

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs to
3 which was referred Senate Bill No. 102 entitled “An act relating to expanding
4 employment protections and collective bargaining rights” respectfully reports
5 that it has considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended by
6 striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the
7 following:

8 Sec. 1. 21 V.S.A. § 495o is added to read:

9 § 495o. EMPLOYER COMMUNICATIONS RELATING TO RELIGIOUS

10 OR POLITICAL MATTERS; EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

11 (a) An employer, or an employer’s agent, shall not discharge, discipline,
12 penalize, or otherwise discriminate against, or threaten to discharge, discipline,
13 penalize, or otherwise discriminate against, an employee:

14 (1) because the employee declines:

15 (A) to attend or participate in an employer-sponsored meeting that
16 has the primary purpose of communicating the employer’s opinion about
17 religious or political matters; or

18 (B) to view or participate in communications with or from the
19 employer or the employer’s agent that have the primary purpose of
20 communicating the employer’s opinion about religious or political matters; or

21 (2) as a means of requiring an employee to:

1 (A) attend an employer-sponsored meeting that has the primary
2 purpose of communicating the employer’s opinion about religious or political
3 matters; or

4 (B) view or participate in communications with or from the employer
5 or the employer’s agent that have the primary purpose of communicating the
6 employer’s opinion about religious or political matters.

7 (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

8 (1) limit an employee’s right to bring a civil action for wrongful
9 termination; or

10 (2) diminish or limit any rights provided to an employee pursuant to a
11 collective bargaining agreement or employment contract.

12 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employer that is
13 a religious or denominational institution or organization, or any organization
14 operated for charitable or educational purposes, that is operated, supervised, or
15 controlled by or in connection with a religious organization, from:

16 (1) communicating with its employees regarding the employer’s opinion
17 on religious matters;

18 (2) requiring its employees to attend a meeting regarding the employer’s
19 opinion on religious matters; or

1 (3) requiring its employees to view or participate in communications
2 from the employer or the employer's agent regarding the employer's opinion
3 on religious matters.

4 (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employer that is
5 a political organization, a political party, or an organization that engages, in
6 substantial part, in political matters from:

7 (1) communicating with its employees regarding the employer's opinion
8 on political matters;

9 (2) requiring its employees to attend a meeting regarding the employer's
10 opinion on political matters; or

11 (3) requiring its employees to view or participate in communications
12 from the employer or the employer's agent regarding the employer's opinion
13 on political matters.

14 (e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employer or the
15 employer's agent from:

16 (1) communicating information to an employee:

17 (A) that the employer is required to communicate pursuant to State or
18 federal law; or

19 (B) that is necessary for the employee to perform the employee's job
20 functions or duties;

1 (e)(1) Whenever, on the basis of a petition pursuant to subdivision (d)(1) of
2 this section or a hearing pursuant to subdivision (d)(2) of this section, the
3 Board finds substantial interest among employees in forming a bargaining unit
4 or being represented for purposes of collective bargaining, a secret ballot
5 election shall be conducted by the Board not more than 23 business days after
6 the petition is filed with the Board except as otherwise provided pursuant to
7 subdivision (4) of this subsection and subdivision (g)(4) of this section.

8 * * *

9 (g)(1) In determining the representation of State employees in a collective
10 bargaining unit, the Board shall conduct a secret ballot of the employees within
11 the time period set forth in subdivision (e)(1) of this section, unless the time to
12 conduct the election is extended pursuant to subdivision (e)(4) of this section,
13 and certify the results to the interested parties and to the State employer. The
14 original ballot shall be so prepared as to permit a vote against representation by
15 anyone named on the ballot. No representative will be certified with less than
16 a majority of the votes cast by employees in the bargaining unit.

17 * * *

18 (4)(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection (g), if the
19 Board determines that a petition to be represented for collective bargaining
20 filed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, which identifies a proposed
21 exclusive representative of the employees in the bargaining unit, bears the

1 signatures of at least 50 percent plus one of the employees in a bargaining unit
2 deemed appropriate by the Board pursuant to this section, the Board shall
3 certify the person or labor organization as the exclusive representative of the
4 bargaining unit.

5 (B) Certification of a collective bargaining representative shall only
6 be available pursuant to this subdivision (g)(4) when no other person or labor
7 organization is currently certified or recognized as the exclusive representative
8 of the employees in the bargaining unit.

9 (h) A representative chosen ~~by secret ballot~~ for the purposes of collective
10 bargaining by a majority of the votes cast by secret ballot or certified pursuant
11 to subdivision (g)(4) of this section shall be the exclusive representative of all
12 the employees in ~~such~~ the bargaining unit for a minimum of one year. ~~Such~~
13 The representative shall be eligible for reelection or for recertification pursuant
14 to subdivision (g)(4) of this section.

