

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to  
3 which was referred Senate Bill No. 62 entitled “An act relating to creating a  
4 New Vermont Employee Incentive Program” respectfully reports that it has  
5 considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking out  
6 all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. INTENT AND PURPOSE

8 It is the intent of the General Assembly and the purpose of this act to:

9 (1) expand the Vermont workforce;

10 (2) attract new residents to the State; and

11 (3) provide support to employers who are unable to fill positions from  
12 among candidates who are already located in this State, whether due to very  
13 low unemployment rate or due to a disconnect between job requirements and  
14 candidate qualifications.

15 Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. chapter 1 is amended to read:

16 CHAPTER 1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

17 \* \* \*

18 § 4. NEW RELOCATING AND REMOTE EMPLOYEES; INCENTIVES

19 (a) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design  
20 and implement a program to award incentive grants to relocating employees as

1 provided in this section and subject to the policies and procedures the Agency  
2 adopts to implement the program.

3 (b) A relocating employee may be eligible for a grant under the program  
4 for qualifying expenses, subject to the following:

5 (1) A base grant shall not exceed \$5,000.00.

6 (2) The Agency may award an enhanced grant, which shall not exceed  
7 \$7,500.00, for a relocating employee who becomes a resident in a labor market  
8 area in this State in which:

9 (A) the average annual unemployment rate in the labor market area  
10 exceeds the average annual unemployment rate in the State; or

11 (B) the average annual wage in the State exceeds the annual average  
12 wage in the labor market area.

13 (c) The Agency shall:

14 (1) adopt procedures for implementing the program, which shall include  
15 a simple certification process to certify relocating employees and qualifying  
16 expenses;

17 (2) promote awareness of the program, including through coordination  
18 with relevant trade groups and by integration into the Agency's economic  
19 development marketing campaigns;

20 (3) award grants to relocating employees on a first-come, first-served  
21 basis beginning on July 1, 2021, subject to available funding; and

1           (4) adopt measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy  
2           to assess the utilization and performance of the program.

3           (d) Annually, on or before December 15, the Agency shall submit a report  
4           to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the  
5           Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs  
6           concerning the implementation of this section, including:

7           (1) a description of the policies and procedures adopted to implement  
8           the program;

9           (2) the promotion and marketing of the program;

10           (3) an analysis of the utilization and performance of the program,  
11           including the projected revenue impacts and other qualitative and quantitative  
12           returns on investment in the program based on available data and modeling.

13           (e) As used in this section:

14           (1) “Qualifying expenses” means the actual costs a relocating employee  
15           incurs for one or more of the following:

16           (A) relocation expenses, which may include moving costs, closing  
17           costs for a primary residence, rental security deposit, one month’s rent  
18           payment, and other relocation expenses established in Agency guidelines;

19           (B) reasonable and necessary costs, considering the employee’s  
20           location and employment position, to access or upgrade broadband Internet  
21           connectivity or to acquire membership in a co-working or similar space.

1           (2) “Relocating employee” means an individual who on or after July 1,  
2           2021 meets the following criteria:

3                   (A) The individual becomes a full-time resident of this State.

4                   (B) The individual:

5                           (i)(I) becomes a full-time employee at a Vermont location of a  
6                   business domiciled or authorized to do business in this State; and

7                                   (II) the employer attests to the Agency that, after reasonable  
8                   time and effort, the employer has been unable to fill the employee’s position  
9                   from among Vermont applicants; or

10                           (ii) is a full-time employee of an out-of-state business and  
11                   performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely from a home  
12                   office or a co-working space located in this State.

13                   (C) The individual receives gross salary or wages that equal or  
14                   exceed:

15                           (i) 160 percent of the State minimum wage; or

16                           (ii) 140 percent of the State minimum wage if:

17                                   (I) the individual becomes a full-time employee at a Vermont  
18                   location of a business domiciled or authorized to do business in this State that  
19                   is located in a Vermont labor market area in which the average annual  
20                   unemployment rate is higher than the average annual unemployment rate for  
21                   the State; or

1                   (II) the individual is a full-time employee of an out-of-state  
2                   business and performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely  
3                   from a home office or a co-working space located in this State, and the  
4                   individual becomes a resident in a Vermont labor market area in which the  
5                   average annual unemployment rate is higher than the average annual  
6                   unemployment rate for the State.

7                   (D) The individual is subject to Vermont income tax.

8                   Sec. 3. IMPLEMENTATION; FUNDING; TRANSITION; REPORT

9                   (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to consolidate into a single  
10                  program:

11                  (1) the funding and activities of the New Remote Worker Grant Program  
12                  created in 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1, as amended by 2019 Acts  
13                  and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 15; and

14                  (2) the funding and activities of the New Worker Relocation Incentive  
15                  Program created by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 12.

16                  (b) Consistent with subsection (a) of this section, the Agency of Commerce  
17                  and Community Development may use any remaining funds appropriated to it  
18                  for the New Remote Worker Grant Program and the New Worker Relocation  
19                  Incentive Program to:

1           (1) award incentives to new remote workers and new relocating workers  
2           who qualify for an incentive under either of those programs until July 1, 2021;  
3           and

4           (2) award incentives to relocating employees under the program created  
5           pursuant to Sec. 2 of this act on or after July 1, 2021.

6           (c) On or before January 15, 2022, the Agency of Commerce and  
7           Community Development shall report to the Senate Committee on Economic  
8           Development, Housing and General Affairs and to the House Committee on  
9           Commerce and Economic Development concerning any recommended changes  
10          to the program created in Sec. 2 of this act, including any residency  
11          requirements or other further changes on new employee eligibility.

12          Sec. 4. REPEAL

13          The following are repealed:

14           (1) 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1, as amended by 2019 Acts  
15           and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 15 (New Remote Worker Grant Program); and

16           (2) 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 12 (New Worker Relocation  
17           Incentive Program).

18          Sec. 5. APPROPRIATION

19           (a) In fiscal year 2022, the amount of \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated from  
20           the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development  
21           to provide grants pursuant to the program created in Sec. 2 of this act.

1        (b) The Agency shall make reasonable efforts to promote the availability of  
2        grants through the program to communities that are underrepresented in  
3        Vermont and to populations that have historically experienced discrimination  
4        or unequal access to benefits and services.

5        Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

6        (a) This section and Sec. 3 shall take effect on passage.

7        (b) The remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

8        and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act  
9        relating to creating incentives for new remote and relocating workers”

10

11

12

13        (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

14

\_\_\_\_\_

15

Senator \_\_\_\_\_

16

FOR THE COMMITTEE