

# House Calendar

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Wednesday, April 17, 2024

106th DAY OF THE ADJOURNED SESSION

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House Convenes at 1:00 P.M.

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**ACTION CALENDAR**

**Favorable with Amendment**

**S. 189**

An act relating to mental health response service guidelines and social service provider safety

**Rep. Peterson of Clarendon**, for the Committee on Health Care, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. § 7260 is added to read:

§ 7260. MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE SERVICE GUIDELINES

(a) The Department shall develop guidelines for use by municipalities, including use by emergency medical technicians and public safety personnel, such as law enforcement officers as defined by 20 V.S.A. § 2351a and firefighters as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 3151, who are employed, volunteer, or are under contract with a municipality. The guidelines shall recommend best practices for de-escalation and for mental health response services, including crisis response services. The Department shall make the guidelines available to municipalities and publish the guidelines on the Department's website.

(b) In developing the guidelines required pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the Department shall consult with the following entities:

- (1) the Department of Health;
- (2) the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living;
- (3) the Department of Public Safety;
- (4) the Vermont Care Partners;
- (5) the Vermont Psychiatric Survivors;
- (6) the Vermont chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness;
- (7) the Vermont Criminal Justice Council;
- (8) the Vermont League of Cities and Towns;
- (9) Disability Rights Vermont;
- (10) the Department's State Program Standing Committees; and

(11) any other stakeholders the Department deems appropriate.

## Sec. 2. PRESENTATION; SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDER SAFETY

(a) On or before November 15, 2024, the Agency of Human Services, in collaboration with the Vermont chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, shall convene one or more meetings related to social service provider safety with community-based social service organizations.

(1) The following community-based social service organizations, professions, and individuals may be included in the meeting or meetings described in this subsection:

(A) the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence;

(B) the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness;

(C) mental health and health care providers;

(D) community action programs;

(E) restorative justice service providers;

(F) disability service providers and advocates;

(G) individuals with lived experience of a mental health condition, substance use disorder, or any other condition or circumstance requiring social work services; and

(H) any other stakeholder deemed appropriate by the Agency.

(2) In advance of the meeting or meetings described in this subsection, the participating community-based social service organizations and individuals from a participating profession may review relevant studies related to social service provider safety and individual social service provider safety experiences.

(b) On or before January 31, 2025, the Agency of Human Services, in collaboration with the Vermont chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, shall present findings and recommendations to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, including a list of the community-based social service organizations that participated in the meeting or meetings and the number of meetings convened.

Sec. 3. 33 V.S.A. § 6309 is added to read:

### § 6309. STAFF SAFETY; DISCHARGE FROM SERVICE

(a) If an individual was previously discharged from service by a home health agency to protect the safety of staff in accordance with the rules adopted

by the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living pursuant to subsection 6303(a) of this chapter, and the behavior or conditions causing the discharge cannot be reasonably mitigated or eliminated, a home health agency may:

(1) deny a subsequent admission; or

(2) decline to send a home health agency employee to make a visit if the home health agency has reason to believe that the individual who exhibited the behavior that resulted in the discharge is present in the home.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a home health agency to enter a home to determine if a risk can be mitigated or eliminated.

(c) A home health agency shall provide notice of any denial of admission made pursuant to this section. The notice shall include the reason for the denial of admission and information regarding how an individual may submit a complaint pursuant to section 6308 of this chapter in accordance with the rules adopted by the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living pursuant to subsection 6303(a) of this chapter.

#### Sec. 4. REPORT; HOME HEALTH AGENCY SAFETY DISCHARGES

On or after February 15, 2025, in consultation with home health agencies, the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living shall provide an update to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare regarding the implementation of Sec. 3 (33 V.S.A. § 6309) of this act. Specifically, the update shall address:

(1) the number of safety discharges made by home health agencies during the previous calendar year;

(2) the nature of the risks posed that result in a safety discharge; and

(3) the number of individuals denied subsequent admission to or services from a home health agency due to a previous safety discharge.

#### Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to mental health response service guidelines and the safety of social service and home health providers”

**(Committee vote: 11-0-0)**

## **Senate Proposal of Amendment**

### **H. 694**

An act relating to sexual exploitation

The Senate proposes to the House to amend the bill as follows:

By inserting a new section to be Sec. 3a to read as follows:

#### **Sec. 3a. VERMONT SENTENCING COMMISSION; DEFINITIONS; SEXUALLY BASED OFFENSES**

(a) The Vermont Sentencing Commission shall review definitions in 13 V.S.A. chapters 59 (lewdness and prostitution), 64 (sexual exploitation of children), and 72 (sexual assault) for the purpose of updating and harmonizing the definitions as they are used in those chapters. As part of the review, the Commission shall, in particular, consider the definitions of “sexual conduct” as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2821 and “sexual act” as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3251.

(b) The Commission shall report its recommendations for legislative consideration to the Senate and House Committees on Judiciary on or before December 1, 2024.

### **Action Under Rule 52**

#### **J.R.H. 10**

Joint resolution authorizing the Green Mountain Girls State educational program to use the State House facilities on June 27, 2024

**(For text, see House Journal of April 16, 2024)**

## **NOTICE CALENDAR**

### **Favorable with Amendment**

#### **H. 626**

An act relating to animal welfare

**Rep. Waters Evans of Charlotte**, for the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, recommends the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 20 V.S.A. chapter 190 is added to read:

#### CHAPTER 190. DIVISION OF ANIMAL WELFARE

#### § 3201. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) “Animal” has the same meaning as in 13 V.S.A. § 351, provided that the animals or activities regulated under this chapter shall not apply to:

(A) activities regulated by the Department of Fish and Wildlife pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Part 4;

(B) scientific research governed by accepted procedural standards subject to review by an institutional animal care and use committee;

(C) livestock and poultry husbandry practices for the raising, management, and use of domestic animals;

(D) veterinary medical or surgical procedures; and

(E) the killing of an animal as authorized pursuant to sections 3809 and 3545 of this title.

(2) “Director” means the Director of Animal Welfare and includes the Director’s designee.

(3) “Division” means the Division of Animal Welfare.

(4) “Domestic animal” has the same meaning as in 6 V.S.A. § 1151(2).

§ 3202. ESTABLISHMENT OF DIVISION OF ANIMAL WELFARE;

POWERS AND DUTIES

(a)(1) The Division of Animal Welfare is established within the Department of Public Safety. The Commissioner of Public Safety shall appoint a Director of Animal Welfare who shall be in immediate charge of the Division. The Director shall be qualified by education and professional experience to perform the duties of the position. The Director shall have at least the following minimum qualifications:

(A) experience in interpreting or knowledge of animal welfare laws and rules;

(B) knowledge of animal welfare stakeholders in the State and regionally; and

(C) knowledge of the causes and characteristics of animal welfare and animal cruelty issues.

(2) The Director position shall be a classified service position in the Department of Public Safety.

(b)(1) The Director shall develop a comprehensive plan for the development, implementation, and enforcement of the animal welfare laws of

the State. In developing the comprehensive plan, the Director shall first review the 2023 Report on Unification of Animal Welfare and Related Public Safety Function and similar reports and proposed legislation. The plan shall include:

(A) how the Director shall oversee investigation and response to animal cruelty complaints in the State in order to provide the best services to Vermont's animals statewide;

(B) how the Director shall coordinate administration and enforcement of animal welfare laws in the State in a collaborative manner with those law enforcement officers and municipalities that retain authority to enforce animal cruelty requirements in the State;

(C) how the State should address the extent and scope of any deficiencies in Vermont's system of investigating and responding to animal cruelty complaints;

(D) how the State should ensure that investigations of animal cruelty complaints are conducted according to systematic and documented written standard operating procedures and checklists;

(E) a proposal to house and care for animals seized in response to complaints of animal cruelty, including how to pay for the care of seized animals;

(F) a proposal for funding animal welfare administration and enforcement in the State, including potential sources of public and private funding; and

(G) recommended amendments to animal welfare statutes or rules, including standards of care for animals housed by animal shelters or rescue organizations.

(2) The Director of Animal Welfare shall submit the comprehensive plan required by this subsection and any revisions thereto to the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations not later than eight months after the date of hiring of the Director.

(c) The Director of Animal Welfare shall consult with other State agencies that respond to animal welfare complaints or with animal welfare responsibilities to quantify the amount of time State agency staff expend in fulfilling animal welfare responsibilities, including the costs to agencies of fulfilling the responsibilities.



(d) The Director of Animal Welfare shall be the sole employee of the Division of Animal Welfare until the comprehensive plan required under subdivision (b)(2) of this section is completed and the General Assembly enacts legislation, as needed, to implement the comprehensive plan.

§ 3203. ANIMAL WELFARE FUND

(a) The Animal Welfare Fund is established within the Department of Public Safety to fund the expenses incurred by the Division of Animal Welfare in implementing the requirements of this chapter. The Director of Animal Welfare shall administer the Fund.

(b) The Fund shall consist of:

(1) 50 percent of the revenue collected from the surcharge assessed under subsection 3581(f) of this title; and

(2) appropriations made by the General Assembly.

(c) All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned by the Fund shall remain in the Fund.

Sec. 2. 20 V.S.A. § 3581 is amended to read:

§ 3581. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

(a) A person who is the owner of a dog or wolf-hybrid more than six months old shall annually on or before April 1 cause it to be registered, numbered, described, and licensed on a form approved by the Secretary for one year from that day in the office of the clerk of the municipality in which the dog or wolf-hybrid is kept. A person who owns a working farm dog and who intends to use that dog on a farm pursuant to the exemptions in section 3549 of this title shall cause the working farm dog to be registered as a working farm dog and shall, in addition to all other fees required by this section, pay \$5.00 for a working farm dog license. The owner of a dog or wolf-hybrid shall cause it to wear a collar and attach a license tag issued by the municipal clerk to the collar. Dog or wolf-hybrid owners shall pay for the license \$4.00 for each neutered dog or wolf-hybrid, and \$8.00 for each unneutered dog or wolf-hybrid. If the license fee for any dog or wolf-hybrid is not paid on or before April 1, its owner or keeper may thereafter procure a license for that license year by paying a fee of 50 percent in excess of that otherwise required.

(b) Before a person shall be entitled to obtain a license for a neutered dog or wolf-hybrid, he or she shall exhibit to the clerk a certificate signed by a duly licensed veterinarian showing that the dog or wolf-hybrid has been sterilized.

(c)(1) A mandatory license fee surcharge of \$4.00 per license shall be collected by each city, town, or village for the purpose of funding the dog, cat, and wolf-hybrid spaying and neutering program established in chapter 193, subchapter 6 of this title.

(2) An optional license fee surcharge of up to \$10.00 per license is to be implemented by the legislative body of a city, town, or village that has established an animal and rabies control program for the sole purpose of funding the rabies control program.

(3) The license fee surcharges in this subsection shall not be considered part of the license fee for purposes of calculating a penalty for late payment.

(d) Before obtaining a license for a dog or wolf-hybrid six months of age or older, a person shall deliver to the municipal clerk a certificate or a certified copy thereof issued by a duly licensed veterinarian, stating that the dog or wolf-hybrid has received a current preexposure rabies vaccination with a vaccine approved by the Secretary, and the person shall certify that the dog or wolf-hybrid described in the certificate or copy is the dog or wolf-hybrid to be licensed. The municipal clerk shall keep the certificates or copies thereof on file. The Secretary shall prescribe the size and format of rabies certificates. The owner of any such dog or wolf-hybrid shall maintain a copy of the rabies vaccination form and provide it to State or municipal officials upon request.

\* \* \*

(f) In addition to the license fees assessed in subsections (a) and (c) of this section and section 3583 of this title, municipal clerks shall assess a ~~\$1.00~~ \$2.00 fee for each license sold. The clerks shall forward the fees collected under this subsection to the State Treasurer on or before the 15th day of May, September, and January of each year, together with an accounting of the licenses sold. The funds collected under this subsection are to be used for rabies control programs and for administration of animal welfare laws in the State. For this purpose, on or before the 30th days of May, September, and January, the State Treasurer shall disburse the funds collected under this subsection as follows:

(1) ~~Forty-five~~ 22.5 percent to the Fish and Wildlife Fund;

(2) ~~Forty-five~~ 22.5 percent to the Commissioner of Health;

(3) ~~Ten~~ five percent to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets;  
and

(4) 50 percent to the Animal Welfare Fund created by section 3203 of this title.

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 351(4) is amended to read:

(4) “Humane officer” or “officer” means:

(A) any enforcement officer as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4(11)(A) or investigator employed by the Office of the Attorney General or State’s Attorney; or

(B) an individual who has received the animal cruelty response training required by section 356 of this title who is:

(i) ~~a designated humane society employee; or~~

~~(ii) an animal control officer appointed by the legislative body of a municipality who is authorized by the legislative body employed by a municipal or State law enforcement agency to perform the duties and functions of a humane officer; or~~

(ii) a Division of Animal Welfare employee authorized to conduct investigations under this chapter.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

**(Committee Vote: 12-0-0)**

**Rep. Masland of Thetford**, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends that the report of the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs be amended in Sec. 2, 20 V.S.A. § 3581, by striking out subsection (f) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (f) to read as follows:

(f) In addition to the license fees assessed in subsections (a) and (c) of this section and section 3583 of this title, municipal clerks shall assess a ~~\$1.00~~ \$3.00 fee for each license sold. The clerks shall forward the fees collected under this subsection to the State Treasurer on or before the 15th day of May, September, and January of each year, together with an accounting of the licenses sold. The funds collected under this subsection are to be used for rabies control programs and for administration of animal welfare laws in the State. For this purpose, on or before the 30th days of May, September, and January, the State Treasurer shall disburse the funds collected under this subsection as follows:

(1) ~~Forty-five 14.85~~ percent to the Fish and Wildlife Fund.;

(2) ~~Forty-five 14.85~~ percent to the Commissioner of Health.;

(3) ~~Ten~~ 3.3 percent to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets; and

(4) 67 percent to the Animal Welfare Fund created by section 3203 of this title.

**(Committee Vote: 8-3-1)**

**Rep. Harrison of Chittenden**, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommends that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, when further amended as recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, and when further amended by striking out Sec. 4, effective date, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Sec. 3, definition of humane officer, shall take effect on July 1, 2024, except that 13 V.S.A. § 351(4)(B)(ii), inclusion of Division of Animal Welfare employee as humane officer, shall take effect on January 1, 2025.

(b) All other sections shall take effect on January 1, 2025.

**(Committee Vote: 10-2-0)**

## S. 209

An act relating to prohibiting unserialized firearms and unserialized firearms frames and receivers

**Rep. Arsenault of Williston**, for the Committee on Judiciary, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. chapter 85 is amended to read:

### CHAPTER 85. WEAPONS

\* \* \*

Subchapter 4. Unserialized Firearms and Firearms Frames and Receivers

§ 4081. SHORT TITLE

This subchapter shall be known as the “Vermont Ghost Guns Act.”

§ 4082. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) “Federal firearms licensee” means a federally licensed firearm dealer, federally licensed firearm importer, and federally licensed firearm manufacturer.

(2) “Federally licensed firearm dealer” means a licensed dealer as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(11).

(3) “Federally licensed firearm importer” means a licensed importer as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(9).

(4) “Federally licensed firearm manufacturer” means a licensed manufacturer as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(10).

(5) “Fire control component” means a component necessary for the firearm to initiate, complete, or continue the firing sequence, including any of the following: hammer, bolt, bolt carrier, breechblock, cylinder, trigger mechanism, firing pin, striker, or slide rails.

(6) “Frame or receiver of a firearm” means a part of a firearm that, when the complete firearm is assembled, is visible from the exterior and provides housing or a structure designed to hold or integrate one or more fire control components, even if pins or other attachments are required to connect the fire control components. Any part of a firearm imprinted with a serial number is presumed to be a frame or receiver of a firearm unless the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives makes an official determination otherwise or there is other reliable evidence to the contrary.

(7) “Three-dimensional printer” means a computer-aided manufacturing device capable of producing a three-dimensional object from a three-dimensional digital model through an additive manufacturing process that involves the layering of two-dimensional cross sections formed of a resin or similar material that are fused together to form a three-dimensional object.

(8) “Unfinished frame or receiver” means any forging, casting, printing, extrusion, machined body, or similar article that has reached a stage in manufacture when it may readily be completed, assembled, or converted to be used as the frame or receiver of a functional firearm or that is marketed or sold to the public to become or be used as the frame or receiver of a functional firearm once completed, assembled, or converted.

(9) “Violent crime” has the same meaning as in section 4017 of this title.

§ 4083. UNLAWFUL CONDUCT INVOLVING UNSERIALIZED  
FIREARMS, FRAMES, AND RECEIVERS

(a)(1) A person shall not knowingly possess an unfinished frame or receiver unless the unfinished frame or receiver has been imprinted with a serial number by a federal firearms licensee pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title.

(2) A person shall not knowingly transfer or offer to transfer an unfinished frame or receiver unless the unfinished frame or receiver has been imprinted with a serial number by a federal firearms licensee pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title.

