

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on General and Housing to which was referred House Bill
3 No. 157 entitled “An act relating to the Vermont basic needs budget”
4 respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the
5 bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in
6 lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. BASIC NEEDS BUDGET TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE;
8 REPORT

9 (a) Creation. The Basic Needs Budget Technical Advisory Committee is
10 created to update the methodology utilized in calculating the basic needs
11 budget pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 526.

12 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
13 members:

14 (1) two current members of the House of Representatives, not all from
15 the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

16 (2) two current members of the Senate, not all from the same political
17 party, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

18 (3) the Secretary of Human Services or designee;

19 (4) one member, appointed by the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund;

20 (5) one member, appointed by the Society for Human Resources

21 Management, Vermont State Council; and

1 (6) one member, appointed by Capstone Community Action.

2 (c) Duties.

3 (1)(A) On or before November 1, 2023, the Committee shall study the
4 topics set forth in subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1) and submit a written
5 report to the Joint Fiscal Committee, the House Committee on General and
6 Housing, and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and
7 General Affairs that details the Committee’s findings and provides
8 recommendations for revisions to the methodology for determining the basic
9 needs budget pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 526. The report may also include
10 recommendations for legislative action.

11 (B) In preparing the report required pursuant to subdivision (A) of
12 this subdivision (1), the Committee shall study the following topics:

13 (i) the current methodology for calculating the basic needs budget
14 and determining what constitutes a livable wage;

15 (ii) potential changes to the methodology for calculating the basic
16 needs budget and determining what constitutes a livable wage, including the
17 identification of not more than seven household configurations to be utilized in
18 future determinations of the basic needs budget and livable wage; and

19 (iii) potential changes to 2 V.S.A. § 526 to account for public
20 policy changes, data availability, or any other factors that have had an impact

1 on any aspects of the basic needs budget calculation or the cost to Vermonters
2 of basic needs as that term is defined in 2 V.S.A. § 526(a)(1).

3 (2) The Committee shall:

4 (A) take testimony from subject-matter experts to assist with data
5 analysis and methodological considerations; and

6 (B) take testimony from a variety of stakeholders, including
7 employers and employees and organizations that represent employers and
8 employees.

9 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative and technical
10 assistance of the Joint Fiscal Office, the technical assistance of the Department
11 of Labor’s Economic and Labor Market Information Division, and the legal
12 assistance of the Office of Legislative Counsel.

13 (e) Meetings.

14 (1) The Joint Fiscal Office shall call the first meeting of the Committee
15 to occur on or before August 15, 2023.

16 (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the
17 first meeting.

18 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

19 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 30, 2025.

20 (f) Compensation and reimbursement.

1 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
2 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem
3 compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for
4 not more than five meetings.

5 (2) Other members of the Committee who are not State employees shall
6 be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as
7 permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than five meetings.

8 (g) Appropriations.

9 (1) The sum of \$7,000.00 is appropriated to the General Assembly from
10 the General Fund in fiscal year 2024 for per diem compensation and
11 reimbursement of expenses for members of the Committee.

12 (2) The sum of \$10,000.00 is appropriated to the Joint Fiscal Office
13 from the General Fund in fiscal year 2024 for costs related to retaining experts
14 and other services provided to the Committee by the Joint Fiscal Office.

15 Sec. 2. 2025 BASIC NEEDS BUDGET REPORT; METHODOLOGY

16 Notwithstanding any provision of 2 V.S.A. § 526(c) to the contrary, in
17 preparing the basic needs budget report due January 15, 2025, the Joint Fiscal
18 Office shall utilize the methodology and household configurations
19 recommended by the Basic Needs Budget Technical Advisory Committee
20 established pursuant to section 1 of this act.

1 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

2 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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6 (Committee vote: _____)

7

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Representative _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE