

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Natural Resources and Energy to which was referred  
3 House Bill No. 697 entitled “An act relating to eligibility of reserve forestland  
4 for enrollment in the Use Value Appraisal Program” respectfully reports that it  
5 has considered the same and recommends that the Senate propose to the House  
6 that the bill be amended as follows:

7 First: In Sec. 2, 32 V.S.A. chapter 124, in section 3752, by striking out  
8 subdivision (17) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision  
9 (17) to read as follows:

10 (17) “Reserve forestland” means land that is managed for the purpose of  
11 attaining old forest values and functions in accordance with minimum  
12 acceptable standards for forest management and as approved by the  
13 Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. On parcels of up to 100 acres,  
14 50 percent or more of the enrolled parcel acres shall be composed of  
15 significant and sensitive conditions in accordance with the minimum  
16 acceptable standards established by the Commissioner. On parcels of 100  
17 acres or more, 30 percent of the enrolled parcel acres shall be composed of  
18 significant and sensitive conditions in accordance with the minimum  
19 acceptable standards established by the Commissioner.

20 Second: By adding a new section to be Sec. 2a to read as follows:  
21 Sec. 2a. 32 V.S.A. § 3757 is amended to read:

1 § 3757. LAND USE CHANGE TAX

2 \* \* \*

3 (b) Any owner of eligible land who wishes to withdraw land from use  
4 value appraisal shall notify the Director, who shall in turn notify the local  
5 assessing official. In the alternative, if the Director determines that  
6 development has occurred, the Director shall notify the local assessing official  
7 of his or her determination. Thereafter, land that has been withdrawn or  
8 developed shall be appraised and listed at its full fair market value in  
9 accordance with the provisions of chapter 121 of this title and subsection  
10 3756(d) of this title, according to the appraisal model and land schedule of the  
11 municipality.

12 \* \* \*

13 (m) An owner of land enrolled in use value appraisal as reserve forestland  
14 who wishes to amend the category or subcategory of enrollment of the land  
15 shall notify the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. The  
16 Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall review the parcel acres of  
17 the forestland that are composed of significant and sensitive conditions and  
18 shall recommend whether those parcel acres should be enrolled as ecologically  
19 sensitive treatment areas or whether those parcel acres should be conserved  
20 through purchase by the State or agreement with the landowner.

1        Third: By striking out Secs. 4, report on enrollment of reserve forestland,  
2        and 5, effective dates, in their entireties and inserting in lieu therefore three  
3        new sections to be Secs. 4–6 to read as follows:

4        Sec. 4. REPORT ON ENROLLMENT OF RESERVE FORESTLAND

5        On or before January 15, 2026, the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and  
6        Recreation, after consultation with the Director of Property Valuation and  
7        Review, shall report to the House Committees on Natural Resources, Fish, and  
8        Wildlife and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Natural  
9        Resources and Energy and on Finance regarding enrollment of managed  
10       forestland under the Use Value Appraisal Program. The report shall include:

11        (1) a summary of how enrollment of managed forestland in the Use  
12       Value Appraisal Program has changed since passage of this act, including  
13       whether owners of managed forestland changed the status of enrollment of  
14       their land to reserve forestland or ecologically significant treatment areas;

15        (2) the number of persons enrolling land in the Use Value Appraisal  
16       Program as reserve forestland;

17        (3) any other information that the Commissioner determines is relevant  
18       to the ongoing enrollment of reserve forestland in the Use Value Appraisal  
19       Program, including any relevant information regarding any impacts to the  
20       overall managed forestland category; and

1           (4) recommendations on how to promote the long-term enrollment of  
2           land in the reserve forestland category of enrolled land in order to attain old  
3           forest conditions or functions and values.

4           Sec. 5. ANNUAL REPORT; DIVISION OF PROPERTY VALUATION  
5                           AND REVIEW

6           As part of the annual report required under 32 V.S.A. § 3412, the Director  
7           of the Division of Property Valuation and Review shall include an assessment  
8           of how enrollment of managed forestland in the Use Value Appraisal Program  
9           has changed since reserve forestland was approved as eligible managed  
10           forestland, including whether owners of managed forestland changed the status  
11           of enrollment of their land to reserve forestland or ecologically significant  
12           treatment areas.

13           Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

14           (a) This section and Secs. 1 (findings), 3 (report on enrollment of reserve  
15           forestland), 3a (implementation), 4 (report on enrollment), and 5 (Division of  
16           Property Valuation and Review report) shall take effect on passage.

17           (b) Secs. 2 (Use Value Appraisal Program) and 2a (review of reserved  
18           forestland) shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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

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Senator \_\_\_\_\_

FOR THE COMMITTEE