(3) This subsection shall not apply to:

(A) a federal firearms licensee acting within the scope of the licensee's license;

(B) possession or transfer of an unfinished frame or receiver for the purpose of having it imprinted with a serial number pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title; or

(C) an unfinished frame or receiver transferred to or possessed by a law enforcement officer for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

(b)(1) A person shall not knowingly possess a firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm that is not imprinted with a serial number by a federal firearms licensee pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title.

(2) A person shall not knowingly transfer or offer to transfer a firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm that is not imprinted with a serial number by a federal firearms licensee pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title.

(3) This subsection shall not apply to:

(A) a federal firearms licensee acting within the scope of the licensee's license;

(B) possession or transfer of a firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm for the purpose of having it imprinted with a serial number pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title;

(C) an unserialized frame or receiver transferred to or possessed by a law enforcement officer for legitimate law enforcement purposes;

(D) an antique firearm as defined in subsection 4017(d) of this title;

(E) a firearm that has been rendered permanently inoperable; or

(F) a firearm that was manufactured before 1968.

(c)(1) A person who manufactures a firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm, including by a three-dimensional printer, shall cause the firearm,

frame, or receiver to be imprinted with a serial number by a federal firearms licensee pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title.

(2) This subsection shall not apply to:

(A) a federally licensed firearms manufacturer acting within the scope of the manufacturer's license; or

(B) possession or transfer of a firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm for the purpose of having it imprinted with a serial number pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title.

(d)(1) A person who violates subdivision (a)(1) or (b)(1) of this section shall be:

(A) for a first offense, assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$50.00;

(B) for a second offense, assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$250.00; and

(C) for a third or subsequent offense, assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$500.00.

(2) A person who violates subdivision (a)(2), (b)(2), or (c)(1) of this section shall be:

(A) for a first offense, imprisoned for not more than one year or fined not more than \$500.00, or both;

(B) for a second offense, imprisoned for not more than two years or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both; and

(C) for a third or subsequent offense, imprisoned for not more than three years or fined not more than \$2,000.00, or both.

(3) A person who carries an unserialized firearm while committing a violent crime, or while committing reckless endangerment in violation of section 1025 of this title, shall be imprisoned for not more than five years or fined not more than \$5,000.00, or both.

#### § 4084. FEDERAL FIREARMS LICENSEES; AUTHORITY TO

##### SERIALIZE FIREARMS, FRAMES, AND RECEIVERS

(a)(1) A federal firearms licensee may imprint a serial number on, or cause a serial number to be imprinted on, an unserialized firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm pursuant to this section.

(2) A licensee who causes a serial number to be imprinted on an unserialized firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection shall:

(A) ensure that the firearm, frame, or receiver remains in the custody and control of the licensee and is returned to the licensee immediately after it is serialized; and

(B) otherwise comply with the requirements of this section.

(b)(1) A firearm, frame, or receiver serialized pursuant to this section shall be imprinted with a serial number that begins with the licensee's abbreviated federal firearms license number, which is the first three and last five digits of the license number, and is followed by a hyphen that precedes a unique identification number. The serial number shall not be duplicated on any other firearm, frame, or receiver serialized by the licensee and shall be imprinted in a manner that complies with the requirements under federal law for affixing serial numbers to firearms, including that the serial number be at the minimum size and depth and not susceptible to being readily obliterated, altered, or removed.

(2) A licensee who serializes or causes to be serialized a firearm, frame, or receiver pursuant to this section shall make and retain records of the serialization that comply with the requirements under federal law for the sale of a firearm. In addition to any record required by federal law, the record shall include the date, name, age, and residence of any person to whom the item is transferred and the unique serial number imprinted on the firearm, frame, or receiver.

(3) A licensee shall not be deemed a firearms manufacturer solely for serializing a firearm, frame, or receiver pursuant to this section.

(c) Returning a firearm, frame, or receiver to a person other than a licensee after it has been serialized pursuant to federal law or this section constitutes a transfer that requires a background check of the transferee. A federal licensee who serializes or causes to be serialized a firearm, frame, or receiver pursuant to this section shall conduct a background check on the transferee pursuant to subsection 4019(c) of this title, provided that if the transfer is denied, the licensee shall deliver the firearm, frame, or receiver to a law enforcement agency for disposition. The agency shall provide the licensee with a receipt on agency letterhead for the firearm, frame, or receiver.

(d) A licensee who violates subsection (b) or (c) of this section shall:

(1) for a first offense, be fined not more than \$2,500.00; and



(2) for a second or subsequent offense, be imprisoned for not more than one year or fined not more than \$2,500.00, or both.

Sec. 2. 4 V.S.A. § 1102 is amended to read:

§ 1102. JUDICIAL BUREAU; JURISDICTION

\* \* \*

(33) Violations of 13 V.S.A. § 4083(a)(1) or (b)(1) relating to possessing a firearm, frame or receiver of a firearm, or unfinished frame or receiver of a firearm that is not imprinted with a serial number.

\* \* \*

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 4019a is amended to read:

§ 4019A. FIREARMS TRANSFERS; WAITING PERIOD

(a) A person shall not transfer a firearm to another person until 72 hours after the licensed dealer facilitating the transfer is provided with a unique identification number for the transfer by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) or seven business days have elapsed since the dealer contacted NICS to initiate the background check, whichever occurs first.

(b) A person who transfers a firearm to another person in violation of subsection (a) of this section shall be imprisoned not more than one year or fined not more than \$500.00, or both.

(c) This section shall not apply to a firearm transfer that does not require a background check under 18 U.S.C. § 922(t) or section 4019 of this title.

(d) As used in this section, “firearm” has the same meaning as in subsection 4017(d) of this title.

(e)(1) This section shall not apply to a firearms transfer at a gun show.

(2) As used in this subsection, “gun show” means a function sponsored by:

(A) a national, state, or local organization, devoted to the collection, competitive use, or other sporting use of firearms; or

(B) an organization or association that sponsors functions devoted to the collection, competitive use, or other sporting use of firearms in the community.

(3) This subsection shall be repealed on ~~July 1, 2024~~ July 1, 2025.

(f) This section shall not apply to the return of a firearm, frame, or receiver to a person by a licensed dealer after the dealer has serialized it pursuant to federal law or section 4084 of this title if the dealer returns the firearm, frame, or receiver to the same person from whom it was received.

Sec. 4. 13 V.S.A. § 4027 is added to read:

§ 4027. POLLING PLACES; WEAPONS PROHIBITED

(a)(1) A person shall not knowingly possess a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon at a polling place, or on the walks leading to a building in which a polling place is located, on an election day.

(2) The provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection shall apply to the town clerk's office during any period when a board of civil authority has voted to permit early voting pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2546b(a)(1).

(b) A person who violates this section shall be imprisoned not more than one year or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(c) This section shall not apply to:

(1) a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon carried for legitimate law enforcement purposes by a federal law enforcement officer or a law enforcement officer certified as a law enforcement officer by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 2358;

(2) a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon carried by a person while performing the person's official duties as an employee of the United States; a department or agency of the United States; a state; or a department, agency, or political subdivision of a state, if the person is authorized to carry a firearm as part of the person's official duties; or

(3) a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon stored in a motor vehicle.

(d) Notice of the provisions of this section shall be posted conspicuously at each public entrance to each polling place.

(e) As used in this section:

(1) "Dangerous or deadly weapon" has the same meaning as in section 4016 of this title.

(2) "Firearm" has the same meaning as in section 4017 of this title.

(3) "Polling place" means a place that a municipality has designated to the Secretary of State as a polling place pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2502(f).

Sec. 5. 17 V.S.A. § 2510 is added to read:

§ 2510. POLLING PLACES; WEAPONS PROHIBITED

(a)(1) A person shall not knowingly possess a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon at a polling place, or on the walks leading to a building in which a polling place is located, on an election day.

(2) The provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection shall apply to the town clerk's office during any period when a board of civil authority has voted to permit early voting pursuant to subdivision 2546b(a)(1) of this title.

(b) This section shall not apply to:

(1) a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon carried for legitimate law enforcement purposes by a federal law enforcement officer or a law enforcement officer certified as a law enforcement officer by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 2358;

(2) a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon carried by a person while performing the person's official duties as an employee of the United States; a department or agency of the United States; a state; or a department, agency, or political subdivision of a state, if the person is authorized to carry a firearm as part of the person's official duties; or

(3) a firearm or a dangerous or deadly weapon stored in a motor vehicle.

(c) Notice of the provisions of this section shall be posted conspicuously at each public entrance to each polling place.

(d) As used in this section:

(1) "Dangerous or deadly weapon" has the same meaning as in 13 V.S.A. § 4016.

(2) "Firearm" has the same meaning as in section 13 V.S.A. § 4017.

(3) "Polling place" means a place that a municipality has designated to the Secretary of State as a polling place pursuant to subsection 2502(f) of this title.

Sec. 6. REPORT; VERMONT STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER (SAC)

On or before January 1, 2026, the Vermont Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) shall report data on prosecutions under Sec. 1 of this act to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary. The report shall include:

(1) the number of civil violations filed and adjudications obtained for violations of 13 V.S.A. § 4083(a)(1) or (b)(1) relating to possessing a firearm, frame or receiver of a firearm, or unfinished frame or receiver of a firearm that is not imprinted with a serial number;

(2) the number of criminal charges filed and convictions obtained for violations of 13 V.S.A. § 4083(a)(2), (b)(2), or (c)(1) relating to transferring, offering to transfer, or manufacturing a firearm, frame or receiver of a firearm, or unfinished frame or receiver of a firearm that is not imprinted with a serial number;

(3) the number of criminal charges filed and convictions obtained for violations of 13 V.S.A. § 4083(d)(3) relating to carrying an unserialized firearm while committing a violent crime, or while committing reckless endangerment; and

(4) the number of criminal charges filed and convictions obtained for violations of 13 V.S.A. § 4084(b) or (c) relating to improper serialization or handling of a firearm or frame or receiver of a firearm by a federal firearms licensee.

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. 1 and 2 of this act shall take effect on February 28, 2025.

(b) Secs. 3, 4, 5, 6 and this section shall take effect on passage.

**(Committee vote: 9-2-0)**

**S. 305**

An act relating to miscellaneous changes related to the Public Utility Commission

**Rep. Patt of Worcester**, for the Committee on Environment and Energy, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

\* \* \* Notice \* \* \*

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 165(b) is amended to read:

(b) Public contract advocates shall be appointed or retained for such time as may be required to monitor, represent the public interest, and report on any contract for basic telecommunications service under 30 V.S.A. § 226a. Compensation, expenses, and support of public contract advocates shall be assessed as costs to the Department of Public Service and paid from the revenues received from the tax to finance the Department and the ~~Board~~ Public Utility Commission levied under 30 V.S.A. § 22.

Sec. 2. 30 V.S.A. § 8(d) is amended to read:

(d) ~~At least 12 days prior to~~ Written notice of a hearing before the ~~Commission a Commissioner~~ or a hearing officer, ~~the Commission shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to all parties to the case and shall indicate the name and title of the person designated to conduct the hearing shall be given in accordance with 30 V.S.A. § 10.~~

Sec. 3. 30 V.S.A. § 10(c) is amended to read:

(c) ~~A scheduling or procedural conference~~ As used in this section, the term “hearings” refers to public hearings and evidentiary hearings. All other proceedings before the Commission may be held upon any reasonable notice.

Sec. 4. 30 V.S.A. § 102(a) is amended to read:

(a) Before the articles of incorporation are transmitted to the Secretary of State, the incorporators shall petition the Public Utility Commission to determine whether the establishment and maintenance of the corporation will promote the general good of the State and shall at that time file a copy of any petition with the Department. The Department, within 12 days, shall review the petition and file a recommendation regarding the petition in the same manner as is set forth in subsection 225(b) of this title. The recommendation shall set forth reasons why the petition shall be accepted without hearing or shall request that a hearing on the petition be scheduled. If the Department requests a hearing on the petition, or, if the Commission deems a hearing necessary, it shall appoint a time and place either remotely accessible or in the county where the proposed corporation is to have its principal office for hearing the petition. ~~At least 12 days before this hearing, notice~~ Notice of the hearing ~~shall be given in accordance with section 10 of this title and~~ shall be published on the Commission’s website and once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the proposed corporation is to have its principal office. The website notice shall be maintained through the date of the hearing. The newspaper notice shall include an ~~Internet~~ internet address where more information regarding the petition may be viewed. The Department of Public Service, through the Director for Public Advocacy, shall represent the public at the hearing.

Sec. 5. 30 V.S.A. § 231(a) is amended to read:

(a) A person, partnership, unincorporated association, or previously incorporated association that desires to own or operate a business over which the Public Utility Commission has jurisdiction under the provisions of this chapter shall first petition the Commission to determine whether the operation of such business will promote the general good of the State, and shall at that

time file a copy of any such petition with the Department. The Department, within 12 days, shall review the petition and file a recommendation regarding the petition in the same manner as is set forth in subsection 225(b) of this title. Such recommendation shall set forth reasons why the petition shall be accepted without hearing or shall request that a hearing on the petition be scheduled. If the Department requests a hearing on the petition, or, if the Commission deems a hearing necessary, it shall appoint a time and place in the county where the proposed corporation is to have its principal office for hearing the petition. At least 12 days before this hearing, notice Notice of the hearing shall be given in accordance with section 10 of this title and shall be published on the Commission's website and once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the hearing will occur. The website notice shall be maintained through the date of the hearing. The newspaper notice shall include an ~~Internet~~ internet address where more information regarding the petition may be viewed. The Director for Public Advocacy shall represent the public at the hearing. If the Commission finds that the operation of such business will promote the general good of the State, it shall give such person, partnership, unincorporated association, or previously incorporated association a certificate of public good specifying the business and territory to be served by such petitioners. For good cause, after opportunity for hearing, the Commission may amend or revoke any certificate awarded under the provisions of this section. If any such certificate is revoked, the person, partnership, unincorporated association, or previously incorporated association shall no longer have authority to conduct any business ~~which~~ that is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission whether or not regulation thereunder has been reduced or suspended, under section 226a or 227a of this title.

Sec. 6. 30 V.S.A. § 248(u) is amended to read:

(u) ~~For an energy storage facility, a~~ A certificate under this section shall only be required for ~~a stationary facility exporting to the grid~~ an energy storage facility that has a capacity of 100 kW or greater, unless the Commission establishes a larger threshold by rule. The Commission shall establish a simplified application process for energy storage facilities subject to this section with a capacity of up to 1 MW, unless it establishes a larger threshold by rule. For facilities eligible for this simplified application process, a certificate of public good will be issued by the Commission by the ~~forty-sixth~~ 46th day following filing of a complete application, unless a substantive objection is timely filed with the Commission or the Commission itself raises an issue. The Commission may require facilities eligible for the simplified application process to include a letter from the interconnecting utility indicating the absence or resolution of interconnection issues as part of the application.

\* \* \* Energy Efficiency Modernization Act \* \* \*

Sec. 7. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 151, Sec. 1, as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 44, Sec. 1, is further amended to read:

Sec. 1. ALLOWANCE OF THE USE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY

CHARGE FUNDS FOR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

REDUCTION PROGRAMS

(a) The electric resource acquisition budget for an entity appointed to provide electric energy efficiency and conservation programs and measures pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(A) for the calendar years 2021–2026 shall be determined pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(3)(B). This section shall apply only if the entity’s total electric resource acquisition budget for 2024–2026 does not exceed the entity’s total electric resource acquisition budget for 2021–2023, adjusted for cumulative inflation between January 1, 2021, and July 1, 2023, using the national consumer price index. An entity may include proposals for activities allowed under this pilot in its 2027–2029 demand resource plan filing, but these activities shall only be implemented if this section is extended to cover that ~~timeframe~~ time frame.

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law or order of the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to the contrary, ~~the PUC shall authorize an entity pursuant to subsection (a) of this section to appointed under 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(A) may spend a portion of its electric resource acquisition budget, in an amount to be determined by the PUC but not to exceed \$2,000,000.00 per year, on programs, measures, and services that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the thermal energy or transportation sectors. An entity appointed under 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(A) that has a three-year electric resource acquisition budget of less than \$8,000,000.00 may spend up to \$800,000.00 of its resource acquisition budget, and any additional amounts the entity has available to it through annually-budgeted thermal energy and process fuel funds and carry-forward thermal energy and process fuel funds from prior periods, on programs, measures, and services that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the thermal energy or transportation sector. Programs measures, and services authorized pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall~~ An entity spending a portion of its electric resource acquisition budget as outlined in this section shall submit notice of the amount of the annual electric resource acquisition budget to be spent pursuant to this subsection to the PUC, the Department of Public Service, the electric distribution utilities, and the Vermont Public Power Supply Authority with a sworn statement attesting that the programs, measures, or services comply with the following criteria:

(1) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the thermal energy or transportation sectors, or both.

(2) Have a nexus with electricity usage.

(3) Be additive and complementary to and shall not replace or be in competition with electric utility energy transformation projects pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 8005(a)(3) and existing thermal efficiency programs operated by an entity appointed under 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(A) such that they result in the largest possible greenhouse gas emissions reductions in a cost-effective manner.

(4) Be proposed after the entity consults with any relevant State agency or department and shall not be duplicative or in competition with programs delivered by that agency or department.

(5) Be delivered on a statewide basis. However, this shall not preclude the delivery of services specific to a retail electricity provider. Should such services be offered, all distribution utilities and Vermont Public Power Supply Authority shall be provided the opportunity to participate, and those services shall be designed and coordinated in partnership with each of them. For programs and services that are not offered on a statewide basis, the proportion of utility-specific program funds used for services to any distribution utility shall be ~~no~~ not less than the proportionate share of the energy efficiency charge, which in the case of Vermont Public Power Supply Authority, is the amount collected across their combined member utility territories during the period this section remains in effect.

(c) An entity that ~~is approved to provide~~ provides a program, measure, or service pursuant to this section shall provide the program, measure, or service in cooperation with a retail electricity provider.

(1) The entity shall not claim any savings and reductions in fossil fuel consumption and in greenhouse gas emissions by the customers of the retail electricity provider resulting from the program, measure, or service if the provider elects to offer the program, measure, or service pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 8005(a)(3) unless the entity and provider agree upon how savings and reductions should be accounted for, apportioned, and claimed.

~~(2) The PUC shall develop standards and methods to appropriately measure the effectiveness of the programs, measures, and services in relation to the entity's Demand Resources Plan proceeding.~~

(d) Any funds spent on programs, measures, and services pursuant to this section shall not be counted towards the calculation of funds used by a retail electricity provider for energy transformation projects pursuant to 30 V.S.A.



§ 8005(a)(3) and the calculation of project costs pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 8005(a)(3)(C)(iv).

~~(e) On or before April 30, 2021 and every April 30 for six years thereafter, the PUC shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Environment and Energy and the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on Finance concerning any programs, measures, and services approved pursuant to this section.~~

(f) Thermal energy and process fuel efficiency funding. Notwithstanding 30 V.S.A. § 209(e), a retail electricity provider that is also an entity appointed under 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(A), may during the years of 2024–2026, use monies subject to 30 V.S.A. § 209(e) to deliver thermal and transportation measures or programs that reduce fossil fuel use regardless of the preexisting fuel source of the customer, including measures or programs permissible under this pilot program, with special emphasis on measures or programs that take a new or innovative approach to reducing fossil fuel use, including modifying or supplementing existing vehicle incentive programs and electric vehicle supply equipment grant programs to incentivize high-consumption fuel users, especially individuals using more than 1000 gallons of gasoline or diesel annually and those with low and moderate income, to transition to the use of battery electric vehicles.

\* \* \* Clean Heat Standard \* \* \*

Sec. 8. 30 V.S.A. § 8124 is amended to read:

§ 8124. CLEAN HEAT STANDARD COMPLIANCE

\* \* \*

(b) Annual registration.

(1) Each entity that sells heating fuel into or in Vermont shall register annually with the Commission by an annual deadline established by the Commission. The first registration deadline is January 31, 2024, and the annual deadline shall ~~remain January 31 of each year unless a different deadline is established by the Commission~~ be June 30 of each year after. The form and information required in the registration shall be determined by the Commission and shall include all data necessary to establish annual requirements under this chapter. The Commission shall use the information provided in the registration to determine whether the entity shall be considered an obligated party and the amount of its annual requirement.

\* \* \*

(4) The Commission shall maintain, and update annually, a list of registered entities on its website ~~that contains the required registration information.~~

\* \* \*

Sec. 9. 30 V.S.A. § 8125 is amended to read:

§ 8125. DEFAULT DELIVERY AGENT

\* \* \*

(b) Appointment. The default delivery agent shall be one or more statewide entities capable of providing a variety of clean heat measures. ~~The Commission shall designate the first default delivery agent on or before June 1, 2024.~~ The designation of an entity under this subsection may be by order of appointment or contract. A designation, whether by order of appointment or by contract, may only be issued after notice and opportunity for hearing. An existing order of appointment issued by the Commission under section 209 of this title may be amended to include the responsibilities of the default delivery agent. An order of appointment shall be for a limited duration not to exceed 12 years, although an entity may be reappointed by order or contract. An order of appointment may include any conditions and requirements that the Commission deems appropriate to promote the public good. For good cause, after notice and opportunity for hearing, the Commission may amend or revoke an order of appointment.

\* \* \*

(d) Use of default delivery agent.

\* \* \*

(3) The Commission shall by rule or order establish a standard timeline under which the default delivery agent credit cost or costs are established and by which an obligated party must file its form. The default delivery agent's schedule of costs shall include sufficient costs to deliver installed measures and shall specify separately the costs to deliver measures to customers with low income and customers with moderate income as required by subsection 8124(d) of this title. The Commission shall provide not less than ~~120~~ 90 days' notice of default delivery agent credit cost or costs prior to the deadline for an obligated party to file its election form so an obligated party can assess options and inform the Commission of its intent to procure credits in whole or in part as fulfillment of its requirement.

\* \* \*

(e) Budget.

\* \* \*

(B) the development of a three-year plan and associated proposed budget by the default delivery agent to be informed by the final results of the Department's potential study. The default delivery agent may propose a portion of its budget towards promotion and market uplift, workforce development, and trainings for clean heat measures. The Commission shall approve the first three-year plan and associated budget by no later than September 1, 2025; and

\* \* \*

Sec. 10. 30 V.S.A. § 8126 is amended to read:

§ 8126. RULEMAKING

(a) The Commission shall adopt rules and may issue orders to implement and enforce the Clean Heat Standard program.

\* \* \*

(c) The Commission's rules may include a provision that allows the Commission to revise its Clean Heat Standard rules by order of the Commission without the revisions being subject to the rulemaking requirements of the 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, provided the Commission:

- (1) provides notice of any proposed changes;
- (2) allows for a 30-day comment period;
- (3) responds to all comments received on the proposed change;
- (4) provides a notice of language assistance services on all public outreach materials; and
- (5) arranges for language assistance to be provided to members of the public as requested using professional language services companies.

(d) Any order issued under ~~this chapter subsection (c)~~ subsection (c) of this section shall be subject to appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court under section 12 of this title, and the Commission must immediately file any orders, a redline, and clean version of the revised rules with the Secretary of State, with notice simultaneously provided to the House Committee on Environment and Energy and the Senate Committees on Finance and on Natural Resources and Energy.

Sec. 11. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 18, Sec. 6 is amended to read:

Sec. 6. PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION IMPLEMENTATION

\* \* \*

(f) Final rules.

\* \* \*

(5) The final proposed rules shall contain the first set of annual required amounts for obligated parties as described in 30 V.S.A. § 8124(a)(1)(2). The first set of annual required amounts shall only be adopted through the rulemaking process established in this section, not through an order.

\* \* \*

Sec. 12. 32 V.S.A. § 3102 is amended to read:

§ 3102. CONFIDENTIALITY OF TAX RECORDS

\* \* \*

(d) The Commissioner shall disclose a return or return information:

\* \* \*

(7) to the Joint Fiscal Office pursuant to subsection 10503(e) of this title and subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that subsection; ~~and~~

(8) to the Attorney General; the Data Clearinghouse established in the October 2017 Non-Participating Manufacturer Adjustment Settlement Agreement, which the State of Vermont joined in 2018; the National Association of Attorneys General; and counsel for the parties to the Agreement as required by the Agreement and to the extent necessary to comply with the Agreement and only as long as the State is a party to the Agreement; and

(9) to the Public Utility Commission and the Department of Public Service, provided the disclosure relates to the sale of heating fuel into or in the State for compliance with the Clean Heat Standard established in 30 V.S.A. chapter 94.

\* \* \*

\* \* \* Energy Storage Fees \* \* \*

Sec. 13. 30 V.S.A. § 248c(d) is amended to read:

(d) Electric and natural gas facilities. This subsection sets fees for applications under section 248 of this title.

(1) There shall be a ~~registration~~ fee of \$100.00 for each electric generation facility less than or equal to 50 kW in plant capacity, or for a rooftop project, or for a hydroelectric project filing a net metering registration, or for an application filed under subsection 248(n) of this title, or for an energy storage facility less than or equal to 1 MW in nameplate capacity that is

required to obtain a certificate of public good under section 248 of this title and is proposed to be located inside an existing building and that would not require any ground disturbance work or upgrades to the distribution system.

(2) There shall be a fee of \$25.00 for modifications for each electric generation facility less than or equal to 50 kW in plant capacity, or for a rooftop project, or for a hydroelectric project filing a net metering registration, or for an application filed under subsection 248(n) of this title, or for an energy storage facility less than or equal to 1 MW in nameplate capacity that is required to obtain a certificate of public good under section 248 of this title and is proposed to be located inside an existing building and that would not require any ground disturbance work or upgrades to the distribution system.

(3) There shall be a fee for electric generation facilities and energy storage facilities that are required to obtain a certificate of public good under section 248 of this title and that do not qualify for the lower fees in subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection, calculated as follows:

(A) \$5.00 per kW; and

(B) \$100.00 for modifications.

(4) For applications that include both a proposed electric generation facility and a proposed energy storage facility, the fee shall be the larger of either the fee for the electric generation facility or the energy storage facility as set out in subdivisions (1) and (3) of this subsection.

(5) For applications that propose to add an energy storage facility to a location that already has a certificate of public good for an electric generation facility, the fee shall be that for a proposed new energy storage facility as set out in subdivisions (1) and (3) of this subsection.

(6) For applications that propose to add an electric generation facility to a location that already has a certificate of public good for an energy storage facility, the fee shall be that for a proposed new electric generation facility as set out in subdivisions (1) and (3) of this subsection.

\* \* \* Energy Savings Account \* \* \*

Sec. 14. 30 V.S.A. § 209 is amended to read:

§ 209. JURISDICTION; GENERAL SCOPE

\* \* \*

(d) Energy efficiency.

\* \* \*

(3) Energy efficiency charge; regulated fuels. In addition to its existing authority, the Commission may establish by order or rule a volumetric charge to customers for the support of energy efficiency programs that meet the requirements of section 218c of this title, with due consideration to the State's energy policy under section 202a of this title and to its energy and economic policy interests under section 218e of this title to maintain and enhance the State's economic vitality. The charge shall be known as the energy efficiency charge, shall be shown separately on each customer's bill, and shall be paid to a fund administrator appointed by the Commission and deposited into the Electric Efficiency Fund. When such a charge is shown, notice as to how to obtain information about energy efficiency programs approved under this section shall be provided in a manner directed by the Commission. This notice shall include, at a minimum, a toll-free telephone number, and to the extent feasible shall be on the customer's bill and near the energy efficiency charge.

\* \* \*

(B) The charge established by the Commission pursuant to this subdivision (3) shall be in an amount determined by the Commission by rule or order that is consistent with the principles of least-cost integrated planning as defined in section 218c of this title. As circumstances and programs evolve, the amount of the charge shall be reviewed for unrealized energy efficiency potential and shall be adjusted as necessary in order to realize all reasonably available, cost-effective energy efficiency savings. In setting the amount of the charge and its allocation, the Commission shall determine an appropriate balance among the following objectives; provided, however, that particular emphasis shall be accorded to the first four of these objectives: reducing the size of future power purchases; reducing the generation of greenhouse gases; limiting the need to upgrade the State's transmission and distribution infrastructure; minimizing the costs of electricity; reducing Vermont's total energy demand, consumption, and expenditures; providing efficiency and conservation as a part of a comprehensive resource supply strategy; providing the opportunity for all Vermonters to participate in efficiency and conservation programs; and targeting efficiency and conservation efforts to locations, markets, or customers where they may provide the greatest value.

(C) The Commission, by rule or order, shall establish a process by which a customer who pays an average annual energy efficiency charge under this subdivision (3) of at least \$5,000.00 may apply to the Commission to self-administer energy efficiency through ~~the use of an energy savings account or~~ customer credit programs which ~~that~~ shall contain a percentage of the customer's energy efficiency charge payments as determined by the Commission. The remaining portion of the charge shall be used for

administrative, measurement, verification, and evaluation costs and for systemwide energy benefits. Customer energy efficiency funds may be approved for use by the Commission for one or more of the following: electric energy efficiency projects and non-electric efficiency projects, which may include thermal and process fuel efficiency, flexible load management, combined heat and power systems, demand management, energy productivity, and energy storage. These funds shall not be used for the purchase or installation of new equipment capable of combusting fossil fuels. The Commission in its rules or order shall establish criteria for each program and approval of these applications, establish application and enrollment periods, establish participant requirements, and establish the methodology for evaluation, measurement, and verification for programs. The total amount of customer energy efficiency funds that can be placed into energy savings accounts or the customer credit program annually is \$2,000,000.00 and \$1,000,000.00 respectively.

(C)(D) The Commission may authorize the use of funds raised through an energy efficiency charge on electric ratepayers to reduce the use of fossil fuels for space heating by supporting electric technologies that may increase electric consumption, such as air source or geothermal heat pumps if, after investigation, it finds that deployment of the technology:

\* \* \*

\* \* \* Thermal Energy \* \* \*

Sec. 15. 30 V.S.A. § 201 is amended to read:

§ 201. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

\* \* \*

(7) “Thermal energy” means piped noncombustible fluids used for transferring heat into and out of buildings for the purpose of avoiding, eliminating, reducing any existing or new on-site greenhouse gas emissions of all types of heating and cooling processes, including comfort heating and cooling, domestic hot water, and refrigeration.

(8) “Thermal energy network” means all real estate, fixtures, and personal property operated, owned, used, or to be used for or in connection with or to facilitate distribution infrastructure project that supplies thermal energy to more than one household, dwelling unit, or network of buildings that are not commonly owned. This definition does not include a mutual benefit enterprise, cooperative or common interest community that is owned by the persons it serves and that provides thermal energy services only to its

members, a landlord providing thermal energy services only to its tenants where the service is included in the lease agreement, or any entity that provides thermal energy services only to itself.

Sec. 16. 30 V.S.A. § 231 is amended to read:

§ 231. CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC GOOD; ABANDONMENT OF  
SERVICE; HEARING

\* \* \*

(d) Notwithstanding any other State law to the contrary, a municipality shall have the authority to construct, operate, set rates for, finance, and use eminent domain for a thermal energy network utility without a certificate of public good or approval by the Commission. Nothing in this section shall alter the requirements of 10 V.S.A. § 151, including for district energy projects such as those described in subdivision 209 (e)(1) of this title.

Sec. 17 THERMAL ENERGY NETWORK DEVELOPMENT STUDY

(a) On or before December 1, 2025, the Public Utility Commission shall issue a report to the House Committee on Environment and Energy and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy on how to support the development of thermal energy networks and the permitting of thermal energy network providers. The report shall address all aspects of the permitting, construction, operation, and rates of thermal energy networks and recommend necessary statutory changes.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit persons or companies already regulated by the Commission under 30 V.S.A. chapter 5 from pursuing thermal energy network projects prior to completion of this study.

\* \* \* Baseload Power \* \* \*

Sec. 18. 30 V.S.A. § 8009 is amended to read:

§ 8009. BASELOAD RENEWABLE POWER PORTFOLIO  
REQUIREMENT

\* \* \*

(d) On or before November 1, 2026 2027, the Commission shall determine, for the period beginning on November 1, 2026 2027 and ending on November 1, 2032, the price to be paid to a plant used to satisfy the baseload renewable power portfolio requirement. The Commission shall not be required to make this determination as a contested case under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25. The price



shall be the avoided cost of the Vermont composite electric utility system. As used in this subsection, the term “avoided cost” means the incremental cost to retail electricity providers of electric energy or capacity, or both, which, but for the purchase from the plant proposed to satisfy the baseload renewable power portfolio requirement, such providers would obtain from a source using the same generation technology as the proposed plant. For the purposes of this subsection, the term “avoided cost” also includes the Commission’s consideration of each of the following:

\* \* \*

(k) Collocation and efficiency requirements.

\* \* \*

(3) On or before October 1, ~~2024~~ 2025, the owner of the plant shall submit to the Commission and the Department a certification that the main components of the facility used to meet the requirement of subdivision (1) of this subsection ~~(k)~~ have been manufactured and that the construction plans for the facility have been completed.

(4) If the contract and certification required under subdivision (2) of this subsection are not submitted to the Commission and Department on or before July 1, 2023 or if the certification required under subdivision (3) is not submitted to the Commission and Department on or before October 1, ~~2024~~ 2025, then the obligation under this section for each Vermont retail electricity provider to purchase a pro rata share of the baseload renewable power portfolio requirement shall cease on November 1, ~~2024~~ 2025, and the Commission is not required to conduct the rate determination provided for in subsection (d) of this section.

(5) On or before September 1, ~~2025~~ 2026, the Department shall investigate and submit a recommendation to the Commission on whether the plant has achieved the requirement of subdivision (1) of this subsection. If the Department recommends that the plant has not achieved the requirement of subdivision (1) of this subsection, the obligation under this section shall cease on November 1, ~~2025~~ 2026, and the Commission is not required to conduct the rate determination provided for in subsection (d) of this section.

(6) After November 1, ~~2026~~ 2027, the owner of the plant shall report annually to the Department and the Department shall verify the overall efficiency of the plant for the prior 12-month period. If the overall efficiency of the plant falls below the requirement of subdivision (1) of this subsection, the report shall include a plan to return the plant to the required efficiency within one year.

(7) If, after implementing the plan in subdivision (6) of this subsection, the owner of the plant does not achieve the efficiency required in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Department shall request that the Commission commence a proceeding to terminate the obligation under this section.

(8) The Department may retain research, scientific, or engineering services to assist it in making the recommendation required under subdivision (5) of this subsection and in reviewing the information required under subdivision (6) of this subsection and may allocate the expense incurred or authorized by it to the plant's owner.

\* \* \*

#### Sec. 19. BIOMASS SUPPLIERS AND CONSTRUCTION

(a) The owner of the plant used to satisfy the baseload renewable power portfolio requirement under 30 V.S.A. § 8009 shall offer to enter into written contracts with each of its biomass suppliers establishing customary commercial terms, including payment timelines, supply volume, and term length.

(b) For biomass suppliers that are not a party to a supply contract with the plant owner as of April 1, 2024, the plant owner shall offer to provide supply contracts to ensure payment to such suppliers for biomass deliveries within seven business days of the invoice date.

(c) The plant owner shall ensure that the payments made to each biomass supplier are timely, accurate, and valid. In the event any payment is not timely made under the terms of a supplier contract, the plant owner shall pay a late payment penalty to the supplier equal to five percent per week.

(d) The plant owner shall hire an independent certified public accountant to review the timeliness of the plant owner's payments to its suppliers and to prepare a quarterly report detailing its findings. The quarterly report shall also include a status report on the design and construction of the facility proposed to meet the requirements of 30 V.S.A. § 8009(k). Each quarterly report shall be verified under the penalty of perjury and provided to the General Assembly and the Department of Public Service.

(e) The requirements of this section shall apply until the Commission establishes the new avoided cost paid to the plant in accordance with 30 V.S.A. § 8009(d), after which point the obligations under this section shall cease.

\* \* \* Dig Safe; Notice of Excavation Activities \* \* \*

Sec. 20. 30 V.S.A. § 7004(c) is amended to read:

(c) At least 48 72 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, but not more than 30 days before commencing excavation activities, each person required to give notice of excavation activities shall notify the System referred to in section 7002 of this title. Such notice shall set forth a reasonably accurate and readily identifiable description of the geographical location of the proposed excavation activities and the premarks.

\* \* \* Energy Cost Stabilization Study \* \* \*

## Sec. 21. ENERGY COST STABILIZATION STUDY

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) Energy generation and consumption is in a state of transition, shifting towards beneficial, strategic electrification using efficiency, renewables, storage, and flexible demand management.

(2) There is an increasing understanding of energy burden that is measured in terms of the percentage of household income that is spent on energy costs.

(3) Total energy costs are a result of multiple expenditures such as electricity costs, transportation costs, and building heating and cooling costs.

(4) As energy consumption shifts from fossil fuels to electricity, electricity costs may increase but total energy costs (including transportation and building heating and cooling costs) are expected to decrease.

(5) There are various income-sensitive programs available to Vermont households that assist with energy costs.

(b) The Public Utility Commission shall study current and potential future programs and initiatives focused on reducing or stabilizing energy costs for low- or moderate-income households and shall make a determination as to whether a statewide program to reduce energy burden is needed in Vermont. In conducting its analysis, the Commission shall take into consideration a comprehensive approach that recognizes electric costs might rise but that total energy costs are expected to decrease because of increased electrification, efficiency, storage, and demand response activities. The Commission shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2025.

(c) In conducting the study required by this section, the Commission shall seek input from interested stakeholders, including the Department of Public Service, the Agency of Human Services, the Agency of Transportation, the efficiency utilities, electric distribution utilities, residential customers, low-income program representatives, consumer-assistance program representatives,

statewide environmental organizations, environmental justice entities, at least one low-income cost reduction program participant, at least one moderate-income cost reduction program participant, and any other stakeholders identified by the Commission.

(d)(1) As part of its study, the Commission shall assess current programs within and outside Vermont designed to directly reduce or stabilize energy expenditures for low- or moderate-income households and shall seek to identify successful design elements of each. In particular, the Commission shall assess:

(A) Vermont low-income electric energy cost reduction programs;

(B) statewide energy cost reduction programs currently available outside Vermont; and

(C) Vermont programs available to low- and moderate-income households that are designed to reduce transportation, thermal, or electric energy costs, including through investments in efficiency or electrification measures.

(2) In assessing existing programs, the Commission shall take into consideration and develop findings regarding each program's:

(A) funding model and funding source;

(B) eligibility requirements;

(C) process for making and monitoring eligibility determinations;

(D) administrative structure;

(E) efficacy in terms of eligibility, customer participation, funding, program offerings, and coordination with other programs, and where there might be opportunities for program improvement, particularly regarding administrative savings and efficiencies and universality of access; and

(F) ability to assist the State with achieving its greenhouse gas reduction requirements in a manner that is consistent with State policy on environmental justice.

(e) The report required by this section shall include the following:

(1) Recommendations as to how existing programs may better coordinate to ensure low- and moderate-income Vermonters are reducing their total energy consumption and costs.

(2) If applicable, identification of obstacles and recommended solutions for increasing coordination across electric, thermal, and transportation energy

cost reduction programs, including through the sharing of best practices and program design and implementation successes.

(3) A recommendation as to whether existing programs should continue to operate and align with a new statewide program or, instead, transition eligible customers to a statewide program and otherwise cease operations.

(4) A recommendation regarding the most appropriate financing mechanism for a statewide energy cost stabilization program if such a program is recommended and, in addition, recommendations regarding:

(A) eligibility requirements, which may be based on income, participation in other public assistance programs, or other potential approach;

(B) a process for making and monitoring eligibility determinations;  
and

(C) any other matters deemed appropriate by the Commission.

\* \* \* Effective Dates \* \* \*

#### Sec. 22. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 20, (30 V.S.A. § 7004(c)) shall take effect on November 1, 2024.

**(Committee vote: 11-0-0)**

#### **Favorable**

#### **S. 187**

An act relating to student application of sunscreen

**Rep. Minier of South Burlington**, for the Committee on Education, recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

**(Committee Vote: 10-0-2)**

#### **Senate Proposal of Amendment**

#### **H. 40**

An act relating to nonconsensual removal of or tampering with a condom

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

Sec. 1. 12 V.S.A. § 1043 is added to read:

§ 1043. NONCONSENSUAL REMOVAL OF OR TAMPERING WITH A  
CONDOM

(a) No person shall intentionally and without consent remove or tamper with a condom prior to or during a sexual act in a manner likely to render it ineffective for its common purpose when consent to the sexual act is given by the other person with the explicit understanding that a condom would be used.

(b) A person harmed by a violation of subsection (a) of this section may bring an action in the Civil Division of the Superior Court for compensatory damages, punitive damages, and reasonable costs and attorney's fees.

(c) An action under subsection (b) of this section shall be subject to the statute of limitations in section 511 of this title.

## Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

### **H. 666**

An act relating to escrow deposit bonds

The Senate proposes to the House to amend the bill as follows:

In Sec. 1, 27A V.S.A. § 4-110, in subdivision (b)(1), following “and the declarant”, by striking out the words “discloses the identity of the issuer of the surety bond to the purchaser” and inserting in lieu thereof the words “provides the purchaser with a copy of the surety bond under which the purchaser's deposit is protected”

### **For Informational Purposes**

#### **H.C.R REQUEST DEADLINE**

All requests for a 2024 House Concurrent Resolution should be submitted to Michael Chernick in the Office of Legislative Counsel by noon on **Tuesday, April 23, 2024.**

#### **NOTICE OF CROSSOVER DATES**

The Committee on Joint Rules adopted the following Crossover dates:

(1) All **House/Senate** bills must be reported out of the last committee of reference (including the Committees on Appropriations and on Ways and Means/Finance, except as provided below in (2) and the exceptions listed below) on or before **Friday, March 15, 2024** and filed with the Clerk/Secretary so they may be placed on the Calendar for Notice the next

legislative day – Committee bills must be voted out of Committee by **Friday, March 15, 2024**.

(2) All **House/Senate** bills referred pursuant to House Rule 35(a) or Senate Rule 31 to the Committees on Appropriations and on Ways and Means/Finance must be reported out by the last of those committees on or before **Friday, March 22, 2024** and filed with the Clerk/Secretary so they may be placed on the Calendar for Notice the next legislative day.

**Exceptions the foregoing deadlines include the major money bills (the general Appropriations bill (“The Big Bill”), the Transportation Capital bill, the Capital Construction bill, the Pay Act, and the Fee and miscellaneous tax bills).**

### **JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE NOTICES**

Grants and Positions that have been submitted to the Joint Fiscal Committee by the Administration, under 32 V.S.A. §5(b)(3)(D):

**JFO #3198:** Bargain sale of timber rights to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife from the A Johnson Co., LLC. Vermont acquired the current Pond Woods Wildlife Management Area in Benson and Orwell, VT in the 1960s. At that time the A Johnson Co. retained the timber rights. The State now has the opportunity to acquire the timber rights, valued at \$2,320,529.00, for \$900,000.00. Acquisition of the timber rights will allow greater control over the property management. The \$900,000.00 sale price plus closing costs is covered by ongoing, annual funding from the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife.

