

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Natural Resources and Energy to which was referred
3 Senate Bill No. 109 entitled “An act relating to the Vermonters’ Enhanced
4 Energy Savings Act” 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. 10 V.S.A. § 581 is amended to read:

8 § 581. BUILDING EFFICIENCY GOALS

9 It shall be goals of the State:

10 (1) To improve substantially the energy fitness of at least ~~20 percent of~~
11 ~~the State’s housing stock by 2017 (more than 60,000 housing units), and 25~~
12 ~~percent of the State’s housing stock by 2020 (approximately 80,000 housing~~
13 ~~units) 120,000 housing units and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by~~
14 0.32 MMTCO₂e by 2031.

15 * * *

16 (4) To save Vermont families and businesses a total of \$1.5 billion on
17 their fuel bills over the lifetimes of the improvements and measures installed
18 between 2008 and 2017.

19 (5) To increase weatherization services to low-income Vermonters by
20 expanding the number of units weatherized or the scope of services provided,

1 or both, as revenue becomes available in the Home Weatherization Assistance
2 Fund.

3 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 3902 is amended to read:

4 § 3902. OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

5 (a) The Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity is hereby
6 authorized to allocate available financial assistance for community services
7 agencies and programs in accordance with State and federal law and
8 regulation.

9 (b) The Director may provide financial assistance to community services
10 agencies for the planning, conduct, administration, and evaluation of
11 community service programs to provide a range of services and activities
12 having a measurable and potentially major impact on causes of poverty in the
13 community or in areas of the community where poverty is a particularly acute
14 problem. Components of those services and activities may involve, without
15 limitation of other activities and supporting facilities designed to assist low
16 income participants:

17 (1) to secure and retain meaningful employment;

18 (2) to obtain adequate education;

19 (3) to make better use of available income;

1 (4) to provide and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living
2 environment, while also working to achieve the State’s energy savings and
3 carbon emission reduction goals, including those in 10 VSA § 581;

4 (5) to obtain services for the prevention of narcotics addiction,
5 alcoholism, and for the rehabilitation of narcotic addicts and alcoholics;

6 (6) to obtain emergency assistance through loans and grants to meet
7 immediate and urgent individual and family needs, including the need for
8 health services, nutritious food, housing, and unemployment-related assistance;

9 (7) to remove obstacles and solve personal and family problems ~~which~~
10 that block achievement of self-sufficiency;

11 (8) to achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community;

12 (9) to make more frequent and effective use of other programs related to
13 the purposes of this chapter;

14 (10) to coordinate and establish linkages between governmental and
15 other social service programs to assure the effective delivery of such services
16 to low-income persons; and to encourage the use of entities in the private
17 sector of the community in efforts to ameliorate poverty in the community.

18 * * *

19 Sec. 3. PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION PROCEEDING

20 On or before December 17, 2021, the Public Utility Commission shall
21 report to the General Assembly on its recommendations concerning the

1 implementation of a volumetric thermal energy efficiency charge to provide
2 supplemental funding for thermal energy efficiency programs implemented
3 pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 209(e) and (g). The report shall include the following:

4 (1) criteria for establishing the amount of the thermal energy efficiency
5 charge, including the size of annual thermal energy efficiency program budgets
6 and accounting for existing or new sources of funding for those programs over
7 time;

8 (2) whether the supplemental funding provided by the thermal energy
9 efficiency charge should be directed to an entity other than an entity appointed
10 by the Commission pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(B) to provide efficiency
11 programs and services to thermal energy customers;

12 (3) how to incentivize the installation of clean energy heating systems
13 and phase out the use of heating systems with high amounts of emissions; and

14 (4) any statutory amendments necessary to implement its
15 recommendations.

16 Sec. 4. DEVELOPMENT OF WEATHERIZATION WORKFORCE AND
17 COUNSELING SERVICES; REPORTS

18 (a) Weatherization Workforce Report.

19 (1) On or before June 15, 2021, the Chairs of the Senate Committee on
20 Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committee on Energy and
21 Technology, or their designees shall meet with the Department of Labor, the

1 Agency of Education, Efficiency Vermont, the Vermont Housing Finance
2 Agency, the Community Action Agencies, NeighborWorks of Western
3 Vermont, and other parties currently delivering programming to train workers
4 to perform services related to thermal energy savings and weatherization.

