

1 S.225

2 Introduced by Senators Ram Hinsdale, Hardy, Hooker, Perchlik and Pollina

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Conservation and development; labor; community service; climate
6 change

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create the
8 Vermont Climate Corps to implement a work program that would provide
9 employment doing climate resilience and adaptation work.

10 An act relating to the Vermont Climate Corps

11 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

12 Sec. 1. 10 V.S.A. § 547 is added to read:

13 § 547. VERMONT CLIMATE CORPS

14 (a) Definitions. As used in this section:

15 (1) “Corps member” means an individual who is at least 18 years of age
16 and who has committed to not more than 12 months of full-time, part-time, or
17 flex-time service in the Vermont Climate Corps.

18 (2) “Program host” means a State entity, municipality, or nonprofit
19 organization located or with a physical presence in Vermont that has
20 committed to hosting Corps members through the Vermont Climate Corps.

1 (3) “SerVermont “ means the Vermont State Service Commission, as
2 required under section 201 of the National and Community Service Trust Act
3 of 1993, as amended, and established in Executive Order No. 33-18.

4 (b) Corps established. There is established the Vermont Climate Corps to
5 be developed and administered by SerVermont. The purposes of the Vermont
6 Climate Corps are to:

7 (1) increase the opportunities for Vermonters to devote up to a year of
8 service to Vermont communities;

9 (2) mobilize the service sector as an innovative solution to clear and
10 pressing environmental problems that negatively impact Vermont
11 communities;

12 (3) provide rural and underserved communities in Vermont with
13 volunteer resources to help address critical health, human, public safety,
14 educational, and environmental needs; and

15 (4) strengthen civic engagement of participants and in communities
16 through volunteer service.

17 (c) The following conditions shall apply to the Vermont Climate Corps:

18 (1) SerVermont may provide funding to eligible Program hosts that have
19 experience administering national service grants and engaging Vermonters in
20 formal service programs in order to enable those hosts to support corps
21 members and undertake eligible projects.

1 (2) Program hosts that receive funding from SerVermont through the
2 Vermont Climate Corps shall use the funding received to meet costs incurred
3 by hosting and supporting corps members in their service who are participating
4 in eligible projects.

5 (3) Corps members shall be the responsibility of their Program hosts and
6 shall not be employees, or considered to be employees, of the State of Vermont
7 for any purpose throughout the duration of their service.

8 (4) SerVermont and Program hosts shall, to the extent practicable,
9 ensure that corps members are placed in projects that match their interests,
10 geographic constraints, skills, and abilities.

11 (5) Program hosts shall seek to enroll as Corps members individuals
12 who reflect the diversity of gender, racial, ethnic, sexual, social, and disability
13 status of Vermonters.

14 (6) Project eligibility shall be determined by SerVermont and may
15 include weatherization, environmental restoration, and other climate-related
16 projects. Innovative strategies and partnerships are encouraged.

17 (d) In administering the Vermont Climate Corps, SerVermont shall
18 coordinate with appropriate organizations in the served communities, shall
19 explore service-based solutions that build community capacity to combat
20 climate change, and may engage with existing national service programs.

1 (e) Report. On or before April 1 annually, SerVermont shall report to the
2 General Assembly on the Vermont Climate Corps.

3 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION

4 The sum of \$5,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to
5 SerVermont in fiscal year 2023 for the purpose of administering the Vermont
6 Climate Corps established in 10 V.S.A. § 598. Within 180 days following
7 passage of this act, SerVermont shall seek to establish in 2024 the first class of
8 Corps members.

9 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on passage.