*[Received March 24, 2024]*

**JFO #3197:** One (1) limited-service position, Environmental Analyst IV, to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation. The position will manage the increase in funding and the resulting increase in projects for the Healthy Homes program which provides financial assistance to low to moderate income homeowners to address failed or inadequate water, wastewater, drainage and storm water issues. A portion of the American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds appropriated in Act 78 of 2023, funds this position through 12/31/2026.

*[Received March 19, 2024]*

**JFO #3196:** Two (2) limited-service positions, both Grant Specialists, to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. The positions will manage stewardship of existing grants and applications and outreach for annual grant cycles. Both positions are 70% funded through existing federal funds. The remaining 30% will be a combination of state

special funds: State Recreation Trails Fund and Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative funds. The positions will not rely on annual appropriations of the General Fund. Both funded through 9/30/2024.

*[Received March 19, 2024]*

**JFO #3195:** One (1) limited-service position, Environmental Scientist III to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation. The position will support high-priority efforts to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species in public waters in the Lake Champlain Basin and is funded through additional federal funds received under an existing EPA grant for work in the Lake Champlain Basin program. Funding is for one-year with anticipation that funding will renew and be available for the foreseeable future. Position requested is through 12/31/2028.

*[Received March 19, 2024]*

**JFO #3194:** \$10,483,053.00 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Department of Tourism and Marketing from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Funds will support the resiliency and long-term recovery of the travel and tourism sectors in Vermont after the wide-spread disruption of these sectors during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Department of Tourism and Marketing has been working with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for over 18 months to develop a plan that would satisfy the EDA requirements and meet the specific needs of the Vermont travel and tourism industry. The grant includes two (2) limited-service positions, Grants Programs Manager and Travel Marketing Administrator to complete the grant administration plan. Both positions are fully funded through the new award through 10/31/2025.

*[Received March 19, 2024]*

**JFO #3193:** Land donation of 18.6 acres of undevelopable wetlands in Newport City, VT from Linda Chamberlin Mosher to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife. The land abuts the existing South Bay Wildlife Management Area and will expand wildlife and fish habitats and improve public access. The donation value is \$51,500.00. Estimated closing costs of \$10,000.00 and ongoing maintenance costs are covered by already budgeted federal funds. No state funds will be used for the acquisition.

*Received March 12, 2024]*

**JFO #3192:** \$327,250.00 to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Health from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for data collection and public awareness related to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. The grant is expected to fund yearly through 9/29/2027. The grant includes one (1)



limited-service position, Health Systems Program Administrator, to manage contracts and grants associated with the funding and communications with the CDC. The position is also funded through 9/29/2027.

*[Received March 12, 2024]*

**JFO #3191:** One (1) limited-service position to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Health to assess and carry out work related to data on maternal mortality and sudden unexpected infant deaths. Position requires quality assurance of data and transfer to federal data tracking systems. Position is funded through 09/29/2024 through previously approved JFO #1891.

*[Received March 12, 2024]*

**JFO #3190:** \$900,000.00 to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Corrections from the U.S. Department of Justice. Funds will enhance the reentry vocational case management of incarcerated individuals who are assessed for moderate and above risk of reoffending. The funds include one (1) limited-service position, Vocational Outreach Project Manager, fully funded through 9/30/2026.

*[Received March 1, 2024]*

**JFO #3189:** \$10,000,000.00 to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living from the U.S. Department of Education. The funds will be used to support the transition of youths with disabilities from high school to adulthood. The grants will support six (6) limited-service positions through 9/30/2028 that will work to support partnerships with all supervisory unions and the agencies focusing on employment opportunities for adults with disabilities.

*[Received March 1, 2024]*

**JFO #3188:** There are two sources of funds related to this request: \$50,000.00 from the Vermont Land Trust and \$20,000.00 from the Lintilhac Foundation, all to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. All funds will go to support the acquisition of a 19-acre property in Island Pond which will expand the Brighton State Park.

*[Received March 4, 2024]*

**JFO #3187:** Two (2) limited-service positions to the Public Service Department, Vermont Community Broadband Board: Administrative Services Manager III and Data and Information Project Manager. Positions will carry out work related to the federal Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. This program has the potential to bring in additional Broadband investment, provided local applications are successful. Positions

are fully funded through 11/30/2027 and are funded by previously approved JFO #3136.

*[Received February 26, 2024]*

**JFO #3186:** \$4,525,801.81 to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The majority of funds to be sub-awards to Vermont's agricultural businesses and organizations to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain and to support market development for small farms and food businesses. Includes full funding for one (1) limited-service position, Agriculture Development Specialist II and 50% support for one (1) limited-service position, Contracts and Grants Specialist I. The other 50% for the position will come from already approved JFO #2982.

*[Received February 8, 2024]*

**JFO #3185:** \$70,000.00 to the Attorney General's Office from the Sears Consumer Protection and Education Fund to improve accessibility and outreach of the Vermont Consumer Assistance Program to underserved populations in Vermont.

*[Received January 31, 2024]*

**JFO #3184:** Three (3) limited-service positions to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Health. One (1) Substance Abuse Program Evaluator, funded through 8/31/28; and one (1) Public Health Specialist II, and one (1) Family Service Specialist both funded through 9/29/2024. The positions are fully funded by previously approved JFO requests #3036 and #1891. These positions will support Vermont's Overdose Data to Action program and the Maternal Mortality Review Panel.

*[Received January 31, 2024]*

**JFO #3183:** \$182,500.00 to the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Funds will be used to complete the purchase of a conservation easement on a 183-acre parcel of land in Townshend, Vermont (Peterson Farm). *[Note: Remainder of the easement (\$82,500) is supported by a State appropriation agreement between the department and the VHCB. Closing costs, including department staff time, is funded by already budgeted federal funds. Ongoing enforcement costs are managed by the department's Lands and Facilities Trust Fund. A \$15,000.00 stewardship contribution to this fund will be made by the landowner at the time of the sale.]*

*[Received January 31, 2024]*

**JFO #3182:** \$125,000.00 to Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation from the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission to expand current monitoring of cyanotoxins in Lake Champlain and Vermont inland lakes.

*[Received January 31, 2024]*

**JFO #3181:** \$409,960.00 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Department of Housing and Community Development from the U.S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service. Funds will be used for the preservation, repair, and restoration of the Old Constitution House, located in Windsor, Vermont. The first Constitution of Vermont was adopted on this site, then known as Elijah West's Tavern, on July 8, 1777. *[Note: A State match of \$53,714.00 is accomplished within the agency budget through the reduction of a fraction of an existing position base and existing capital bill funds.]*

*[Received January 31, 2024]*

**JFO #3180:** One (1) limited-service position, Administrative Services Director III, to the Agency of Administration, Recovery Office. Position will ensure that flood recovery projects are integrated with existing state and federal programs. Will also ensure compliance and tracking of already awarded grants as well as those anticipated in the wake of the July 2023 flooding event. Position is funded through already approved JFO Request #3165 as well as Acts 74 (2021) and 185 (2022). The position is fully funded through 7/31/2027.

*[Received January 31, 2024]*

**JFO #3179:** Two (2) limited-service positions. One (1) to the Department of Mental Health, Project AWARE Lead Coordinator and one (1) to the Agency of Education, Project AWARE Co-Coordinator. The positions will liaison to coordinate and expand the state's efforts to develop sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health. Both positions are fully funded through 9/29/28 from previous SAMHSA grant award JFO #2934.

*[Received January 26, 2024]*

**JFO #3178:** \$456,436.00 to the Agency of Natural Resources, Secretary's Office from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Funds will support (1) limited-service position, Environmental Analyst IV. This position will serve as administrative lead developing the updated Climate Action Plan with the Vermont Climate Council and perform added work required by the EPA grant. Position is funded through 6/30/2027.

*[Received January 11, 2024]*

**JFO #3177: \$2,543,564.00** to the Agency of Natural Resources, Secretary's Office from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Funding is phase one of a two-phase funding opportunity aimed to support Vermont with climate change mitigation planning efforts. A comprehensive climate action plan will be developed, to overlap with and be synonymous to the required update to Vermont's Climate Action Plan in 2025.

*[Received January 12, 2024]*

**JFO #3176: \$250,000.00** to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Mental Health from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. These funds will increase rapid access to behavioral health care by supporting the peer service component of the mental health urgent care clinic being established in Chittenden County. This clinic will offer an alternative to seeking mental health care in emergency departments

*[Received January 11, 2024]*