

1 S.99

2 An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to vehicles

3 The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill by striking out all after
4 the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

5 * * * New Motor Vehicle Arbitration * * *

6 Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. § 4173(d) is amended to read:

7 (d) Within the 45-day period set forth in subsection (c) of this section but at
8 least five days prior to hearing, the manufacturer shall have one final
9 opportunity to correct and repair the defect that the consumer claims entitles
10 ~~him or her~~ the consumer to a refund or replacement vehicle. Any right to a
11 final repair attempt is waived if the manufacturer does not complete it at least
12 five days prior to hearing. If the consumer is satisfied with the corrective work
13 done by the manufacturer or ~~his or her~~ the manufacturer's delegate, the
14 arbitration proceedings shall be terminated without prejudice to the consumer's
15 right to request arbitration be recommenced ~~if the repair proves unsatisfactory~~
16 ~~for the duration of the~~ within one year following the expiration of the express
17 warranty term in accordance with subsection 4179(a) of this title.

18 * * * Definition of Mail * * *

19 Sec. 2. 23 V.S.A. § 4(87) is added to read:

20 (87) "Mail," "mail or deliver," "mails," "mails or delivers," "mailing,"
21 "mailing or delivering," "mailed," and "mailed or delivered" mean any method

1 of delivery authorized by the Commissioner, which may include by hand, U.S.
2 mail, and electronic transmission.

3 * * * Mobile Identification * * *

4 Sec. 3. 23 V.S.A. § 116 is added to read:

5 § 116. ISSUANCE OF MOBILE IDENTIFICATION

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

7 (1) “Data field” means a discrete piece of information that appears on a
8 mobile identification.

9 (2) “Full profile” means all the information provided on a mobile
10 identification.

11 (3) “Limited profile” means a portion of the information provided on a
12 mobile identification.

13 (4) “Mobile identification” means an electronic representation of the
14 information contained on a nonmobile credential.

15 (5) “Mobile identification holder” means an individual to whom a
16 mobile identification has been issued.

17 (6) “Nonmobile credential” means a nondriver identification card issued
18 under section 115 of this title, a driver’s license issued under section 603 of
19 this title, a junior operator’s license issued under section 602 of this title, a
20 learner’s permit issued under section 617 of this title, a commercial driver’s

1 license issued under section 4111 of this title, or a commercial learner's permit
2 issued under section 4112 of this title.

3 (b) Issuance. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may issue a mobile
4 identification to an individual in addition to, and not instead of, a nonmobile
5 credential. If issued, the mobile identification shall:

6 (1) be capable of producing both a full profile and a limited profile;

7 (2) satisfy the purpose for which the profile is presented;

8 (3) allow the mobile identification holder to maintain physical
9 possession of the device on which the mobile identification is accessed during
10 verification; and

11 (4) not be a substitute for an individual producing a nonmobile
12 credential upon request.

13 (c) Agreements with other entities. The Commissioner may enter into
14 agreements to facilitate the issuance, use, and verification of a mobile
15 identification or other electronic credentials issued by the Commissioner or
16 another state.

17 (d) Administration.

18 (1) The Commissioner may operate, or may operate through a third-
19 party administrator, a verification system for mobile identifications.

20 (2) Access to the verification system and any data field by a person
21 presented with a mobile identification requires the credential holder's consent,

1 and, if consent is granted, the Commissioner may release the following through
2 the verification system:

3 (A) for a full profile, all data fields that appear on the mobile
4 identification; and

5 (B) for a limited profile, only the data fields represented in the
6 limited profile for the mobile identification.

7 * * * License Plate Stickers; Validation Stickers * * *

8 Sec. 4. 23 V.S.A. § 305 is amended to read:

9 § 305. REGISTRATION PERIODS

10 (a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall issue registration
11 certificates, ~~validation stickers~~, and number plates upon initial registration, and
12 registration certificates ~~and validation stickers~~ for each succeeding renewal
13 period of registration upon payment of the registration fee. Number plates so
14 issued will become void one year from the first day of the month following the
15 month of issue, unless a longer initial registration period is authorized by law
16 or unless this period is extended through renewal. Registrations issued for
17 motor trucks shall become void one year from the first day of the month
18 following the month of issue.

19 (b) The Commissioner shall issue a registration certificate, ~~validation~~
20 ~~sticker~~, and a number plate or number plates for each motor vehicle owned by
21 the State, which shall be valid for a period of five years. Such motor vehicle

1 shall be considered properly registered while the issued number plate or
2 number plates are attached to the motor vehicle. The Commissioner may
3 replace such number plate or number plates when in ~~his or her~~ the
4 Commissioner's discretion their condition requires.

5 (c) ~~Except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of this section, no plate~~
6 ~~is valid unless the validation sticker is affixed to the rear plate in the manner~~
7 ~~prescribed by the Commissioner in section 511 of this title. [Repealed.]~~

8 (d) When a registration for a motor vehicle, snowmobile, motorboat, or all-
9 terrain vehicle is processed electronically, a receipt shall be available
10 electronically and for printing. An electronic or printed receipt shall serve as a
11 temporary registration for 10 days after the date of the transaction. An
12 electronic receipt may be shown to an enforcement officer using a portable
13 electronic device. Use of a portable electronic device to display the receipt
14 does not in itself constitute consent for an officer to access other contents of
15 the device.

16 Sec. 5. 23 V.S.A. § 326 is amended to read:

17 § 326. REFUND UPON LOSS OF VEHICLE

18 The Commissioner may cancel the registration of a motor vehicle when the
19 owner ~~thereof~~ of the motor vehicle proves to ~~his or her~~ the Commissioner's
20 satisfaction that ~~it~~ the motor vehicle has been totally destroyed by fire or,
21 through crash or wear, has become wholly unfit for use and has been

1 dismantled. After the Commissioner cancels the registration and the owner
2 returns to the Commissioner either the registration certificate, or the number
3 plate or number plates ~~and the validation sticker~~, the Commissioner shall
4 certify to the Commissioner of Finance and Management the fact of the
5 cancellation, giving the name of the owner of the motor vehicle, ~~his or her~~ the
6 owner's address, the amount of the registration fee paid, and the date of
7 cancellation. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue ~~his or~~
8 ~~her~~ the Commissioner of Finance and Management's warrant in favor of the
9 owner for such percent of the registration fee paid as the unexpired term of the
10 registration bears to the entire registration period, but in no case shall the
11 Commissioner of Finance and Management retain less than \$5.00 of the fee
12 paid.

13 Sec. 6. 23 V.S.A. § 364b is amended to read:

14 § 364b. ALL-SURFACE VEHICLES; REGISTRATION

15 (a) The annual fee for registration of an all-surface vehicle (ASV) shall be
16 the sum of the fees established by sections 3305 and 3504 of this title, plus
17 \$26.00.

18 (b) Evidence of the registration shall be a ~~sticker, as determined by the~~
19 ~~Commissioner, affixed to~~ registration certificate and the number plate issued
20 pursuant to chapter 31 of this title.

1 Sec. 7. 23 V.S.A. § 453(f) is amended to read:

2 (f) In any year that number plates are reused ~~and validation stickers are~~
3 ~~issued~~, the Commissioner shall not be required to issue new number plates to
4 persons renewing registrations under this section.

5 Sec. 8. 23 V.S.A. § 457 is amended to read:

6 § 457. TEMPORARY PLATES

7 At the time of the issuance of a registration certificate to a dealer as
8 provided in this chapter, the Commissioner shall furnish the dealer with a
9 sufficient number of number plates ~~and temporary validation stickers~~,
10 temporary number plates, or temporary decals for use during the 60-day period
11 immediately following sale of a vehicle or motorboat by the dealer. The plates
12 and decals shall have the same general design as the plates or decals furnished
13 individual owners, but the plates and decals may be of a material and color as
14 the Commissioner may determine. The Commissioner shall collect a fee of
15 \$5.00 for each temporary plate issued.

16 Sec. 9. 23 V.S.A. § 458 is amended to read:

17 § 458. TEMPORARY PLATE ON SOLD OR EXCHANGED VEHICLES

18 On the day of the sale or exchange of a motor vehicle, motorboat,
19 snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle to be registered in this State, a dealer may
20 issue to the purchaser, for attachment to the motor vehicle, snowmobile, or all-
21 terrain vehicle, or to be carried in or on the motorboat, a number plate ~~with~~

1 ~~temporary validation stickers~~, a temporary number plate, or a temporary decal,
2 provided that the purchaser deposits with such dealer, for transmission to the
3 Commissioner, a properly executed application for the registration of such
4 motor vehicle, motorboat, snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle and the required
5 fee. If a properly licensed purchaser either attaches to the motor vehicle,
6 snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle or carries in the motorboat such number
7 plate or decal, ~~he or she~~ the purchaser may operate the same for a period not to
8 exceed 60 consecutive days immediately following the purchase. ~~An~~
9 ~~individual shall not operate a motor vehicle, motorboat, snowmobile, or all-~~
10 ~~terrain vehicle with a number plate with temporary validation stickers, a~~
11 ~~temporary number plate, or a temporary decal attached to the motor vehicle or~~
12 ~~carried in the motorboat except as provided in this section.~~

13 Sec. 10. 23 V.S.A. § 459 is amended to read:

14 § 459. NOTICE, APPLICATION, AND FEES TO COMMISSIONER

15 (a) Upon issuing a number plate ~~with temporary validation stickers~~, a
16 temporary number plate, or a temporary decal to a purchaser, a dealer shall
17 have 15 calendar days, or up to 30 calendar days as applicable pursuant to
18 subsection 2015(b) of this title, to forward to the Commissioner the application
19 and fee, deposited with ~~him or her~~ the dealer by the purchaser, together with
20 notice of such issue and such other information as the Commissioner may
21 require.

1 (b) If a number plate with ~~temporary validation stickers~~, a temporary
2 registration plate, or a temporary decal is not issued by a dealer in connection
3 with the sale or exchange of a vehicle or motorboat, the dealer may accept
4 from the purchaser a properly executed registration, tax, and title application
5 and the required fees for transmission to the Commissioner. The dealer shall
6 have 15 calendar days, or up to 30 calendar days as applicable pursuant to
7 subsection 2015(b) of this title, to forward to the Commissioner the application
8 and fee together with such other information as the Commissioner may require.

9 Sec. 11. 23 V.S.A. § 465 is amended to read:

10 § 465. LOANING OF PLATES, VEHICLES, OR MOTORBOATS

11 PROHIBITED

12 A dealer shall not lend or lease registration certificates, ~~validation stickers~~,
13 numbers, decals, or number plates that have been assigned to ~~him or her~~ the
14 dealer under the provisions of this chapter, nor shall ~~he or she~~ the dealer lend
15 or lease a vehicle or motorboat to which ~~his or her~~ the dealer's decals,
16 numbers, or number plates have been attached, nor lend or lease ~~his or her~~ the
17 dealer's decals, numbers, or number plates to a subagent.

18 Sec. 12. 23 V.S.A. § 494 is amended to read:

19 § 494. FEES

20 The annual fee for a transporter's registration certificate, ~~or~~ or number plate, ~~or~~
21 ~~validation sticker~~ is \$123.00.

1 Sec. 13. 23 V.S.A. § 511 is amended to read:

2 § 511. MANNER OF DISPLAY

3 (a) Number plates. A motor vehicle operated on any highway shall have
4 displayed in a conspicuous place either one or two number plates as the
5 Commissioner may require. Such number plates shall be furnished by the
6 Commissioner and shall show the number assigned to such vehicle by the
7 Commissioner. If only one number plate is furnished, the same shall be
8 securely attached to the rear of the vehicle. If two are furnished, one shall be
9 securely attached to the rear and one to the front of the vehicle. The number
10 plates shall be kept entirely unobscured, and the numerals and letters thereon
11 shall be plainly legible at all times. They shall be kept horizontal, shall be so
12 fastened as not to swing, excepting, however, there may be installed on a
13 motor truck or truck tractor a device that would, upon contact with a
14 substantial object, permit the rear number plate to swing toward the front of the
15 vehicle, provided such device automatically returns the number plate to its
16 original rigid position after contact is released, and the ground clearance of the
17 lower edges thereof shall be established by the Commissioner pursuant to the
18 provisions of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25.

19 (b) ~~Validation sticker. A registration validation sticker shall be~~
20 ~~unobstructed and shall be affixed as follows:~~

1 (1) Notwithstanding Department of Motor Vehicles, Registration and
2 Operation of Snowmobiles, Approved Helmets and VAST Snowmobile
3 Registrations (CVR 14-050-027), Secs. I(3)(a) and III:

4 (A) the Department of Motor Vehicles shall not issue temporary and
5 permanent validation stickers, temporary and permanent validating stickers, or
6 “S” stickers;

7 (B) operators of snowmobiles shall not be required to display
8 temporary or permanent validation stickers, temporary or permanent validating
9 stickers, or “S” stickers; and

10 (C) the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) shall not be
11 required to maintain a log of “S” stickers or have unused registration “S”
12 stickers available for inspection in Department of Motor Vehicles audits, nor
13 shall VAST agents be eligible to issue “S” stickers.

14 (2) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall amend the Approved
15 Helmets and VAST Snowmobile Registrations rule to eliminate requirements
16 related to temporary and permanent validation stickers, temporary and
17 permanent validating stickers, and “S” stickers the next time the rule is
18 amended pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25.

19 (b) Vermont Dealer Licensing and Schedule of Penalties and Suspension.

20 (1) Notwithstanding Department of Motor Vehicles, Vermont Dealer
21 Licensing and Schedule of Penalties and Suspension (CVR 14-050-050), Sec.

1 VI(j), there shall not be an administrative penalty assessed for a dealer failing
2 to display a validation sticker on a dealer's registration plate.

3 (2) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall amend the Vermont Dealer
4 Licensing and Schedule of Penalties and Suspension rule to eliminate the
5 administrative penalty for a dealer failing to display a validation sticker on a
6 dealer's registration plate the next time the rule is amended pursuant to 3
7 V.S.A. chapter 25.

8 * * * Electronic Proof of Registration * * *

9 Sec. 15. 23 V.S.A. § 307 is amended to read:

10 § 307. CARRYING OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE; REPLACEMENT
11 AND CORRECTED CERTIFICATES

12 (a) ~~A person~~ An individual shall not operate a motor vehicle nor draw a
13 trailer or semi-trailer unless all required registration certificates are carried in
14 some easily accessible place in the motor vehicle or electronically on a
15 portable electronic device; however, use of a device for this purpose does not
16 in itself constitute consent for an enforcement officer to access other contents
17 of the device.

18 * * *

19 (d)(1) An operator cited for violating subsection (a) of this section shall not
20 be convicted if the operator sends a copy of or produces to the issuing

1 enforcement agency within seven business days after the traffic stop proof of a
2 valid registration certificate that was in effect at the time of the traffic stop.

3 (2) An operator cited for violating subsection (a) of this section with
4 respect to a pleasure car, motorcycle, or truck that could be registered for less
5 than 26,001 pounds shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$5.00,
6 which penalty shall be exempt from surcharges under 13 V.S.A. § 7282(a), if
7 ~~he or she~~ the operator is cited within the 14 days following the expiration of
8 the motor vehicle's registration.

9 * * * Registration Fees; Plug-In Electric Vehicles * * *

10 Sec. 16. 23 V.S.A. § 361 is amended to read:

11 § 361. PLEASURE CARS

12 The annual registration fee for ~~registration of any motor vehicle of the a~~
13 ~~pleasure car type, and all vehicles powered by electricity~~ as defined in
14 subdivision 4(28) of this title, and including a pleasure car that is a plug-in
15 electric vehicle, as defined in subdivision 4(85) of this title, shall be \$74.00;
16 and the biennial fee shall be \$136.00.

17 Sec. 17. 23 V.S.A. § 362 is amended to read:

18 § 362. SPECIALIZED FUEL MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTOR BUSES

19 (a) The annual registration fee for ~~the registration of any "specialized fuel~~
20 ~~driven motor vehicle"~~, as defined in ~~section~~ subdivision 4(22) of this title, and
21 of motor buses, as defined in section 3002 of this title, shall be one and three-

1 quarters times the amount of the annual fee provided for a motor vehicle of the
2 classification and weight under the terms of this chapter.

3 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the annual and biennial
4 registration fees for a pleasure car, as defined in subdivision 4(28) of this title,
5 that is a plug-in electric vehicle, as defined in subdivision 4(85) of this title,
6 shall be determined pursuant to section 361 of this chapter, and the annual
7 registration fee for a motorcycle, as defined in subdivision 4(18)(A) of this
8 title, that is a plug-in electric vehicle, as defined in subdivision 4(85) of this
9 title, shall be determined pursuant to section 364 of this chapter.

10 * * * Distracted Driving; Hands-Free Use * * *

11 Sec. 18. 23 V.S.A. § 1095b is amended to read:

12 § 1095b. HANDHELD USE OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE

13 PROHIBITED

14 (a) ~~Definition~~ Definitions. As used in this section, ~~“hands-free;~~

15 (1) “Hands-free use” means the use of a portable electronic device
16 without ~~use of~~ utilizing either hand by employing an internal feature of, or an
17 attachment to, the device or a motor vehicle.

18 (2) “Public highway” means a State or municipal highway as defined in
19 19 V.S.A. § 1(12).

20 (3) “Securely mounted” means the portable electronic device is placed
21 in an accessory specifically designed or built to support the hands-free use of a

1 portable electronic device that is not affixed to the windshield in violation of
2 section 1125 of this title and either:

3 (A) is utilized in accordance with manufacturer specifications; or

4 (B) causes the portable electronic device to remain completely
5 stationary under typical driving conditions.

6 (4) “Use” means the use of a portable electronic device in any way that
7 is not a hands-free use, including an operator of a motor vehicle holding a
8 portable electronic device in the operator’s hand or hands while operating a
9 motor vehicle.

10 (b) Use of handheld portable electronic device prohibited.

11 (1) An individual shall not use a portable electronic device while
12 operating:

13 (A) a moving motor vehicle in a place open temporarily or
14 permanently to public or general circulation of vehicles; or

15 ~~(2) In addition, an individual shall not use a portable electronic device~~
16 ~~while operating~~

17 (B) a motor vehicle on a public highway in Vermont, including while
18 the vehicle is stationary, unless otherwise provided in this section. As used in
19 this subdivision (b)(2):

20 ~~(A) “Public highway” means a State or municipal highway as defined~~
21 ~~in 19 V.S.A. § 1(12).~~

1 ~~(B) “Operating” means operating a motor vehicle on a public~~
2 ~~highway, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic~~
3 ~~control device, or other temporary delays. “Operating” does not include~~
4 ~~operating a motor vehicle with or without the motor running when the operator~~
5 ~~has moved the vehicle to the side of or off the public highway and has halted in~~
6 ~~a location where the vehicle can safely and lawfully remain stationary~~
7 including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control
8 device, or other temporary delays.

9 ~~(3)~~(2) The prohibitions of this subsection shall not apply:

10 (A) ~~To~~ to hands-free use;

11 (B) ~~To~~ to activation or deactivation of hands-free use, ~~as long as any~~
12 ~~accessory for securely mounting the device is not affixed to the windshield in~~
13 ~~violation of section 1125 of this title. provided the portable electronic device is~~
14 securely mounted or the activation or deactivation is done through an internal
15 feature of the device or the motor vehicle being operated and without the
16 operator utilizing either hand to hold the portable electronic device;

17 (C) ~~When~~ when use of a portable electronic device is necessary for
18 an individual to communicate with law enforcement or emergency service
19 personnel under emergency circumstances or in response to a direction or order
20 from law enforcement;

1 (1) In the case of a first suspension, a license or privilege to operate
2 shall be reinstated only:

3 (A) after the ~~person~~ individual has successfully completed the
4 Alcohol and Driving Education Program, at the ~~person's~~ individual's own
5 expense, followed by an assessment of the need for further treatment by a
6 State-designated counselor, at the ~~person's~~ individual's own expense, to
7 determine whether reinstatement should be further conditioned on satisfactory
8 completion of a therapy program agreed to by the ~~person~~ individual and the
9 Drinking Driver Rehabilitation Program Director;

10 (B) if the screening indicates that therapy is needed, after the ~~person~~
11 individual has satisfactorily completed or shown substantial progress in
12 completing a therapy program at the ~~person's~~ individual's own expense agreed
13 to by the ~~person~~ individual and the Driver Rehabilitation Program Director;

14 (C) if the ~~person~~ individual elects to operate under an ignition
15 interlock RDL or ignition interlock certificate, after the ~~person~~ individual
16 operates under the RDL or certificate for the applicable period set forth in
17 subsection 1205(a) or section 1206 of this title, plus any extension of this
18 period arising from a violation of section 1213 of this title; and

19 (D) if the ~~person~~ individual has no pending criminal charges, civil
20 citations, or unpaid fines or penalties for a violation under this chapter.

1 (2) In the case of a second suspension, a license or privilege to operate
2 shall not be reinstated until:

3 (A) the ~~person~~ individual has successfully completed an alcohol and
4 driving rehabilitation program;

5 (B) the ~~person~~ individual has completed or shown substantial
6 progress in completing a therapy program at the ~~person's~~ individual's own
7 expense agreed to by the ~~person~~ individual and the Driver Rehabilitation
8 Program Director;

9 (C) after the ~~person~~ individual operates under an ignition interlock
10 RDL or ignition interlock certificate for 18 months or, in the case of a ~~person~~
11 someone subject to the one-year hard suspension prescribed in subdivision
12 1213(a)(1)(C) of this title, for one year, plus any extension of the relevant
13 period arising from a violation of section 1213 of this title, except if otherwise
14 provided in subdivision (4) of this subsection (a); and

15 (D) the ~~person~~ individual has no pending criminal charges, civil
16 citations, or unpaid fines or penalties for a violation under this chapter.

17 (3) In the case of a third or subsequent suspension or a revocation, a
18 license or privilege to operate shall not be reinstated until:

19 (A) the ~~person~~ individual has successfully completed an alcohol and
20 driving rehabilitation program;

1 (B) the ~~person~~ individual has completed or shown substantial
2 progress in completing a therapy program at the ~~person's~~ individual's own
3 expense agreed to by the ~~person~~ individual and the Driver Rehabilitation
4 Program Director;

5 (C) the ~~person~~ individual has satisfied the requirements of subsection
6 (b) of this section; and

7 (D) the ~~person~~ individual has no pending criminal charges, civil
8 citations, or unpaid fines or penalties for a violation under this chapter.

9 (4) The Commissioner shall waive a requirement under subdivision (2)
10 of this subsection or subsection (b) of this section that ~~a person~~ an individual
11 operate under an ignition interlock RDL or certificate prior to eligibility for
12 reinstatement if:

13 (A) the ~~person~~ individual furnishes sufficient proof as prescribed by
14 the Commissioner that ~~he or she~~ the individual is incapable of using an ignition
15 interlock device because of a medical condition that will persist permanently or
16 at least for the term of the suspension or, in the case of suspensions or
17 revocations for life, for a period of at least three years; or

18 (B) the underlying offenses arose solely from being under the
19 influence of a drug other than alcohol.

20 (b) Total Abstinence Program.

21 (1) As used in this subsection:

1 (A) “Drug” means:

2 (i) a regulated drug, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4201, that is used in
3 any way other than as prescribed for a legitimate medical use in conformity
4 with instructions from the prescriber; or

5 (ii) any substance or combination of substances, other than alcohol
6 or a regulated drug, that potentially affects the nervous system, brain, or
7 muscles of an individual so as to impair an individual’s ability to drive a
8 vehicle safely to the slightest degree.

9 (B) “Total abstinence” means refraining from consuming any amount
10 of alcohol or drugs at any time, regardless of whether the alcohol or drugs are
11 consumed by an individual when attempting to operate, operating, or in actual
12 physical control of a vehicle.

13 (2)(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, a ~~person~~
14 an individual whose license or privilege to operate has been suspended or
15 revoked for life under this subchapter may apply to the Commissioner for
16 reinstatement of ~~his or her~~ the individual’s driving privilege if the individual
17 satisfies the requirements set forth in subdivision (3) of this subsection (b).
18 ~~The person shall have completed three years of total abstinence from~~
19 ~~consumption of alcohol and nonprescription regulated drugs. The use of a~~
20 ~~regulated drug in accordance with a valid prescription shall not disqualify an~~

1 ~~applicant for reinstatement of his or her driving privileges unless the applicant~~
2 ~~used the regulated drug in a manner inconsistent with the prescription label.~~

3 (B) The beginning date for the period of total abstinence shall be not
4 earlier than the effective date of the suspension or revocation from which the
5 ~~person~~ individual is requesting reinstatement and shall not include any period
6 during which the ~~person~~ individual is serving a sentence of incarceration to
7 include furlough. The application shall include the applicant's authorization
8 for a urinalysis examination, or another examination if it is approved as a
9 preliminary screening test under this subchapter, to be conducted prior to
10 reinstatement under this subdivision (2). The application to the Commissioner
11 shall be accompanied by a fee of \$500.00. The Commissioner shall have the
12 discretion to waive the application fee if the Commissioner determines that
13 payment of the fee would present a hardship to the applicant.

14 ~~(2)(3)~~ If the Commissioner or a medical review board convened by the
15 Commissioner is satisfied by a preponderance of the evidence that the
16 applicant has ~~abstained for the required number of years~~ maintained total
17 abstinence for the three years immediately preceding the application, has
18 successfully completed a therapy program as required under this section, and
19 has operated under a valid ignition interlock RDL or under an ignition
20 interlock certificate for at least three years following the suspension or
21 revocation, and the ~~person~~ applicant provides a written acknowledgment that

1 ~~he or she cannot drink any amount of alcohol at all and cannot consume~~
2 ~~nonprescription regulated drugs under any circumstances~~ the applicant must
3 maintain total abstinence at all times while participating in the Total
4 Abstinence Program, the ~~person's~~ applicant's license or privilege to operate
5 shall be reinstated immediately, subject to the condition that the ~~person's~~
6 applicant's suspension or revocation will be put back in effect in the event any
7 further investigation reveals a ~~return to the consumption of alcohol or drugs~~
8 failure to maintain total abstinence and to ~~such~~ any additional conditions as the
9 Commissioner may impose to advance the public interest in public safety. The
10 requirement to operate under an ignition interlock RDL or ignition interlock
11 certificate shall not apply if the ~~person~~ applicant is exempt under subdivision
12 (a)(4) of this section.

13 ~~(3)~~(4) If after notice and an opportunity for a hearing the Commissioner
14 later finds that the ~~person~~ individual was violating the conditions of the
15 ~~person's~~ individual's reinstatement under this subsection, the ~~person's~~
16 individual's operating license or privilege to operate shall be immediately
17 suspended or revoked for life.

18 ~~(4)~~(5) If the Commissioner finds that a ~~person~~ an individual reinstated
19 under this subsection is suspended pursuant to section 1205 of this title or is
20 convicted of a violation of section 1201 of this title subsequent to

1 reinstatement under this subsection, the ~~person~~ individual shall be conclusively
2 presumed to be in violation of the conditions of ~~his or her~~ the reinstatement.

3 ~~(5)(6)~~ ~~A person~~ An individual shall be eligible for reinstatement under
4 this subsection only once following a suspension or revocation for life.

5 ~~(6)(7)(A)~~ If an applicant for reinstatement under this subsection (b)
6 resides in a jurisdiction other than Vermont, the Commissioner may elect not
7 to conduct an investigation. If the Commissioner elects not to conduct an
8 investigation, ~~he or she~~ the Commissioner shall provide a letter to the
9 applicant's jurisdiction of residence stating that Vermont does not object to the
10 jurisdiction issuing the applicant a license if the applicant is required to operate
11 only vehicles equipped with an ignition interlock device for at least a three-
12 year period, unless exempt under subdivision (a)(4) of this section, and is
13 required to complete any alcohol rehabilitation or treatment requirements of
14 the licensing jurisdiction.

15 (B) If the applicant's jurisdiction of residence is prepared to issue or
16 has issued a license in accordance with subdivision (A) of this subdivision (6)
17 and the applicant satisfies the requirements of section 675 of this title, the
18 Commissioner shall update relevant State and federal databases to reflect that
19 the applicant's lifetime suspension or revocation in Vermont under chapter 13,
20 subchapter 13 of this title has terminated.

1 (c) Screening and therapy programs. In the case of a second or subsequent
2 suspension, the Commissioner shall notify the ~~person that he or she is required~~
3 individual of the requirement to enroll in the alcohol and driving education
4 screening and therapy program provided for in this section within 30 days of
5 after license suspension. If the ~~person~~ individual fails to enroll or fails to
6 remain so enrolled until completion, the Drinking Driver Rehabilitation
7 Program shall report such failure to the sentencing court. The court may order
8 the ~~person~~ individual to appear and show cause why ~~he or she~~ the individual
9 failed to comply.

10 (d) Judicial review. ~~A person~~ An individual aggrieved by a decision of a
11 designated counselor under this section may seek review of that decision
12 pursuant to Rule 75 of the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure.

13 * * *

14 Sec. 20. CURRENT TOTAL ABSTINENCE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

15 (a) Not later than September 1, 2023, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
16 shall provide written notice to all individuals participating in or applying to
17 participate in the Total Abstinence Program as of the effective date of this
18 section of amendments to 23 V.S.A. § 1209a and that, as of the effective date
19 of this section, they must maintain total abstinence, as defined in 23 V.S.A.
20 § 1209a(b)(1) as amended by Sec. 19 of this act, at all times while participating
21 in or applying to participate in the Total Abstinence Program. Notice shall be

1 mailed to an individual's residence or mailing address as currently listed with
2 the Department of Motor Vehicles.

3 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the license or
4 privilege to operate of an individual participating in the Total Abstinence
5 Program on the effective date of this section may be suspended or revoked for
6 life in accordance with 23 V.S.A. § 1209a(b)(3), as amended by Sec. 19 of this
7 act, in the event that any further investigation reveals a failure to maintain total
8 abstinence, as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 1209a(b)(1) as amended by Sec. 19 of
9 this act.

10 * * * Overweight Permits * * *

11 Sec. 21. 23 V.S.A. § 1392 is amended to read:

12 § 1392. GROSS WEIGHT LIMITS ON HIGHWAYS

13 Except as provided in section 1400 of this title, a person or corporation shall
14 not operate or cause to be operated a motor vehicle in excess of the total
15 weight, including vehicle, object, or contrivance and load, of:

16 * * *

17 (3) No vehicle may exceed a gross weight in excess of 80,000 pounds
18 unless the operator or owner of the vehicle has complied with the provisions of
19 section 1400 of this title or except as otherwise provided in this section.

20 * * *

1 (13) Despite the axle-load provisions of section 1391 of this title and the
2 maximum gross load of subdivision (4) of this section, a special annual permit,
3 which shall expire with the vehicle's registration, except for vehicles not
4 registered in Vermont in which case the permit shall become void on January 1
5 following date of issue, may be issued to a person ~~or corporation~~ operating on
6 designated routes on the State Highway System for a fee of ~~\$415.00~~ \$382.00
7 for each vehicle ~~that must be~~ registered for a weight of 80,000 pounds. This
8 special permit shall be issued only for a combination of vehicle and semi-
9 trailer or trailer equipped with five or more axles, with a distance between
10 axles that meets the minimum requirements of registering the vehicle to 80,000
11 pounds as allowed under subdivision (4) of this section. The maximum gross
12 load under this special permit shall be 90,000 pounds. Unless authorized by
13 federal law, this subdivision shall not apply to operation on the Dwight D.
14 Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

15 (14) Despite the axle-load provisions of section 1391 of this title and the
16 axle spacing and maximum gross load provisions of subdivision (4) of this
17 section, a special annual permit, which shall expire with the vehicle's
18 registration, except for vehicles not registered in Vermont in which case the
19 permit shall become void on January 1 following date of issue, may be issued
20 to a person ~~or corporation~~ transporting loads on vehicles on designated routes
21 on the State Highway System for the following fees for each vehicle unit.

1 Unless authorized by federal law, the provisions of this subdivision regarding
2 weight limits, or tolerances, or both, shall not apply to operation on the Dwight
3 D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. This
4 special permit shall be issued for the following vehicles and conditions:

5 * * *

6 (16) Notwithstanding the axle load provisions of section 1391 of this
7 title and the maximum gross load of subdivision (4) of this section, a five or
8 more axle truck tractor, semi-trailer combination, or truck trailer combination,
9 when the load consists solely of unprocessed milk products as defined in
10 subdivision 4(55) of this title, may be registered for and operated with a
11 maximum gross weight of 90,000 pounds on State highways without permit
12 and upon posted State and town highways ~~and those highways designated as~~
13 ~~the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense~~
14 ~~Highways~~ when the vehicle has been issued a permit in compliance with the
15 provisions of section 1400 of this title; however:

16 (A) Vehicles operated pursuant to this subdivision (16) shall be
17 subject to the same axle spacing restrictions as are applied to five or more axle
18 vehicles registered to 80,000 pounds as set forth in subdivision (4) of this
19 section.

20 (B) ~~On those highways designated as the Dwight D. Eisenhower~~
21 ~~National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, the provisions of~~

1 ~~subsection 1391(c) of this title shall apply unless other axle load limits,~~
2 ~~tolerances, or both, are authorized under federal law. Unless prohibited by~~
3 ~~federal law, the provisions of this subdivision (16) shall apply to operation on~~
4 ~~the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense~~
5 ~~Highways.~~

6 (C) ~~The fee for the annual permit as provided in this subdivision (16)~~
7 ~~shall be \$10.00 when the fee has been paid to register the vehicle for 90,000~~
8 ~~pounds or \$382.00 when the vehicle is registered for 80,000 pounds.~~

9 [Repealed.]

10 (17) Notwithstanding the gross vehicle weight provisions of subdivision
11 (4) of this section, a truck trailer combination or truck tractor, semi-trailer
12 combination with six or more load-bearing axles registered for 80,000 pounds
13 shall be allowed to bear a maximum of 99,000 pounds by special annual
14 permit, which shall expire with the vehicle's registration, except for vehicles
15 not registered in Vermont in which case the permit shall become void on
16 January 1 following the date of issue, for operating on designated routes on
17 State and town highways, subject to the following:

18 (A) The combination of vehicles must have, as a minimum, a
19 distance of 51 feet between extreme axles.

1 (19)(A) A person issued a permit under the provisions of subdivision
2 (13), (14), ~~(16)~~, or (17) of this section, and upon payment of a \$10.00
3 administrative fee for each additional permit, may obtain additional permits for
4 the same vehicle, provided the additional permit is for a lesser weight and
5 provided the vehicle or combination of vehicles meets the minimum
6 requirements for the permit sought as set forth in this section.

7 * * *

8 Sec. 22. [Deleted.]

9 * * * Electronic Permits * * *

10 Sec. 23. 23 V.S.A. § 1392 is amended to read:

11 § 1392. GROSS WEIGHT LIMITS ON HIGHWAYS

12 Except as provided in section 1400 of this title, a person ~~or corporation~~ shall
13 not operate or cause to be operated a motor vehicle in excess of the total
14 weight, including vehicle, object, or contrivance and load, of:

15 * * *

16 ~~(21) All permits issued pursuant to this section shall be carried in the~~
17 ~~vehicle. The fine for violation of this subdivision shall be \$150.00. A~~
18 ~~violation of this subdivision shall be considered an offense separate from an~~
19 ~~overweight violation. [Repealed.]~~

1 Sec. 24. 23 V.S.A. § 1455 is added to read:

2 § 1455. CARRYING OF PERMITS IN THE PERMITTED MOTOR

3 VEHICLE

4 All permits issued pursuant to this subchapter shall be carried in the motor
5 vehicle in either paper or electronic form. Use of a portable electronic device
6 to display an electronic permit does not in itself constitute consent for an
7 enforcement officer to access other contents of the device. The civil penalty
8 for violation of this section shall be \$150.00. A violation of this section shall
9 be considered an offense separate from any other related violations.

10 * * * Title * * *

11 * * * Prospective Elimination of 15-Year Limitation; Electronic Title * * *

12 Sec. 25. 23 V.S.A. § 2012 is amended to read:

13 § 2012. EXEMPTED VEHICLES

14 No certificate of title need be obtained for:

15 * * *

16 (10) a vehicle that is more than 15 years old on January 1, 2024.

17 Sec. 26. 23 V.S.A. § 2013 is amended to read:

18 ~~§ 2013. WHEN CERTIFICATE REQUIRED; ISSUANCE OF EXEMPT~~

19 ~~VEHICLE TITLE UPON REQUEST~~

20 (a)(1) Except as provided in section 2012 of this title, the provisions of this
21 chapter shall apply to and a title must be obtained for all motor vehicles at the

1 time of first registration or when a change of registration is required under the
2 provisions of section 321 of this title by reason of a sale for consideration.

3 (2) ~~In addition, a Vermont resident may apply at any time to the~~
4 ~~Commissioner to obtain an “exempt vehicle title” for a vehicle that is more~~
5 ~~than 15 years old. Such titles shall be in a form prescribed by the~~
6 ~~Commissioner and shall include a legend indicating that the title is issued~~
7 ~~under the authority of this subdivision. The Commissioner shall issue an~~
8 ~~exempt vehicle title if the applicant pays the applicable fee and fulfills the~~
9 ~~requirements of this section, and if the Commissioner is satisfied that:~~

10 (A) ~~the applicant is the owner of the vehicle;~~

11 (B) ~~the applicant is a Vermont resident; and~~

12 (C) ~~the vehicle is not subject to any liens or encumbrances.~~

13 [Repealed.]

14 (3) ~~Prior to issuing an exempt vehicle title pursuant to subdivision (2) of~~
15 ~~this subsection, the Commissioner shall require all of the following:~~

16 (A) ~~The applicant to furnish one of the following proofs of~~
17 ~~ownership, in order of preference:~~

18 (i) ~~a previous Vermont or out of state title indicating the~~
19 ~~applicant’s ownership;~~

20 (ii) ~~an original or a certified copy of a previous Vermont or out of~~
21 ~~state registration indicating the applicant’s ownership;~~

1 (b) The Commissioner may issue an electronic certificate of title, provided
2 that the applicant is entitled to the issuance of the certificate of title pursuant to
3 subsection (a) of this section.

4 (c) The Commissioner shall maintain ~~at his or her central office~~ a record of
5 all certificates of title issued ~~by him or her for vehicles 15 years old and newer,~~
6 and of all exempt vehicle titles issued ~~by him or her,~~ under a distinctive title
7 number assigned to the vehicle; under the identification number of the vehicle;
8 alphabetically, under the name of the owner; and, in the discretion of the
9 Commissioner, by any other method ~~he or she~~ the Commissioner determines.
10 The original records may be maintained on microfilm or electronic imaging.

11 Sec. 28. 23 V.S.A. § 2091(a) is amended to read:

12 (a) Except for vehicles for which no certificate of title is required pursuant
13 to section 2012 of this title ~~and for vehicles that are more than 15 years old,~~
14 any person who purchases or in any manner acquires a vehicle as salvage; any
15 person who scraps, dismantles, or destroys a motor vehicle; or any insurance
16 company or representative thereof who declares a motor vehicle to be a total
17 loss, shall apply to the Commissioner for a salvage certificate of title within 15
18 days ~~of~~ after the time the vehicle is purchased or otherwise acquired as
19 salvage; is scrapped, dismantled, or destroyed; or is declared a total loss.
20 However, an insurance company or representative thereof proceeding under

1 subsection (c) of this section may apply outside this 15-day window to the
2 extent necessary to comply with the requirements of that subsection.

3 * * * Nonresident Title * * *

4 Sec. 29. 23 V.S.A. § 2020 is amended to read:

5 § 2020. WITHHOLDING OF CERTIFICATE; BOND REQUIRED

6 If the Commissioner is not satisfied as to the ownership of the vehicle or
7 that there are no undisclosed security interests in it, the Commissioner may
8 register the vehicle but shall either:

9 (1) Withhold issuance of a certificate of title until the applicant presents
10 documents reasonably sufficient to satisfy the Commissioner as to the
11 applicant's ownership of the vehicle and that there are no undisclosed security
12 interests in it; ~~or,~~

13 (2) As a condition of issuing a certificate of title, require ~~the~~ an
14 applicant who is a Vermont resident to file with the Commissioner a bond in
15 the form prescribed by the Commissioner and executed by the applicant, and
16 either accompanied by the deposit of cash with the Commissioner or also
17 executed by a person authorized to conduct a surety business in this State. The
18 bond shall be in an amount equal to one and one-half times the value of the
19 vehicle as determined by the Commissioner and conditioned to indemnify any
20 prior owner and lienholder and any subsequent purchaser of the vehicle or
21 person acquiring any security interest in it, and their respective successors in

1 interest, against any expense, loss, or damage, including reasonable attorney's
2 fees, by reason of the issuance of the certificate of title of the vehicle or on
3 account of any defect in or undisclosed security interest upon the right, title,
4 and interest of the applicant in and to the vehicle. Any such interested person
5 has a right of action to recover on the bond for any breach of its conditions, but
6 the aggregate liability of the surety to all persons shall not exceed the amount
7 of the bond. The bond, and any deposit accompanying it, shall be returned at
8 the end of three years or earlier if the vehicle is no longer registered in this
9 State and the currently valid certificate of title is surrendered to the
10 Commissioner, unless the Commissioner has been notified of the pendency of
11 an action to recover on the bond. The Commissioner shall not issue titles to
12 nonresidents under the provisions of this subdivision.

13 * * * Towing; Abandoned Vehicles * * *

14 Sec. 30. 23 V.S.A. § 4(88) is added to read:

15 (88) "Towing business" means a person that regularly engages in one or
16 more of the following: recovery, impoundment, transport, storage, or disposal
17 of motor vehicles.

18 Sec. 31. 23 V.S.A. § 2151 is amended to read:

19 § 2151. DEFINITIONS

20 As used in this subchapter:

21 (1)(A) "Abandoned motor vehicle" means:

1 (i) a motor vehicle that has remained on public or private property
2 or on or along a highway for more than 48 hours without the consent of the
3 owner or person in control of the property and has a valid registration plate or
4 public vehicle identification number that has not been removed, destroyed, or
5 altered; or

6 (ii) a motor vehicle that has remained on public or private property
7 or on or along a highway without the consent of the owner or person in control
8 of the property for any period of time if:

9 (I) the vehicle does not have a valid registration plate or the
10 public vehicle identification number has been removed, destroyed, or altered;
11 or

12 (II) a law enforcement officer has requested that the vehicle be
13 removed by a towing business.

14 (B) “Abandoned motor vehicle” does not include a vehicle or other
15 equipment used or to be used in construction or in the operation or
16 maintenance of highways or public utility facilities, which is left in a manner
17 that does not interfere with the normal movement of traffic.

18 (2) “Landowner” means a person who owns or leases or otherwise has
19 authority to control use of real property.

20 (3) “Law enforcement officer” means a State Police officer, municipal
21 police officer, motor vehicle inspector, Capitol Police officer, constable,

1 sheriff, or deputy sheriff certified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council
2 under 20 V.S.A. § 2358.

3 (4) “Motor vehicle” means all vehicles propelled or drawn by power
4 other than muscular power that have, or could have, one or more of the
5 following:

6 (A) a registration plate, registration decal, or certificate of number;

7 (B) a public vehicle identification number; or

8 (C) a certificate of title.

9 ~~(3)~~(5) “Public vehicle identification number” means the public vehicle
10 identification number that is usually visible through the windshield and
11 attached to the driver’s side of the dashboard, instrument panel, or windshield
12 pillar post or on the doorjamb on the driver’s side of the vehicle.

13 Sec. 32. 23 V.S.A. § 2153(a) is amended to read:

14 (a) A landowner on whose property an abandoned motor vehicle ~~is located~~
15 was discovered or has been relocated shall apply to the Department for an
16 abandoned motor vehicle certification on forms supplied by the Department
17 within ~~30~~ 90 days ~~of~~ after the date the vehicle was discovered ~~on or brought to~~
18 ~~the property unless the vehicle has been removed from the property or~~
19 relocated. An abandoned motor vehicle certification form shall indicate the
20 date that the abandoned motor vehicle was discovered or ~~brought to the~~
21 ~~property~~ relocated; the make, color, model, and location of the vehicle; the

1 name, address, and telephone number of the landowner of the property where
2 the vehicle is currently located; and a certification of the public vehicle
3 identification number, if any, ~~to be recorded~~ prepared by a law enforcement
4 officer, licensed dealer, or inspection station designated by the Commissioner
5 of Motor Vehicles. This subsection shall not be construed as creating a private
6 right of action against the landowner of the property where an abandoned
7 motor vehicle is located.

8 Sec. 33. 23 V.S.A. § 2158 is amended to read:

9 § 2158. FEES FOR TOWING; PUBLIC PROPERTY; FUNDING

10 (a) A towing service may charge a fee of up to ~~\$40.00~~ \$125.00 for towing
11 an abandoned motor vehicle from public property under the provisions of
12 sections 2151–2157 of this ~~title~~ subchapter. This fee shall be paid to the
13 towing service upon the issuance by the Department of Motor Vehicles of a
14 certificate of abandoned motor vehicles under section 2156 of this title. The
15 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall notify the Commissioner of Finance
16 and Management who shall issue payment to the towing service for vehicles
17 removed from public property. ~~Payments under this section shall terminate~~
18 ~~upon the payment of a total of \$16,000.00 for towing abandoned motor~~
19 ~~vehicles from public property in any fiscal year. A towing company shall not~~
20 ~~be eligible for more than 50 percent of this annual allocation.~~

1 (b) ~~The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles is authorized to expend up to~~
2 \$16,000.00 of the Department's annual appropriation for the purpose of this
3 section. [Repealed.]

4 Sec. 34. REPORTS ON AMOUNT PAID BY STATE FOR TOWING
5 ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLES FROM PUBLIC PROPERTY

6 (a) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall provide an oral report on the
7 following to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation on or before
8 February 15, 2024:

9 (1) the amount paid by the State pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 2158 during the
10 first six months of fiscal year 2024; and

11 (2) a summary of any changes to Department processes related to the
12 payment for the towing of abandoned motor vehicles from public property that
13 were implemented after May 1, 2023.

14 (b) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall file a written report on the
15 following with the House and Senate Committees on Transportation on or
16 before December 15, 2025:

17 (1) the amount paid by the State pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 2158 during
18 fiscal year 2024;

19 (2) the amount paid by the State pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 2158 during
20 fiscal year 2025;

1 (3) a summary of any changes to Department processes related to the
2 payment for the towing of abandoned motor vehicles from public property that
3 were implemented after May 1, 2023; and

4 (4) any recommendations on changes to State statute related to the
5 towing of abandoned motor vehicles from public property.

6 Sec. 35. TOWING WORKING GROUP; REPORT

7 (a) The Office of the Attorney General, in consultation with the
8 Department of Financial Regulation, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the
9 Office of Professional Regulation, and the Office of the Vermont State
10 Treasurer, shall engage in a working group process to study vehicle towing
11 practices in the State of Vermont.

12 (b) The working group process shall include stakeholder engagement and at
13 least one public hearing. The following shall be invited to participate as a
14 stakeholder:

15 (1) AAA Northern New England;

16 (2) Associated General Contractors of Vermont;

17 (3) Association of Vermont Credit Unions;

18 (4) Vermont Bankers Association;

19 (5) Vermont Insurance Agents Association;

20 (6) Vermont League of Cities and Towns;

21 (7) Vermont Legal Aid;

1 (8) Vermont Towing Association;

2 (9) Vermont Truck and Bus Association;

3 (10) Vermont Public Interest Research Group; and

4 (11) any other persons identified by the Office of the Attorney General.

5 (c) The study shall, at a minimum, address:

6 (1) pricing of pleasure car and commercial vehicle towing and recovery,
7 including from State and town highways that are restricted based on motor
8 vehicle size;

9 (2) crash site remediation, including costs borne by towing companies;

10 (3) storage practices, including:

11 (A) pricing;

12 (B) vehicle access for removal of personal belongings; and

13 (C) vehicle access for removal of cargo;

14 (4) practices relating to abandonment or suspected abandonment when
15 necessary or appropriate;

16 (5) any applicable recommendations for amendments to State statute;

17 (6) best practices from other states; and

18 (7) any other information that the Office of the Attorney General deems
19 pertinent to the study.

20 (d) The Attorney General shall file a written report on the study, including
21 any recommendations it deems appropriate, with the House Committees on

1 Commerce and Economic Development, on Government Operations and
2 Military Affairs, and on Transportation and the Senate Committees on
3 Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, on Finance, on
4 Government Operations, and on Transportation on or before December 15,
5 2023.

