

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 0.15 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e 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 be  
2 deposited in the efficiency fund established pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(3)  
3 for the purpose of providing supplemental funding for thermal energy  
4 efficiency programs implemented pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 209(e) and (g). The  
5 report shall include the following:

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

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

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

16 (4) any statutory amendments necessary to implement its  
17 recommendations.

1       Sec. 4. DEVELOPMENT OF WEATHERIZATION WORKFORCE AND  
2                    COUNSELING SERVICES; REPORTS

3            (a) Weatherization Workforce Report.

4            (1) On or before June 15, 2021, the Chairs of the Senate Committee on  
5            Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committee on Energy and  
6            Technology, or their designees, shall meet with the Department of Labor, the  
7            Agency of Education, Efficiency Vermont, the Vermont Housing Finance  
8            Agency, representatives of the Community Action Agencies, NeighborWorks  
9            of Western Vermont, the Vermont Fuel Dealers Association, and other parties  
10           currently delivering programming to train workers to perform services related  
11           to thermal energy savings and weatherization.

12           (2) Thereafter, Efficiency Vermont shall lead the Weatherization  
13           Workforce Group that shall develop plans for the coordinated delivery of a  
14           standardized statewide Building Sciences curriculum that includes  
15           weatherization. The curriculum shall be designed to establish a career pathway  
16           in energy efficiency construction and shall include a certification that is  
17           broadly recognized, transparent, and portable.

18           (3) On or before October 1, 2021, Efficiency Vermont shall report to the  
19           Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committee  
20           on Energy and Technology a plan for enhancing the coordinated delivery of

1 the standardized Building Sciences training program in order to support the  
2 goals of 10 V.S.A. § 581.

3 (b) Energy Savings Counseling Report.

4 (1) On or before June 30, 2021, the Chairs of the Senate Committee on  
5 Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committee on Energy and  
6 Technology, or their designees shall meet with the Office of Economic  
7 Opportunity, the directors of the Community Action Agencies, Efficiency  
8 Vermont, NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, and other parties currently  
9 providing outreach and counseling services to Vermonters with low and  
10 moderate income for the State’s energy savings programs, including thermal  
11 and transportation energy efficiency programs.

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

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

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

2 § 35. ENERGY SAVINGS FUND

3 (a) There is established the Energy Savings Fund, which shall be managed  
4 in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5. This Fund shall be  
5 administered by the Department of Public Service to fund a variety of  
6 programs that will increase energy savings. Monies in the Fund shall be used  
7 solely for energy savings programs and for necessary costs incurred in  
8 administering the Fund. The Department may create programs to be funded,  
9 including weatherization and transportation programs.

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

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

14 Sec. 6. APPROPRIATIONS

15 In fiscal year 2022, there is appropriated from the General Fund  
16 \$35,000,000.00 to the Energy Savings Fund, established in 30 V.S.A. §35, as  
17 follows:

18 (1) \$4,000,000.00 to the Department for Children and Families, Office  
19 of Economic Opportunity, Home Weatherization Assistance Program to be  
20 used in fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. Up to \$150,000.00 of these

1 funds may be used for vermiculite remediation and home repair as part of  
2 home weatherization.

3 (2) \$4,000,000.00 to the Department of Buildings and General Services  
4 to provide low-cost financing to municipalities seeking to leverage energy  
5 savings opportunities.

6 (3) \$9,000,000.00 to the Agency of Administration to grant to the  
7 Vermont Housing Finance Agency for financial support of housing  
8 weatherization statewide.

9 (4) \$5,000,000.00 to the Department of Public Service to grant to the  
10 Efficiency Vermont for the purpose of weatherization incentives. These funds  
11 shall be deposited in the Electric Efficiency Fund established under 30 V.S.A.  
12 Sec. 209(d)(3) and be available for use by Efficiency Vermont through  
13 December 31, 2023.

14 (5) \$2,000,000 to the Department of Public Service to grant to  
15 Efficiency Vermont for the purpose of workforce development initiatives and  
16 to support the expansion of Neighborworks of Western Vermont’s Heat Squad  
17 program. These funds shall be deposited in the Electric Efficiency Fund  
18 established under 30 V.S.A. Sec. 209(d)(3) and be available for use by  
19 Efficiency Vermont through December 31, 2023.



1           (6) \$9,000,000.00 to be used on the Affordable Community-Scale  
2           Renewable Energy Program, which shall support the creation of renewable  
3           energy projects for low-income Vermonters.

4           (7) \$2,000,000.00 to support projects offering innovative methods of  
5           financing energy savings measures, including to-the-meter programs.

6           Sec. 7. 10 V.S.A. § 621 is amended to read:

7           § 621. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES

8           The Agency shall have all of the powers necessary and convenient to carry  
9           out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this chapter, including those  
10          general powers provided a business corporation by 11A V.S.A. § 3.02 and  
11          those general powers provided a nonprofit corporation by 11B V.S.A. § 3.02  
12          and including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the power to:

13                                       \* \* \*

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

16          § 9610(d); and

17           (23) develop a program to finance and promote housing weatherization  
18          using funds appropriated by the State; funds generated through issuing bonds,  
19          notes, and other obligations of the Agency; and funds from other sources  
20          obtained through grants or other arrangements. The program shall give  
21          priority to programs benefiting persons and families at or below 120 percent of

1 the median income with high energy burdens and to programs to expand the  
2 pool of qualified weatherization contractors in the State.

3 Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATES

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

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

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Senator \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE