  
2           education or a secondary CTE program or who are pursuing a career change  
3           with a paid on-the-job work experience lasting 12 weeks or less;

4           (2) establish a statewide platform available to all employers to list their  
5           internships, returnships, pre-apprenticeships, and registered apprenticeship  
6           opportunities and for jobseekers to view and access information about specific  
7           opportunities; and

8           (3) support employers by providing them with assistance in developing  
9           and implementing meaningful work-based learning and training opportunities.

10          (b) Definitions. As used in this section:

11           (1) “Internship” means a work-based learning experience with an  
12           employer where the participant may, but does not necessarily, receive  
13           academic credit.

14           (2) “Pre-apprenticeship” is a program of combined learning and work-  
15           based experiences that lead to an informal apprenticeship or formal registered  
16           apprenticeship program.

17           (3) “Registered Apprenticeship” is a program approved by the Vermont  
18           Department of Labor as a federally recognized apprenticeship program.

19           (4) “Returnship” means an on-the-job learning experience for an  
20           individual who is returning to the workforce after an extended absence or is

1 seeking a limited-duration on-the-job work experience in a different  
2 occupation or occupational setting as part of a career change.

3 (c) Activities. The Department may use funds appropriated to it for the  
4 Program to:

5 (1) build and administer the Program;

6 (2) develop an online platform that will connect students and jobseekers  
7 with work-based learning and training opportunities within Vermont;

8 (3) support work-based learning and training opportunities with public  
9 and private employers available to prospective workers located in or relocating  
10 to Vermont;

11 (4) promote work-based learning and training as a valuable component  
12 of a talent pipeline; and

13 (5) assist employers in developing meaningful work-based learning and  
14 training opportunities.

15 (d) Data; goals. The Department shall collect data and establish goals and  
16 performance measures that demonstrate Program results for activities funded  
17 through the Program.

18 (e) State participation. The Department shall engage appropriate State  
19 agencies and departments to expand Program opportunities with State  
20 government and with entities awarded State contracts.

1       (f) Reporting. On or before February 15, 2023, the Department shall report  
2       on recommended metrics for measuring Program performance to the relevant  
3       committees of jurisdiction.

4       Sec. 8a. INTERNSHIP COST OFFSET INITIATIVE

5       (a) In fiscal year 2023 the amount of \$3,000,000 is appropriated from the  
6       General Fund to the Department of Labor for an Internship Cost Offset  
7       Initiative.

8       (b) The Department shall design and implement the Initiative to expand the  
9       number of postsecondary students participating in an internship with a  
10       Vermont employer, consistent with the following:

11           (1) Students enrolled in an approved postsecondary institution are  
12           eligible for not more than \$3,000.00 for tuition and fees directly related to  
13           participating in an internship with a Vermont employer for which they are also  
14           receiving postsecondary credit toward a degree.

15           (2) The Department shall enter into an agreement with the Vermont  
16           Student Assistance Corporation to develop and administer the Initiative, which  
17           shall include an amount not to exceed 7 percent for costs associated with the  
18           administration of the program.

19       (c) Reporting. On or before February 15, 2023, the Department shall report  
20       on recommended metrics for measuring Initiative performance to the relevant  
21       committees of jurisdiction.

1       Sec. 9. THE VERMONT TRADES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

2           (a) The Vermont Trades Scholarship Program is created and shall be  
3       administered by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. The Vermont  
4       Student Assistance Corporation shall disburse initial licensing fees, exam fees,  
5       and tuition payments under the Program on behalf of eligible individuals,  
6       subject to the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for this purpose.

7           (b) To be eligible for a scholarship under the Program, an individual,  
8       whether a resident or nonresident, shall:

9           (1) be enrolled in an industry recognized training and certification  
10       program that leads to initial employment or career advancement in a building,  
11       mechanical, industrial, or medical trade, or in clean energy, energy efficiency,  
12       weatherization, or clean transportation;

13           (2) demonstrate financial need;

14           (3) register with the Vermont Department of Labor for the purpose of  
15       receiving relevant job referrals, if unemployed; and

16           (4) agree to work in their profession in Vermont for a minimum of one  
17       year following licensure or certification completion for each year of  
18       scholarship awarded.

19           (c)(1) The Corporation shall give preference to students attending a  
20       Vermont-based training program or, if one isn't available for their certification,

1 an offer of employment or promotion from a Vermont employer upon  
2 completion.

3 (2) The Corporation shall give priority to applicants who have not  
4 received other assistance.

5 (d) There shall be no deadline to apply for a scholarship under this section.  
6 Scholarships shall be awarded on a rolling basis if funds are available, and any  
7 funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall roll over and shall be available  
8 to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in the following fiscal year to  
9 award additional scholarships as set forth in this section.

10 (e) The sum of \$3,000,000.00 in base General Funds is appropriated to the  
11 Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for scholarships for trades students  
12 under the Vermont Trades Scholarship Program.

13 Sec. 10. THE VERMONT TRADES LOAN REIMBURSEMENT  
14 PROGRAM

15 (a) The Vermont Trades Loan Repayment Reimbursement Program is  
16 created and shall be administered by the Vermont Student Assistance  
17 Corporation. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall disburse  
18 funds under the Program to eligible individuals, subject to the appropriation of  
19 funds by the General Assembly for this purpose.