6 * * * Proof of Liability Insurance; Snowmobiles * * *

7 Sec. 36. 23 V.S.A. § 3206(b) is amended to read:

8 (b) A snowmobile shall not be operated:

9 * * *

10 (19) Without carrying proof of liability insurance as described in this
11 subdivision. No owner or operator of a snowmobile shall operate or permit the
12 operation of the snowmobile on the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System or
13 public right of way, except on the property of the owner, without having in
14 effect a liability policy or bond in the amounts of at least \$25,000.00 for one
15 person and \$50,000.00 for two or more persons killed or injured and
16 \$10,000.00 for damages to property in any one crash. In lieu thereof, evidence
17 of self-insurance in the amount of \$115,000.00 must be filed with the
18 Commissioner. Such financial responsibility shall be maintained and
19 evidenced in a form prescribed by the Commissioner. The standards and
20 process established in subsection 801(c) of this title shall be adopted. An
21 operator may prove financial responsibility using a portable electronic device;

1 however, use of a device for this purpose does not in itself constitute consent
2 for an enforcement officer to access other contents of the device. An operator
3 cited for violating this subsection shall not be convicted if the operator sends or
4 produces to the issuing enforcement agency within seven business days after
5 the traffic stop proof of financial responsibility that was in effect at the time of
6 the traffic stop.

7 * * *

8 * * * Commercial Driver's License; Federal Motor Carrier Safety
9 Administration Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse * * *

10 Sec. 37. 23 V.S.A. § 4108 is amended to read:

11 § 4108. COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE, COMMERCIAL
12 LEARNER'S PERMIT QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

13 (a) Before issuing a commercial driver's license or commercial learner's
14 permit, the Commissioner shall request the applicant's complete operating
15 record from any state in which the applicant was previously licensed to operate
16 any type of motor vehicle in the past 10 years and conduct a check of the
17 applicant's operating record by querying the National Driver Register
18 established under 49 U.S.C. § 30302 ~~and~~, the Commercial Driver's License
19 Information System established under 49 U.S.C. § 31309, and the Commercial
20 Driver's License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse established under 49 C.F.R.

1 Part 382, Subpart G and required pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 382.725 to determine
2 if:

3 (1) the applicant has already been issued a commercial driver's license;

4 (2) the applicant's commercial driver's license has been suspended,
5 revoked, or canceled; ~~or~~

6 (3) the applicant has been convicted of any offense listed in 49 U.S.C.
7 § 30304(a)(3); or

8 (4) the applicant has a verified positive, adulterated, or substituted
9 controlled substances test result; has an alcohol confirmation test with a
10 concentration of 0.04 or higher; has refused to submit to a test in violation of
11 49 C.F.R. § 382.211; or the applicant's employer has reported actual
12 knowledge, as defined at 49 C.F.R. § 382.107, that the applicant used alcohol
13 on duty in violation of 49 C.F.R. § 382.205, used alcohol before duty in
14 violation of 49 C.F.R. § 382.207, used alcohol following an accident in
15 violation of 49 C.F.R. § 382.209, or used a controlled substance in violation of
16 49 C.F.R. § 382.213.

17 (b) The Commissioner shall not issue a commercial driver's license or
18 commercial learner's permit to any individual:

19 * * *

20 (4) Who has a verified positive, adulterated, or substituted controlled
21 substances test result; has an alcohol confirmation test with a concentration of

1 0.04 or higher; has refused to submit to a test in violation of 49 C.F.R.
2 § 382.211; or for whom an employer has reported actual knowledge, as defined
3 in 49 C.F.R. § 382.107, that the applicant used alcohol on duty in violation of
4 49 C.F.R. § 382.205, used alcohol before duty in violation of 49 C.F.R.
5 § 382.207, used alcohol following an accident in violation of 49 C.F.R.
6 § 382.209, or used a controlled substance in violation of 49 C.F.R. § 382.213.

7 * * *

8 * * * Purchase and Use Tax * * *

9 Sec. 38. 32 V.S.A. § 8902(5) is amended to read:

10 (5) "Taxable cost" means the purchase price as defined in subdivision
11 (4) of this section or the taxable cost as determined under section 8907 of this
12 title. For any purchaser who has paid tax on the purchase or use of a motor
13 vehicle that was sold or traded by the purchaser or for which the purchaser
14 received payment under a contract of insurance, the taxable cost of the
15 replacement motor vehicle other than a leased vehicle shall exclude:

16 (A) The value allowed by the seller on any motor vehicle accepted by
17 ~~him or her~~ the seller as part of the consideration of the motor vehicle, provided
18 the motor vehicle accepted by the seller is owned and previously or currently
19 registered or titled by the purchaser, with no change of ownership since
20 registration or titling, except for motor vehicles for which registration is not

1 required under the provisions of Title 23 or motor vehicles received under the
2 provisions of subdivision 8911(8) of this title.

3 (B) The amount received from the sale of a motor vehicle last
4 registered or titled in ~~his or her~~ the seller's name, the amount not to exceed the
5 clean trade-in value of the same make, type, model, and year of manufacture as
6 designated by the manufacturer and as shown in the NADA Official Used Car
7 Guide (New England edition), or any comparable publication, provided such
8 sale occurs within three months ~~of~~ after the taxable purchase. However, this
9 three-month period shall be extended day-for-day for any time that a member
10 of a guard unit or of the U.S. Armed Forces, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 101(10),
11 spends outside Vermont due to activation or deployment, and an additional
12 60 days following the ~~person's~~ individual's return from activation or
13 deployment. Such amount shall be reported on forms supplied by the
14 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.

15 * * *

16 Sec. 39. 32 V.S.A. § 8911 is amended to read:

17 § 8911. EXCEPTIONS

18 The tax imposed by this chapter shall not apply to:

19 * * *

20 (22) Motor vehicles that have been registered to the applicant ~~for a~~
21 ~~period of at least three years~~ in a jurisdiction that imposes a state sales or use

1 tax on motor vehicles. An applicant for exemption under this subdivision shall
2 bear the burden of establishing to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the
3 vehicle was registered in a qualifying jurisdiction ~~for the requisite period.~~

4 * * *

5 * * * Gross Weight Limits on Highways; Report * * *

6 Sec. 40. REPORT ON INCREASING GROSS WEIGHT LIMITS ON
7 HIGHWAYS THROUGH SPECIAL ANNUAL PERMIT

8 (a) The Secretary of Transportation or designee, in collaboration with the
9 Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or designee; the Executive
10 Director of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns or designee; and the
11 President of the Vermont Forest Products Association or designee and with the
12 assistance of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles or designee, shall examine
13 adding one or more additional special annual permits to 23 V.S.A. § 1392 to
14 allow for the operation of motor vehicles at a gross vehicle weight over 99,000
15 pounds and shall file a written report on the examination and any
16 recommendations with the House and Senate Committees on Transportation on
17 or before January 15, 2024.

18 (b) At a minimum, the examination shall address:

19 (1) allowing for a truck trailer combination or truck tractor, semi-trailer
20 combination transporting cargo of legal dimensions that can be separated into
21 units of legal weight without affecting the physical integrity of the load to bear

1 a maximum of 107,000 pounds on six axles or a maximum of 117,000 pounds
2 on seven axles by special annual permit;

3 (2) limitations for any additional special annual gross vehicle weight
4 permits based on highway type, including limited access State highway, non-
5 limited-access State highway, class 1 town highway, and class 2 town
6 highway;

7 (3) limitations for any additional special annual gross vehicle weight
8 permits based on axle spacing and axle-weight provisions;

9 (4) reciprocity treatment for foreign trucks from a state or province that
10 recognizes Vermont vehicles permitted at increased gross weights;

11 (5) permit fees for any additional special annual gross vehicle weight
12 permits;

13 (6) additional penalties, including civil penalties and permit revocation,
14 for gross vehicle weight violations; and

15 (7) impacts of any additional special annual gross vehicle permits on the
16 forest economy and on the management and forest cover of Vermont's
17 landscape.

18 * * * Implementation of DMV Modernization Project; Driver Services * * *

19 Sec. 41. IMPLEMENTATION OF DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

20 MODERNIZATION PROJECT; GENERAL ASSEMBLY

21 OVERSIGHT

1 (a) Findings. The General Assembly finds that:

2 (1) The Department of Motor Vehicles provides services to almost all
3 Vermonters, including, in fiscal year 2022, engaging in more than a million
4 transactions, with almost half of all transactions being conducted online.

5 (2) The Department is in the middle of the DMV Core System
6 Modernization project, with an estimated launch date for the vehicle services
7 module in November 2023 and with the driver services module expected to
8 launch approximately 18 months after it commences in February 2024.

9 (3) As part of its design and implementation of the vehicle services
10 module, the Department has discovered that one of the barriers to modernizing
11 Department operations is certain outdated statutes. In order to best modernize
12 and optimize Department processes for the future during the months-long
13 module design and development process, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
14 has had to make business decisions based on the needs of the Department to
15 modernize processes to best meet the needs of Vermonters. These business
16 decisions will, upon future implementation, conflict with statute if certain
17 statutes are not amended through the legislative process.

18 (4) The driver services module of the DMV Core System Modernization
19 project will design and implement processes to issue and maintain driver's
20 licenses and other credentials; support fraud detection and investigation;

1 administer hearings; and administer, manage, and report driver restrictions,
2 convictions, and other information related to driver improvement.

3 (5) Driver services processes are regulated by statute in 23 V.S.A.
4 chapters 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 24, 25, and 39, as well as more than 15 rules adopted
5 pursuant to authority under Title 23.

6 (6) It is anticipated that in designing and implementing the driver
7 services module, the Commissioner will, in order to modernize and optimize
8 Department processes to best serve Vermonters, need to make additional
9 business decisions that will, upon future implementation, conflict with statute
10 if certain statutes are not amended through the legislative process.

11 (7) Of the modernization projects in which the State is currently
12 engaged, the DMV Core System Modernization Project will likely have the
13 most significant impact on existing statutory language, but it is anticipated that
14 other modernization projects, such as the one that the Department of Labor will
15 undertake related to unemployment insurance, will raise similar tensions
16 between promoting efficiencies as part of modernization and contending with
17 outdated statutory provisions.

18 (8) A collaborative partnership between the Department and the General
19 Assembly throughout the driver services module, monitored during legislative
20 adjournment by the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee, the Joint Fiscal
21 Committee, and members of the House and Senate Committees on

1 Transportation, provides the best opportunity to save money, promote
2 transparency, streamline the process of amending statute to optimize potential
3 efficiencies for Vermonters, and serve as a model for collaboration between
4 branches of State government in future modernization projects.

5 (b) Reports.

6 (1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall file three written reports
7 on the design and implementation of the driver services module of the DMV
8 Core System Modernization project with the Joint Transportation Oversight
9 Committee, the Joint Fiscal Committee, and the House and Senate Committees
10 on Transportation. The first shall be due on or before July 31, 2024, the
11 second shall be due on or before October 15, 2024, and the third shall be due
12 on or before January 15, 2025.

13 (2) To the extent practicable, at the time each written report is filed, the
14 Department shall include recommendations on which provisions of statute and
15 rule the Department anticipates will need to be amended or repealed in order to
16 best modernize and optimize Department processes related to the provision of
17 driver services.

18 (c) General Assembly oversight. To the extent practicable, the Joint
19 Transportation Oversight Committee, the Joint Fiscal Committee, and the
20 House and Senate Committees on Transportation shall promptly express any

1 concerns to the Department regarding any Department recommendations
2 contained in any written report filed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

3 * * * Excessive Motor Vehicle Noise Report * * *

4 Sec. 42. EXCESSIVE MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE REPORT

5 (a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the
6 Commissioner of Public Safety and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns,
7 shall study and report on current and potential enforcement practices around
8 excessive motor vehicle noise and make recommendations on ways to limit
9 excessive motor vehicle noise in Vermont.

10 (b) The study and report shall, at a minimum, address:

11 (1) if there should be a noise standard in statute or the Periodic
12 Inspection Manual, or both, and, if so, what that standard should be;

13 (2) costs to incorporate noise testing into the State motor vehicle
14 inspection required under 23 V.S.A. § 1222 and the State's Periodic Inspection
15 Manual;

16 (3) costs to train law enforcement officers on noise testing;

17 (4) possible options to address excessive motor vehicle noise that do not
18 involve noise testing such as visual inspections for modifications to a motor
19 vehicle's exhaust system, whether as part of enforcement of the State motor
20 vehicle inspection, and labeling on one or more components of a motor
21 vehicle's exhaust system; and

1 (5) approaches to minimize excessive motor vehicle noise that have
2 been taken in other states, including increased enforcement by law
3 enforcement coupled with an objective noise standard defense.

4 (c) On or before January 1, 2025, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
5 shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary
6 and on Transportation with the Commissioner's findings and any
7 recommendations for legislative action.

8 * * * Outreach to Municipalities on Speed Limits * * *

9 Sec. 43. OUTREACH TO MUNICIPALITIES ON SPEED LIMITS

10 The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Vermont League of
11 Cities and Towns and regional planning commissions, shall design and
12 implement a program to provide outreach to municipalities on the setting,
13 posting, and enforcement of speed limits on town highways. The outreach
14 materials shall, at a minimum, provide information on applicable State statutes,
15 applicable portions of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and
16 best practices when it comes to setting and posting speed limits on town
17 highways.

18 * * * ATV Fees and Penalties * * *

19 Sec. 44. REPEALS

20 (a) 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 158, Secs. 29 (July 1, 2023 amendment to
21 23 V.S.A. § 3513(a)) and 43(c) (effective date) are repealed.

1 (b) 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.702 (July 1, 2023 amendment
2 to 23 V.S.A. § 3513) is repealed.

3 Sec. 45. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. H.100(d) is amended to read:

4 (d) Secs. E.240.1 (7 V.S.A. § 845); E.240.2 (32 V.S.A. § 7909); ~~E.702~~
5 ~~(Fish and Wildlife)~~; F.100(b), F.101(b), F.102(b) and F.103 (Executive
6 Branch; Exempt Employees, Misc. Statutory Salaries; Fiscal Year 2024);
7 F.104–106 (Judicial Branch; Statutory Salaries, Fiscal Year 2024); F.107
8 (Sheriffs, Statutory Salaries, Fiscal Year 2024); F.108 (State’s Attorney’s;
9 Statutory Salaries; Fiscal Year 2024); and Secs. F.109(a)(2), F.109(b)(3), and
10 F.109(c)(2) (Appropriations; Fiscal Year 2024) shall take effect on July 1,
11 2023.

12 Sec. 46. 23 V.S.A. § 3513(a) is amended to read:

13 (a) The amount of 90 percent of the fees and penalties collected under this
14 chapter, except interest, is allocated to the ~~Agency of Natural Resources~~
15 Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for use by the Vermont ATV
16 Sportsman’s Association (VASA) for development and maintenance of a
17 Statewide ATV Trail Program, for trail liability insurance, and to contract for
18 law enforcement services with any constable, sheriff’s department, municipal
19 police department, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of
20 Fish and Wildlife for purposes of trail compliance pursuant to this chapter.
21 The Departments of Public Safety and of Fish and Wildlife are authorized to

1 contract with VASA to provide these law enforcement services. The ~~Agency~~
2 ~~of Natural Resources~~ Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall retain
3 for its use up to \$7,000.00 during each fiscal year to be used for administration
4 of the State grant that supports this ~~program~~ Program.

5 * * * Effective Dates * * *

6 Sec. 47. EFFECTIVE DATES

7 (a) This section and Secs. 1 (new motor vehicle arbitration; 9 V.S.A.
8 § 4173(d)), 2 (definition of mail; 23 V.S.A. § 4(87)), 14 (validation sticker
9 requirements in rule), 15 (electronic proof of registration; 23 V.S.A. § 307),
10 16 and 17 (plug-in electric vehicle registration fees; 23 V.S.A. §§ 361 and
11 362), 20 (current Total Abstinence Program participants), and 23 and 24
12 (electronic permits; 23 V.S.A. §§ 1392(21) and 1455) shall take effect on
13 passage.

14 (b) Sec. 19 (Total Abstinence Program; 23 V.S.A. § 1209a) shall take
15 effect on passage and apply to all individuals participating in or in the process
16 of applying to participate in the Total Abstinence Program as of the effective
17 date of this section without regard to when the individual's license was
18 reinstated under the Total Abstinence Program.

19 (c) Secs. 4–13 (license plate stickers; validation stickers) shall take effect
20 on November 1, 2023.

1 (d) Secs. 25–28 (title; 23 V.S.A. §§ 2012, 2013, 2017, and 2091(a)) shall
2 take effect upon completion of the vehicle services module of the DMV Core
3 System Modernization project.

4 (e) Sec. 37 (commercial driver’s license clearinghouse; 23 V.S.A. § 4108)
5 shall take effect on November 18, 2024.

6 (f) All other sections shall take effect on July 1, 2023.