

1 H.518

2 Senator Bray moves that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be  
3 amended as follows:

4 First: By striking out Sec. 3, Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program,  
5 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 3 to read as follows:

6 Sec. 3. MUNICIPAL ENERGY RESILIENCE GRANT PROGRAM

7 (a) Program established.

8 (1) In fiscal year 2023, there is established the Municipal Energy  
9 Resilience Grant Program to award grants to:

10 (A) make recommendations to municipalities on the use of more  
11 efficient renewable or electric heating systems; and

12 (B) make necessary improvements to reduce emissions by reducing  
13 fossil fuel usage and increasing efficiency in municipally owned buildings.

14 (2) For the awards granted pursuant to this subsection, the primary  
15 design of replacement systems shall prioritize renewable or electric heating  
16 systems as the preferred heating source. If, after review, a non-fossil fuel  
17 heating system is not technically feasible as a primary heating source, the  
18 recommendation may include upgrades for other heating systems, provided  
19 they reduce fossil fuel consumption and meet the goals of this act.

1        (b) Definition. As used in this section, “covered municipality” means a  
2        city, town, fire district or incorporated village, and all other governmental  
3        incorporated units.

4        (c) Administration; implementation.

5            (1) Grant awards. The Department of Buildings and General Services,  
6        in coordination with Efficiency Vermont, through the State Energy  
7        Management Program, shall administer the Program, which shall award grants  
8        for the following:

9            (A) not more than \$500,000.00 to each covered municipality for  
10        approved projects for weatherization, thermal efficiency, to supplement or  
11        replace fossil fuel heating systems with more efficient renewable or electric  
12        heating systems, and any other expenditures necessary for the project to be  
13        eligible for funding under federal law and guidelines; and

14            (B) not more than \$4,000.00 to each covered municipality to  
15        facilitate community meetings and communication about municipal energy  
16        resilience.

17            (2) Grant program design. The Department of Buildings and General  
18        Services, in consultation with Efficiency Vermont; the Vermont League of  
19        Cities and Towns; regional planning commissions; and experts in the field of  
20        thermal enclosure, energy efficiency, and renewable building space systems,  
21        shall design the Program. The Program shall include a streamlined and

1 minimal application process for a municipality to apply directly to the  
2 Department of Buildings and General Services or with the assistance of a  
3 regional planning commission. The Program design shall establish:

4 (A) an outreach and education plan by regional planning  
5 commissions, including specific tactics to reach and support each covered  
6 municipality;

7 (B) an equitable system for distributing grants statewide on the basis  
8 of need according to a system of priorities, including the following ranked in  
9 priority order:

10 (i) a municipality with the highest energy burden community  
11 needs and lowest resources, as defined in Efficiency Vermont's 2019 Energy  
12 Burden Report;

13 (ii) a municipality that may not have administrative support to  
14 apply for grants;

15 (iii) geographic location;

16 (iv) community size; and

17 (v) whether another division of the municipality has already  
18 received a grant;

19 (C) guidelines for renewable and energy efficiency buildings systems  
20 resilience, durability, health, and efficiency measures and costs that will be  
21 eligible for grant funding; and

1           (D) eligibility criteria for covered municipalities, including written  
2           commitment by the municipality to conduct community workshops and a self-  
3           assessment.

4           (d) Coordination. The Department of Buildings and General Services shall  
5           coordinate with any other State entities and agencies working with covered  
6           municipalities to provide grants for the Program.

7           (e) Funding. The Program shall be funded by the American Rescue Plan  
8           Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

9           (f) Assessment. A covered municipality is only eligible for a grant under  
10          this section if an assessment of its buildings and facilities has been conducted  
11          pursuant to Sec. 2 of this act.

12          Second: In Sec. 4, Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program;  
13          appropriation, by striking out subdivision (2)(C) in its entirety and inserting in  
14          lieu thereof a new subdivision (2)(C) to read as follows:

15                 (C) \$26,600,000.00 for grants to covered municipalities for  
16                 weatherization, thermal efficiency, and to supplement or replace heating  
17                 systems with more efficient renewable or electric heating systems.