20 (b) To be eligible for loan repayment under the Program, an individual,  
21 shall:



1           (1) be a Vermont resident; and  
2           (2) be employed in an occupation in the building, mechanical, industrial,  
3           or medical trades, or in the clean energy, energy efficiency, weatherization, or  
4           clean transportation sectors, for an average of at least 30 hours per week for  
5           least one full calendar year before applying.

6           (c) For every year of work in a qualifying occupation, an individual shall  
7           be eligible for up to \$5,000.00 in loan repayment reimbursement.  
8           Reimbursements shall not exceed the total amount of educational debt owed.

9           (d) There shall be no deadline to apply for loan repayment reimbursement  
10           under this section. Loan repayment shall be awarded on a rolling basis if funds  
11           are available, and any funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall roll over  
12           and shall be available to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in the  
13           following fiscal year to award additional loan repayment as set forth in this  
14           section.

15           (e) The sum of \$500,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
16           Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for loan repayment for trades  
17           professionals under the Program.

18           Sec. 11. CTE CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION

19                   EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAM; REVOLVING LOAN

20                   FUND

1        (a) Purpose. This section authorizes and provides funding for the CTE  
2        Construction and Rehabilitation Experiential Learning Program and Revolving  
3        Loan Fund, the purposes of which are to:

4            (1) expand the experiential and educational opportunities for high school  
5        and adult CTE students to work directly on construction projects;

6            (2) build community partnerships among CTE centers, housing  
7        organizations, government, and private businesses;

8            (3) beautify communities and rehabilitate buildings that are  
9        underperforming assets;

10          (4) expand housing access to Vermonters in communities throughout the  
11        State; and

12          (5) improve property values while teaching high school and adult  
13        students trade skills.

14        (b) Appropriation; creation of fund; administration.

15            (1) In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$15,000,000.00 is appropriated  
16        from the Education Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to  
17        create and administer the CTE Construction and Rehabilitation Experiential  
18        Learning Program and Revolving Loan Fund pursuant to this section.

19            (2) The Board may use not more than five percent of the Fund for its  
20        costs of administration.

21        (c) Proposals; applications; funding.

1           (1) A regional CTE center, working in collaboration with one or more  
2           housing and community partners, private businesses, nonprofit organizations,  
3           or municipalities, shall identify construction projects that would be relevant  
4           and appropriate for CTE students enrolled in construction, electrical,  
5           plumbing, design, business management, or other CTE programs, including:

6                   (A) rehabilitation of residential properties that are blighted or not  
7                   code-compliant;

8                   (B) new residential construction projects or improvements to land in  
9                   cases of critical community need; and

10                   (C) commercial construction projects that have substantial  
11                   community benefit.

12           (2) Prior to or during the application process, a CTE center and its  
13           partners may consult with the Board to identify and consider potential funding  
14           partners to leverage amounts available through the Fund.

15           (3) A CTE center and its partners shall apply to the Board for funding  
16           by submitting a project application that includes the information required by  
17           the Board and addresses the following:

18                   (A) the educational benefits for students and fit with the CTE  
19                   curriculum;

20                   (B) the community benefits for the neighborhood, municipality, or  
21                   region in which the project is located; and

1           (C) the partners with whom the CTE center is collaborating and the  
2 respective responsibility for the aspects of a project, including:

3           (i) educational instruction and academic credit;

4           (ii) project management;

5           (iii) insurance coverage for students and the property;

6           (iv) compensation and benefits, including compliance with labor  
7 laws, standards, and practices; and

8           (v) property acquisition, ownership, and transfer.

9           (4) A CTE center may use funding for, and shall specify in its  
10 application the allocation of costs associated with:

11           (A) acquisition, design, permitting, construction, marketing, and  
12 other building-related expenses; and

13           (B) costs for labor, including for student wages and for instructor  
14 compensation during the academic year as well as for summer or other work  
15 that is not otherwise budgeted during the academic year.

16           (d) Eligibility; review; approval. The Board may approve an application  
17 that includes the information required by subsection (c) of this section and  
18 provide funding for a project that meets the following eligibility criteria:

19           (1) The project involves the rehabilitation of blighted or otherwise  
20 noncode compliant property, or new residential construction projects or

1 improvements to land in cases of critical need, and results in a building with  
2 not more than four residential dwelling units.

3 (2) The project includes a weatherization component.

4 (3) Students working on the project receive academic credit, a  
5 competitive wage, or both.

6 (e) Affordability; flexibility. If appropriate in the circumstances, the Board  
7 may condition funding for a project on the inclusion of one or mechanisms  
8 addressing the affordability of the property upon rent or sale.

9 (f) Funding; proceeds; revolving loans.

10 (1) The Board shall provide funding for projects from the amounts  
11 available in the Fund in the form of zero-interest loans, in an amount, for a  
12 period, and upon terms specified by the Board.

13 (2) The Board shall return to the Fund any proceeds realized to provide  
14 funding for future projects.

15 (g) Report. The Board shall address the implementation of this section in  
16 its annual report to the General Assembly.

17 Sec. 12. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT

18 In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$125,000.00 is appropriated from the  
19 General Fund to the Department for Children and Families' Child  
20 Development Division to subgrant to the Vermont Association for the

1 Education of Young Children to develop and implement a comprehensive early  
2 childhood educator recruitment campaign.