15 * * *

16 Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 1992 is amended to read:

17 § 1992. REFERENDUM PROCEDURE FOR REPRESENTATION

18 (a)(1) An organization purporting to represent a majority of all of the
19 teachers or administrators employed by the school board may be recognized by
20 the school board without the necessity of a referendum upon the submission of
21 a petition bearing the valid signatures of a majority of the teachers or

1 administrators employed by that school board. ~~Within 15 calendar days after~~
2 ~~receiving the petition, the school board shall notify the teachers or~~
3 ~~administrators of the school district in writing of its intention to either require~~
4 ~~or waive a secret ballot referendum. If the school board gives notice of its~~
5 ~~intention to waive a referendum and recognize an organization, 10 percent of~~
6 ~~the teachers or administrators employed by the school board may submit a~~
7 ~~petition within 15 calendar days thereafter, objecting to the granting of~~
8 ~~recognition without a referendum, in which event a secret ballot referendum~~
9 ~~shall be held in the district for the purpose of choosing an exclusive~~
10 ~~representative as provided pursuant to the provisions of this section. The~~
11 ~~school board and the organization purporting to represent a majority of the~~
12 ~~teachers or administrators shall, within 10 business days after the petition is~~
13 ~~submitted, agree on an impartial third party to examine the petition and~~
14 ~~determine whether a majority of the teachers or administrators support the~~
15 ~~organization. If the parties fail to agree on an impartial third party within~~
16 ~~10 business days, the Vermont Labor Relations Board shall examine the~~
17 ~~petition and determine whether a majority of the teachers or administrators~~
18 ~~support the organization. If the impartial party or the Board determines that a~~
19 ~~majority of the teachers or administrators support the organization, it shall~~
20 ~~certify the organization as the exclusive representative of the teachers or~~
21 ~~administrators.~~

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

* * *

(b) ~~Recognition granted to~~ Certification of a negotiating unit as exclusive representative shall be valid and not subject to challenge by referendum petition or otherwise for the remainder of the fiscal year in which ~~recognition is granted~~ the certification occurs and for an additional period of 12 months after final adoption of the budget for the succeeding fiscal year and shall continue thereafter until a new referendum is called for.

(c)(1)(A) A secret ballot referendum shall be held not more than 21 calendar days after 20 percent of the teachers or administrators employed by the school board present a petition requesting a referendum on the matter of representation, except during a period of prior ~~recognition~~ certification, as provided pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

* * *

Sec. 5. 21 V.S.A. § 1581 is amended to read:

§ 1581. PETITIONS FOR ELECTION; FILING, INVESTIGATIONS,
HEARINGS, DETERMINATIONS

* * *

(b)(1) The Board shall investigate the petition and if it has reasonable cause to believe that a question of representation exists shall provide for an appropriate hearing before the Board itself, a Board member ~~thereof~~, or its agents appointed for that purpose upon due notice. Written notice of the

1 hearing shall be mailed by certified mail to the parties named in the petition
2 not less than seven days before the hearing.

3 (2) If the Board finds upon the record of the hearing that a question of
4 representation exists, it shall conduct an election by secret ballot marked at the
5 place of election and certify to the parties, in writing, the results thereof of the
6 election.

7 (3)(A) If the Board finds upon the record of the hearing that a petition to
8 be represented for collective bargaining filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(A)
9 of this section, which identifies a proposed bargaining representative, bears the
10 signatures of at least 50 percent plus one of the employees in the bargaining
11 unit, the Board shall certify the individual or labor organization identified as
12 the bargaining representative.

13 (B) Certification of a representative shall only be available pursuant
14 to this subdivision (B) when no other individual or labor organization is
15 currently certified or recognized as the bargaining representative.

16 (c) In determining whether or not a question of representation exists, ~~it~~ the
17 Board shall apply the same regulations and rules of decision regardless of the
18 identity of the persons filing the petition or the kind of relief sought.

19 * * *

20 Sec. 6. 21 V.S.A. § 1584 is amended to read:

21 § 1584. PETITIONS AND ELECTION TO RESCIND

1 bears the signatures of at least 50 percent plus one of the employees in the
2 bargaining unit, the Board shall certify the individual or labor organization
3 identified as the bargaining agent.

4 (2) Certification of a bargaining agent shall only be available pursuant to
5 this subsection when no other individual or labor organization is currently
6 certified or recognized as the agent of the employees in the bargaining unit.

7 (i) No election ~~may~~ shall be conducted under this section in a bargaining
8 unit or a subdivision within which in the preceding 12 months a valid election
9 has been held.

10 Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

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

12

13

14

15 (Committee vote: _____)

16

17

Senator _____

18

FOR THE COMMITTEE