5 (2) Thereafter, the Department of Labor shall lead the Weatherization
6 Workforce Group that shall develop plans for the coordinated delivery of a
7 standardized statewide Building Sciences curriculum that includes
8 weatherization. The curriculum shall be designed to establish a career pathway
9 in energy efficiency construction and shall include a certification that is
10 broadly recognized, transparent, and portable.

11 (3) On or before October 1, 2021, the Department of Labor shall report
12 to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy and the House
13 Committee on Energy and Technology a plan for enhancing the coordinated
14 delivery of the standardized Building Sciences training program in order to
15 support the goals of 10 V.S.A. § 581.

16 (b) Energy Savings Counseling Report.

17 (1) On or before June 30, 2021, the Chairs of the Senate Committee on
18 Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committee on Energy and
19 Technology, or their designees shall meet with the Office of Economic
20 Opportunity, the directors of the Community Action Agencies, Efficiency
21 Vermont, NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, and other parties currently

1 providing outreach and counseling services to Vermonters with low and
2 moderate income for the State’s energy savings programs, including thermal
3 and transportation energy efficiency programs.

4 (2) Thereafter, the Office of Economic Opportunity shall lead the
5 Energy Savings Counseling Group that shall develop a plan for the coordinated
6 and effective delivery of counseling services designed to enroll and deliver
7 energy savings programs to their target service populations.

8 (3) On or before October 15, 2021, the Office of Economic Opportunity
9 shall report to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy and the
10 House Committee on Energy and Technology a plan for coordinating and
11 enhancing their counseling services to low-income and moderate-income
12 Vermonters who could benefit from the State’s energy savings programs,
13 including thermal and transportation energy efficiency programs.

14 Sec. 5. 30 V.S.A. § 35 is added to read:

15 § 35. ENERGY SAVINGS FUND

16 (a) There is established the Energy Savings Fund, which shall be managed
17 in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5. This Fund shall be
18 administered by the Department of Public Service to fund a variety of
19 programs that will increase energy savings. Monies in the Fund shall be used
20 solely for energy savings programs, including weatherization and

1 transportation programs and for necessary costs incurred in administering the
2 Fund.

3 (b) The Fund shall be made up of any funds appropriated to or deposited
4 into the Fund.

5 (c) The funds shall only be used to fund projects for which federal funds
6 are not currently available.

7 Sec. 6. APPROPRIATIONS

8 In fiscal year 2022, there is appropriated from the General Fund
9 \$35,000,000.00 to the Energy Savings Fund, established in 30 V.S.A. § 35, as
10 follows:

11 (1) \$4,000,000.00 to the Department for Children and Families, Office
12 of Economic Opportunity, Home Weatherization Assistance Program to be
13 used in fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. Up to \$150,000.00 of these
14 funds may be used for vermiculite remediation and home repair as part of
15 home weatherization.

16 (2) \$4,000,000.00 to the Department of Buildings and General Services
17 to provide low-cost financing to municipalities seeking to leverage energy
18 savings opportunities.

19 (3) \$9,000,000.00 to the Agency of Administration to grant to the
20 Vermont Housing Finance Agency for financial support of housing
21 weatherization statewide.

1 (22) issue bonds, notes, and other obligations secured by the property
2 transfer tax revenues transferred to the Agency pursuant to 32 V.S.A.

3 § 9610(d); and

4 (23) develop a program to finance and promote housing weatherization
5 using funds appropriated by the State; funds generated through issuing bonds,
6 notes, and other obligations of the Agency; and funds from other sources
7 obtained through grants or other arrangements. The program shall give
8 priority to programs benefiting persons and families at or below 120 percent of
9 the median income with high energy burdens and to programs to expand the
10 pool of qualified weatherization contractors in the State.

11 Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATES

12 This act shall take effect on passage, except for Sec .6 (appropriations),
13 which shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

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(Committee vote: _____)

Senator _____

FOR THE COMMITTEE