3 Sec. 13. HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

4 (a) The General Assembly values all health care workers, at every level and  
5 in each component of the health care system. The General Assembly also  
6 acknowledges the many struggles faced by health care workers and that the  
7 pandemic has placed further strain on an already taxed system. Many health  
8 care workers have not had their pay adjusted over time to address increases in  
9 the cost of living, essentially amounting to pay cuts from year to year. Health  
10 care workers have experienced burnout, trauma, and moral injuries due to a  
11 history of underfunding and the present stress of the pandemic.

12 (b) In order to retain and recruit health care workers in Vermont, it is the  
13 intent of the General Assembly to invest in multiple solutions aimed at  
14 reinforcing our health care workforce in the present and sustaining our health  
15 care workers into the future.

16 Sec. 14. EMERGENCY GRANTS TO SUPPORT NURSE EDUCATORS

17 (a) The sum of \$3,000,000.00 is appropriated to the Department of Health  
18 from General Fund in fiscal year 2023 and shall carry forward for the purpose  
19 of providing emergency interim grants to Vermont’s nursing schools over three  
20 years to increase the compensation for their nurse faculty and staff, with  
21 \$1,000,000.00 to be distributed in each of fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025 to

1 increase the compensation for each full-time-equivalent (FTE) member of the  
2 clinical and didactic nurse faculty and staff. The Department shall distribute  
3 the funds among the nursing schools in Vermont equitably based on each  
4 school's proportion of nursing faculty and staff to the total number of FTE  
5 nursing faculty and staff across all nursing schools statewide.

6 (b) If the nurse faculty or staff, or both, of a nursing school receiving a  
7 grant under this section are subject to a collective bargaining agreement, the  
8 use of the grant funds provided to the nursing school for those faculty or staff,  
9 or both, shall be subject to impact bargaining between the nursing school and  
10 the collective bargaining representative of the nurse faculty or staff, or both, to  
11 the extent required by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

12 Sec. 15. NURSE PRECEPTOR INCENTIVE GRANTS; HOSPITALS;

13 WORKING GROUP; REPORT

14 (a)(1) The sum of \$2,400,000.00 is appropriated to the Agency of Human  
15 Services from the General Fund in fiscal year 2023 to provide incentive grants  
16 to hospital-employed nurses in Vermont to serve as preceptors for nursing  
17 students enrolled in Vermont nursing school programs. The Agency shall  
18 distribute the funds to hospitals employing nurses who provide student  
19 preceptor supervision based on the number of preceptor hours to be provided,

1 at a rate of \$5.00 per preceptor hour, or a lesser hourly rate if the need exceeds  
2 the available funds.

3 (2) If nurse preceptors receiving compensation pursuant to a grant awarded  
4 to a hospital under this section are subject to a collective bargaining agreement,  
5 the use of the grant funds provided to the hospital for the nurse preceptors shall  
6 be subject to impact bargaining between the hospital and the collective  
7 bargaining representative of the nurses to the extent required by the collective  
8 bargaining agreement.

9 (b)(1) The Director of Health Care Reform or designee in the Agency of  
10 Human Services shall convene a working group of stakeholders representing  
11 nursing schools, long-term care facilities, designated and specialized service  
12 agencies, federally qualified health centers, home health agencies, primary care  
13 practices, and other health care facilities to:

14 (A) identify ways to increase clinical placement opportunities across  
15 a variety of health care settings for nursing students enrolled in Vermont  
16 nursing school programs;

17 (B) establish sustainable funding models for compensating nurses  
18 serving as preceptors or for supporting the hiring of additional nurses to  
19 alleviate the pressures on nurse preceptors, or both; and

20 (C) develop an action plan for implementing the clinical placement  
21 expansion and sustainable funding models identified and established pursuant



1 to subdivisions (A) and (B) of this subdivision (1), including addressing the  
2 need for student housing opportunities.

3 (2) On or before January 15, 2023, the Director of Health Care Reform  
4 shall provide the working group’s action plan and any recommendations for  
5 legislative action to the House Committees on Health Care, on Commerce and  
6 Economic Development, and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on  
7 Health and Welfare, on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs,  
8 and on Appropriations.

9 Sec. 16. HEALTH CARE EMPLOYER NURSING PIPELINE AND

10 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

11 (a) The sum of \$3,000,000.00 is appropriated to the Vermont Student  
12 Assistance Corporation (VSAC) from the General Fund in fiscal year 2023 and  
13 shall carry forward for the purpose of providing grants to health care  
14 employers, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, designated and  
15 specialized service agencies, federally qualified health centers, and other health  
16 care providers, to establish or expand partnerships with Vermont nursing  
17 schools to create nursing pipeline or apprenticeship programs, or both, that will  
18 train members of the health care employers’ existing staff, including personal  
19 care attendants, licensed nursing assistants, and licensed practical nurses, to  
20 become higher-level nursing professionals. Through a combination of  
21 scholarship awards, grants awarded to health care employers pursuant to this

1 section, and the health care employer’s contributions, the trainees’ tuition and  
2 fees shall be covered in full, and trainees shall be provided with assistance in  
3 meeting their living costs, such as housing and child care, while attending the  
4 program.

5 (b) In awarding grants pursuant to this section, VSAC shall give priority to  
6 health care employer proposals based on the following criteria:

7 (1) the extent to which the health care employer proposes to participate  
8 financially in the program;

9 (2) the extent of the health care employer’s commitment to sustaining  
10 the program financially, including providing financial support for nurse  
11 preceptors, to create ongoing opportunities for educational advancement in  
12 nursing;

13 (3) the ability of the health care employer’s staff to leverage nursing  
14 scholarship opportunities to maximize the reach of the grant funds;

15 (4) the employer’s demonstrated ability to retain nursing students in the  
16 Vermont nursing workforce;

17 (5) the employer’s geographic location, in order to ensure access to  
18 pipeline and apprenticeship programs for nursing staff across Vermont; and

19 (6) the employer’s commitment to advancing the professional  
20 development of individuals from marginalized communities, especially those

1 that have been historically disadvantaged in accessing educational  
2 opportunities and career advancement in the health care professions.

3 (c)(1) VSAC shall begin awarding grants under this section expeditiously  
4 in order to enable health care employer staff to begin enrolling in nursing  
5 school programs that commence in the fall of 2022.

6 (2) On or before September 15, 2022, VSAC shall provide an update to  
7 the Health Reform Oversight Committee on the status of program  
8 implementation.

9 Sec. 17. 18 V.S.A. § 34 is added to read:

10 § 34. VERMONT NURSING FORGIVABLE LOAN INCENTIVE  
11 PROGRAM

12 (a) The Vermont Nursing Forgivable Loan Incentive Program is created  
13 and shall be administered by the Department of Health in collaboration with  
14 the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. The Vermont Student  
15 Assistance Corporation shall disburse scholarship funds under the Program on  
16 behalf of eligible individuals, subject to the appropriation of funds by the  
17 General Assembly for this purpose.

18 (b) To be eligible for a scholarship under the Program, an individual,  
19 whether a resident or nonresident, shall:

20 (1) be enrolled at an approved postsecondary education institution as  
21 defined in 16 V.S.A. § 2822;

1           (2) demonstrate financial need;

2           (3) demonstrate academic capacity by carrying the minimum grade point  
3           average in the individual’s course of study prior to receiving the fund award;  
4           and

5           (4) agree to work as a nurse in Vermont for a minimum of one year  
6           following licensure for each year of scholarship awarded.

7           (c)(1) First priority for scholarship funds shall be given to students  
8           pursuing a practical nursing certificate who will be eligible to sit for the  
9           NCLEX-PN examination upon completion of the certificate.

10           (2) Second priority for scholarship funds shall be given to students  
11           pursuing an associate’s degree in nursing who will be eligible to sit for the  
12           NCLEX-RN examination upon graduation.

13           (3) Third priority for scholarship funds shall be given to students  
14           pursuing a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

15           (4) Fourth priority shall be given to students pursuing graduate nursing  
16           education.

17           (d) Students attending an approved postsecondary educational institution in  
18           Vermont shall receive first preference for scholarships.

19           (e) There shall be no deadline to apply for a scholarship under this section.  
20           Scholarships shall be awarded on a rolling basis as long as funds are available,  
21           and any funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall roll over and shall be

1 available to the Department of Health and the Vermont Student Assistance  
2 Corporation in the following fiscal year to award additional scholarships as set  
3 forth in this section.

4 Sec. 18. REPEAL

5 18 V.S.A. § 31 (educational assistance; incentives; nurses) is repealed.

6 Sec. 19. VERMONT NURSING FORGIVABLE LOAN INCENTIVE

7 PROGRAM; APPROPRIATION

8 The sum of \$3,000,000.00 in Global Commitment investment funds is  
9 appropriated to the Department of Health in fiscal year 2023 for scholarships  
10 for nursing students under the Vermont Nursing Forgivable Loan Program  
11 established in Sec. 17 of this act.

12 Sec. 20. 18 V.S.A. § 35 is added to read:

13 § 35. VERMONT NURSING LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

14 (a) As used in this section:

15 (1) “Corporation” means the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation  
16 established in 16 V.S.A. § 2821.

17 (2) “Eligible individual” means an individual who satisfies the eligibility  
18 requirements for loan repayment under this section.

19 (3) “Eligible school” means an approved postsecondary education  
20 institution, as defined under 16 V.S.A. § 2822.

1           (4) “Loan repayment” means the cancellation and repayment of loans  
2           under this section.

3           (5) “Loans” means education loans guaranteed, made, financed,  
4           serviced, or otherwise administered by the Corporation under this subchapter  
5           for attendance at an eligible school.

6           (6) “Program” means the Vermont Nursing Loan Repayment Program  
7           created under this section.

8           (b) The Vermont Nursing Loan Repayment Program is created and shall be  
9           administered by the Department of Health in collaboration with the  
10           Corporation. The Program provides loan repayment on behalf of individuals  
11           who live and work as a nurse in this State and who meet the eligibility  
12           requirements in subsection (e) of this section.

13           (c) The loan repayment benefits provided under the Program shall be paid  
14           on behalf of the eligible individual by the Corporation, subject to the  
15           appropriation of funds by the General Assembly specifically for this purpose.

16           (d) To be eligible for loan repayment under the Program, an individual  
17           shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

18           (1) have graduated from an eligible school where the individual has,  
19           within the past five years, been awarded a nursing degree;

1           (2) had the minimum grade point average or better or the equivalent as  
2           determined by the Corporation if the eligible school does not use grade point  
3           averages from the eligible school;

4           (3) work as a nurse in this State; and

5           (4) be a resident of Vermont.

6           (f)(1) An eligible individual shall be entitled to an amount of loan  
7           cancellation and repayment under this section equal to one year of loans for  
8           every for one year of service as a nurse in this State.

9           (2) The Corporation shall award loan repayments in amounts that are  
10           sufficient to attract high-quality candidates while also making a meaningful  
11           increase in Vermont’s health care professional workforce.

12           (i) The Corporation shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines  
13           necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

14           Sec. 21. VERMONT NURSING LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM;

15                            APPROPRIATION

16           The sum of \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
17           Department of Health in fiscal year 2023 for loan repayment for nurses under  
18           the Vermont Nursing Loan Repayment Program established in Sec. 20 of this  
19           act.

1 Sec. 22. 18 V.S.A. § 36 is added to read:

2 § 36. NURSE EDUCATOR SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT  
3 PROGRAM

4 (a) Definitions. As used in this section:

5 (1) “Eligible individual” means an individual who satisfies the eligibility  
6 requirements under this section for a scholarship or loan repayment.

7 (2) “Eligible school” means an approved postsecondary education  
8 institution, as defined under 16 V.S.A. § 2822.

9 (3) “Gift aid” means grant or scholarship financial aid received from the  
10 federal government or from the State.

11 (4) “Loan repayment” means the cancellation and repayment of loans  
12 under this section.

13 (5) “Loans” means education loans guaranteed, made, financed,  
14 serviced, or otherwise administered by the Corporation under this subchapter  
15 for attendance at an eligible school.

16 (6) “Program” means the Nurse Educator Scholarship and Loan  
17 Repayment Program created under this section.

18 (7) “Scholarship” means a scholarship awarded under this section  
19 covering tuition, room, board, and the cost of required books and supplies for  
20 up to full-time attendance at an eligible school.



1       (b) Program creation. The Nurse Educator Scholarship and Loan  
2       Repayment Program is created and shall be administered by the Department of  
3       Health in collaboration with the Corporation. The Program provides  
4       scholarships to students enrolled in an eligible school who commit to working  
5       as a nurse educator at a nursing school in this State and who meet the  
6       eligibility requirements in subsection (d) of this section. The Program also  
7       provides loan repayment on behalf of individuals who work as nurse educators  
8       at a nursing school in this State and who meet the eligibility requirements in  
9       subsection (e) of this section.

10       (c) The scholarship and loan repayment benefits provided under the  
11       Program shall be paid on behalf of the eligible individual by the Corporation,  
12       subject to the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly specifically for  
13       this purpose.

14       (d) Eligibility for scholarships. To be eligible for a scholarship under the  
15       Program, an individual, whether a resident or nonresident, shall satisfy all of  
16       the following requirements:

17               (1) be enrolled at an eligible school in a program that leads to a graduate  
18       degree in nursing;

19               (2) continually demonstrate satisfactory academic progress by  
20       maintaining the minimum grade point average or better or the equivalent as

1 determined by the Corporation if the eligible school does not use grade point  
2 averages;

3 (3) have used any available gift aid;

4 (4) have executed a contract with the Corporation committing the  
5 individual to work as a nurse educator at a nursing school in this State;

6 (5) have executed a promissory note obligating the individual to repay  
7 the individual's scholarship benefit, in whole or in part, if the individual fails  
8 to complete the period of service required in subsection (f) of this section; and

9 (6) have completed the Program's application form, the free application  
10 for federal student aid (FAFSA), and the Vermont grant application each  
11 academic year of enrollment in accordance with a schedule determined by the  
12 Corporation.

13 (e) Eligibility for loan repayment. To be eligible for loan repayment under  
14 the Program, an individual shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

15 (1) graduated from an eligible school where the individual has, within  
16 the past five years, been awarded a graduate degree in nursing;

17 (2) had the minimum grade point average or better or the equivalent as  
18 determined by the Corporation if the eligible school does not use grade point  
19 averages from the eligible school;

20 (3) work as a nurse educator at a nursing school in this State; and

21 (4) be a resident of Vermont.

1           (f) Service commitment.

2           (1) Scholarships. For each year of service as a nurse educator at a  
3           nursing school in this State, an eligible individual shall be entitled to a full  
4           academic year of full scholarship benefit under the Program. If an eligible  
5           individual fails to serve as a nurse educator at a nursing school in this State for  
6           a period that would entitle the individual to the full scholarship benefit  
7           received by the individual, other than for good cause as determined by the  
8           Corporation, then the individual shall reimburse the Corporation a pro rata  
9           portion of the scholarship paid under the Program pursuant to the terms of the  
10           interest-free reimbursement promissory note signed by the individual at the  
11           time of entering the Program.

12           (2) Loan repayment. An eligible individual shall be entitled to an  
13           amount of loan cancellation and repayment under this section equal to one year  
14           of loans for every for one year of service as a nurse educator at a nursing  
15           school in this State.

16           (g) Adoption of policies, procedures, and guidelines. The Corporation  
17           shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary to implement the  
18           provisions of this section.

19           Sec. 23. NURSE EDUCATOR SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT

20                           PROGRAM; APPROPRIATION





1 initiatives from any otherwise applicable financial limitations on the hospital’s  
2 budget or budget growth. Notwithstanding any provision of GMCB Rule  
3 3.202, the Board may modify its hospital budget guidance for hospital fiscal  
4 year 2023 as needed to comply with this section.

5 Sec. 27. DESIGNATED AND SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES;

6 MEDICAID RATE INCREASE; REPORT

7 (a) Since the 1960s, the State and federal governments have directed the  
8 community mental health system to provide care in the community using the  
9 least restrictive means for those who would previously have been  
10 institutionalized, but never redistributed the money to the community mental  
11 health system or fully funded that mandate. The General Assembly is taking  
12 the steps set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of this section to address the  
13 shortfall.

14 (b) In order to increase by 10 percent the Medicaid rates for the mental  
15 health and developmental disability services provided by designated and  
16 specialized service agencies, the sum of \$41,854,493.00 in Global  
17 Commitment dollars is appropriated to the Agency of Human Services in fiscal  
18 year 2023.

19 (c) The Departments of Mental Health and of Disabilities, Aging, and  
20 Independent Living, in consultation with representatives of the designated and  
21 specialized services agencies, shall report to the House Committees on Health

1 Care, on Human Services, and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees  
2 on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations on or before January 15, 2023  
3 with the total amount of funds that would be necessary on an annual basis to  
4 increase the salaries for all staff in the community mental health system to the  
5 level of equivalent positions in the State workforce, Vermont hospitals, and  
6 school settings.

7 Sec. 28. AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; DESIGNATED AND  
8 SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES; WORKFORCE  
9 DEVELOPMENT

10 (a) The sum of \$6,000,000.00 is appropriated to the Agency of Human  
11 Services from the General Fund in fiscal year 2023 to expand the supply of  
12 high-quality mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and  
13 developmental disability services professionals by distributing funds to the  
14 designated and specialized service agencies equitably based on each agency's  
15 proportion of full-time- equivalent (FTE) mental health, substance use disorder  
16 treatment, and developmental disability services staff to the total number of  
17 FTE mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and developmental  
18 disability services staff across all designated and specialized service agencies  
19 statewide. The designated and specialized service agencies shall use these  
20 funds for loan repayment and tuition assistance to promote the recruitment and  
21 retention of high-quality mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and

1 developmental disability services professionals available to Vermont residents  
2 in need of their services, as set forth in subsection (b) of this section.

3 (b)(1) Each designated and specialized service agency shall make the funds  
4 received pursuant to subsection (a) of this section available to its current and  
5 prospective employees as set forth in subdivisions (A) and (B) of this  
6 subdivision (1) on a rolling basis in exchange for a one-year service obligation  
7 to provide mental health, substance use disorder treatment, or developmental  
8 disability services, or a combination of these, at a designated or specialized  
9 service agency in this State. The funds may be used for the following  
10 purposes:

11 (A) loan repayment for master’s-level clinicians, bachelor’s-level  
12 direct service staff, and nurses; and

13 (B) tuition assistance for individuals pursuing degrees to become  
14 master’s-level clinicians, bachelor’s-level direct service staff, and nurses.

15 (2) Loan repayment and tuition assistance funds shall be available to the  
16 current and prospective employees of designated and specialized service  
17 agencies in the form of forgivable loans, with the debt forgiven upon the  
18 employee’s completion of the required service obligation.

19 (c) Until the funds have been fully expended, the Agency of Human  
20 Services shall report on or before January 15 annually to the House  
21 Committees on Appropriations, on Health Care, and on Human Services and



1 the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare with  
2 information on the following:

3 (1) the specific designated and specialized service agencies that have  
4 received funds to date and the programs within each of those agencies in which  
5 the financial assistance recipients will deliver services;

6 (2) the amount of financial assistance funding provided to each  
7 recipient;

8 (3) the specific degrees or certificates toward which the tuition  
9 assistance recipients are working and those earned by loan repayment  
10 recipients; and

11 (4) the number of new employees attracted to the designated and  
12 specialized service agencies as a result of the financial assistance, their fields  
13 of study, and the programs in which they deliver services.

14 Sec. 29. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION; BARRIERS TO  
15 MENTAL HEALTH LICENSURE; REPORT

16 The Office of Professional Regulation shall undertake a systematic review  
17 of the licensing processes for mental health and substance use disorder  
18 treatment professionals to identify barriers to licensure. On or before  
19 January 15, 2023, the Office shall provide its findings and recommendations to  
20 address any identified barriers to licensure to the House Committees on Health  
21 Care, on Human Services, on Commerce and Economic Development, and on

1 Government Operations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare, on  
2 Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, and on Government  
3 Operations.

4 Sec. 30. AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; POSITION;

5 APPROPRIATION

6 (a) One classified, three-year limited-service Health Care Workforce  
7 Coordinator position is created in the Agency of Human Services, Office of  
8 Health Care Reform in fiscal year 2023 to support the health care workforce  
9 initiatives set forth in this act and in the Health Care Workforce Development  
10 Strategic Plan. The Coordinator shall focus on building educational, clinical,  
11 and housing partnerships and support structures to increase and improve health  
12 care workforce training, recruitment, and retention.

13 (b) The sum of \$170,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
14 Agency of Human Services, Office of Health Care Reform in fiscal year 2023  
15 for the Health Care Workforce Coordinator position, of which \$120,000.00 is  
16 for personal services and \$50,000.00 is for operating expenses.

17 Sec. 31. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

18 DATA HUB; HEALTH RESOURCE ALLOCATION PLAN

19 The sum of \$2,500,000.00 is appropriated to the Department of Labor from  
20 the General Fund in fiscal year 2023 to enable the Department to serve as the  
21 State's health care workforce data hub. The Department shall collect health

1 care workforce data and identify and propose solutions to address data gaps,  
2 and shall share the data with the Green Mountain Care Board to inform the  
3 Board’s work in identifying the State’s health resources available to meet  
4 Vermonters’ health care needs and additional resources that may be necessary,  
5 as part of the Board’s Health Resource Allocation Plan responsibilities  
6 pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 9405. The Department shall use existing statewide  
7 information to the extent practicable to avoid imposing administrative burdens  
8 on health care providers and to avoid duplication of efforts underway  
9 elsewhere in Vermont. The Department shall expand its data collection  
10 practices over two years to include all levels of the health care workforce,  
11 beginning with the highest-level licensed health care professionals.

12 Sec. 32. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE  
13 BOARD; SUPPLY AND DEMAND MODELING

14 On or before January 15, 2023, the Department of Labor, in collaboration  
15 with the Green Mountain Care Board, shall explore and recommend to the  
16 House Committees on Health Care, on Human Services, and on Commerce and  
17 Economic Development and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare  
18 and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs a process,  
19 methodology, and necessary funding amounts to establish and maintain the  
20 capacity to perform health care supply and demand modeling based on

1 information in the health care workforce data hub, for use by health care  
2 employers, health care educators, and policymakers.

3 Sec. 33. DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL REGULATION; GREEN  
4 MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD; PRIOR AUTHORIZATIONS;  
5 ADMINISTRATIVE COST REDUCTION; REPORT

6 (a) The Department of Financial Regulation shall explore the feasibility of  
7 requiring health insurers and their prior authorization vendors to access clinical  
8 data from the Vermont Health Information Exchange whenever possible to  
9 support prior authorization requests in situations in which a request cannot be  
10 automatically approved.

11 (b) The Department of Financial Regulation shall direct health insurers to  
12 provide prior authorization information to the Department in a format required  
13 by the Department in order to enable the Department to analyze opportunities  
14 to align and streamline prior authorization request processes. The Department  
15 shall share its findings and recommendations with the Green Mountain Care  
16 Board, and the Department and the Board shall collaborate to provide  
17 recommendations to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate  
18 Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance on or before January 15,  
19 2023 regarding the statutory changes necessary to align and streamline prior  
20 authorization processes and requirements across health insurers.

1 Sec. 34. 33 V.S.A. § 3543 is amended to read:

2 § 3543. STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE

3 (a)(1) There is established a need-based student loan repayment assistance  
4 program for the purpose of providing student loan repayment assistance to any  
5 individual employed by a regulated, privately operated center-based child care  
6 program or family child care home.

7 (2) An eligible individual shall:

8 (A) work in a privately operated center-based child care program or  
9 in a family child care home that is regulated by the Division for at least an  
10 average of 30 hours per week for 48 weeks of the year, except that this  
11 minimum time requirement does not apply to an employee of Vermont Head  
12 Start to the extent it conflicts with any law or contract provision governing the  
13 terms of employment.

14 (B) receive an annual salary of not more than \$50,000.00; and

15 (C) have earned an associates or bachelor's degree with a major  
16 concentration in early childhood, child and human development, elementary  
17 education, special education with a birth to age eight focus, or child and family  
18 services within the preceding five years.

19 \* \* \*

1       Sec. 35. PILOT PROGRAM; POSITIONS EMBEDDED WITHIN  
2                   RECOVERY CENTERS

3           (a)(1) In fiscal year 2023, \$1,290,000.00 is appropriated to the Department  
4           for Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living’s Division of Vocation  
5           Rehabilitation and the Vermont Association of Business Industry and  
6           Rehabilitation from the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund for the purpose  
7           of developing and implementing a two-year pilot program that embeds 15 FTE  
8           new positions within 12 recovery centers across the State.

9           (2) The 15 FTE limited-service positions shall be allocated as follows:

10           (A) Of the total appropriation, \$540,000.00 total shall be allocated in  
11           equal amounts to fund the following 2.5 FTE at each of two geographically  
12           diverse recovery centers:

13                   (i) one FTE to serve as an employment counselor within the  
14           Division of Vocation Rehabilitation;

15                   (ii) one FTE to serve as an employment consultant within the  
16           Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation; and

17                   (iii) 0.5 FTE to serve as Employment Assistance Program staff  
18           within the Division of Vocation Rehabilitation.

19           (B) Of the total appropriation, \$75,000.00 shall be allocated in equal  
20           amounts to fund one FTE who shall serve as an employment support counselor  
21           at each of the 10 remaining recovery centers in the State.

1        (b) On or before January 1, 2024, the Division of Vocational  
2        Rehabilitation, in collaboration with the Vermont Association of Business  
3        Industry and Rehabilitation, shall submit a report to the House Committees on  
4        Commerce and Economic Development and on Human Services and to the  
5        Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs  
6        and on Health and Welfare summarizing the effectiveness of the pilot program,  
7        including:

- 8            (1) educational attainment and achievement of program recipients;  
9            (2) acquisition of a credential of value pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 546;  
10           (3) number of job placements; and  
11           (4) job retention rates.

12        Sec. 36. ADVANCE VERMONT PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

13        (a) Duties. Advance Vermont shall perform the following duties, in  
14        coordination and alignment with State partners, in support of the State’s goal  
15        articulated in 10 V.S.A. § 546 that 70 percent of working-age Vermonters hold  
16        a credential of value by 2025 (Goal):

- 17           (1) increase public awareness of the value of postsecondary education  
18        and training to help persons of any age make informed decisions about the  
19        value of education and training that would further their advancement in  
20        educational pathways and pursuit of career goals, through targeted outreach as  
21        outlined in subsection (b) of this section;

1           (2) promote a broad understanding of the public good and value in  
2           achieving the State’s Goal and of actions stakeholders can take to increase  
3           attainment;

4           (3) assist or coordinate with stakeholders, such as educational, business,  
5           governmental, nonprofit, and philanthropic organizations, in activities that seek  
6           to align the delivery of high-quality education and training opportunities with  
7           career advancement and support the policy priorities outlined in 10 V.S.A.  
8           § 546;

9           (4) collect and display publicly available, nonconfidential information  
10           about postsecondary credentials available to Vermonters;

11           (5) facilitate conversations or provide information about the national  
12           best practices in aligning, recognizing, measuring, tracking, and promoting  
13           postsecondary credentials of value to the Vermont Department of Labor and  
14           Agency of Education when requested;

15           (6) maintain its web-based resources that provide information about  
16           opportunities to obtain a postsecondary credential of value, in coordination  
17           with State partners;

18           (7) support the Vermont Department of Labor and Agency of Education  
19           transition or integration of Advance Vermont’s web-based resources and  
20           collected information referenced in subdivisions (4) and (6) of this subsection  
21           into a State-supported system in a coordinated way; and



1           (8) meet on a quarterly basis with the Vermont Department of Labor and  
2           Agency of Education about activities described in this subsection.

3           (b) Outreach. Advance Vermont may use funds awarded by the State to:

4           (1) create and distribute public-facing communications and resources  
5           related to the duties described in this section; and

6           (2) offer support to career and education counselors, employment and  
7           training counselors, jobseekers and their families, and other stakeholders,  
8           consistent with best practice and State policy and programs, to help them better  
9           understand the postsecondary education and training landscape.

10          (c) Reports. Advance Vermont shall provide written reports to:

11          (1) the Vermont Department of Labor and Agency of Education about  
12          anticipated work and activities using a simplified reporting template jointly  
13          developed by Advance Vermont and the State entities on a quarterly basis; and

14          (2) on or before December 15, 2022, the House and Senate committees  
15          of jurisdiction regarding the use of funds, activities performed, and outcomes  
16          achieved by Advance Vermont.

17          (d) Appropriation. The sum of \$350,000.00 is appropriated from the  
18          General Fund in fiscal year 2023 to the Vermont Student Assistance  
19          Corporation for the purposes of funding the work outlined in this section by  
20          Advance Vermont.

21          Sec. 37. VERMONT SERVE, LEARN, AND EARN PROGRAM;

1                    APPROPRIATION

2            In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$3,200,000.00 is appropriated from the  
3            General Fund to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to be granted  
4            to the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps to continue the Vermont Serve,  
5            Learn, and Earn Program with other community partners, providing the Corps  
6            and its partners with the capital and operating funds necessary to support  
7            workforce development goals through creating meaningful paid service and  
8            learning opportunities for young adults.

9            Sec. 38. ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY; FINDINGS

10           The General Assembly finds:

11           (1) Adult education and literacy services are a key piece of the  
12           workforce development system and serve as the entryway into career readiness  
13           and workforce development for tens of thousands of our most vulnerable  
14           Vermonters, those with low literacy, under-education, or those simply in need  
15           of increased skills so that they can succeed.

16           (2) 36,000 adults in Vermont do not have a high school credential, and  
17           tens of thousands more lack the skills to matriculate into and be successful in  
18           college, in career training programs, or both. Adult education and literacy

1 providers are the first stop on the path to the transformative opportunities that  
2 Vermont is offering for these individuals.

3 (3) Adult education and literacy services help people build the assets  
4 they need to move out of poverty successfully, as well as the confidence to  
5 continue to move toward success throughout their lives. Students are supported  
6 to identify concrete goals and then break those goals down into steps. Students  
7 set goals in the domains of:

8 (A) family and life;

9 (B) academics; and

10 (C) career and college readiness.

11 Sec. 39. EFFECTIVE DATES

12 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022, except that:

13 (1) Sec. 8a(b)–(c) (Internship Cost Offset Initiative) shall take effect on  
14 passage.

15 (2) Sec. 25 (18 V.S.A. § 9456) shall take effect on January 1, 2023 and  
16 shall apply to hospital fiscal years 2024 and after.

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1

2 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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\_\_\_\_\_

4

Representative \_\_\_\_\_

5

FOR THE COMMITTEE