1	TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:
2	The Committee on Health and Welfare to which was referred Senate Bill
3	No. 37 entitled "An act relating to access to legally protected health care
4	activity and regulation of health care providers" respectfully reports that it has
5	considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking out
6	all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:
7	* * * Definitions * * *
8	Sec. 1. 1 V.S.A. § 150 is added to read:
9	§ 150. LEGALLY PROTECTED HEALTH CARE ACTIVITY
10	(a) "Gender-affirming health care services" means all supplies, care, and
11	services of a medical, behavioral health, mental health, surgical, psychiatric,
12	therapeutic, diagnostic, preventative, rehabilitative, or supportive nature
13	relating to the treatment of gender dysphoria and gender incongruence.
14	"Gender-affirming health care services" does not include conversion therapy as
15	defined by 18 V.S.A. § 8351.
16	(b)(1) "Legally protected health care activity" means:
17	(A) the exercise and enjoyment, or attempted exercise and
18	enjoyment, by any person of rights to reproductive health care services or
19	gender-affirming health care services secured by this State;
20	(B) any act or omission undertaken to aid or encourage, or attempt to
21	aid or encourage, any person in the exercise and enjoyment, or attempted

exercise and enjoyment, of rights to reproductive health care services or
gender-affirming health care services secured by this State, provided that the
provision of such a health care service by a person duly licensed under the
laws of this State and physically present in this State shall be legally protected
if the service is permitted under the laws of this State, regardless of the
patient's location; or
(C) the provision, issuance, or use of, or enrollment in, insurance or
other health coverage for reproductive health care services or gender-affirming
health care services that are legal in this State, or any act to aid or encourage,
or attempt to aid or encourage, any person in the provision, issuance, or use of,
or enrollment in, insurance or other health coverage for those services,
regardless of the location of the insured or individual seeking insurance or
health coverage, if the insurance or health coverage is permitted under the laws
of this State.
(2) Except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection, the
protections applicable to "legally protected health care activity" shall not apply
to a lawsuit, judgment, or civil, criminal, or administrative action that is based
on conduct for which an action would exist under the laws of this State if the
course of conduct that forms the basis for liability had occurred entirely in this
State.

1	(3) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, the provision of a
2	health care service by a person duly licensed under the laws of this State and
3	physically present in this State shall be legally protected if the service is
4	permitted under the laws of this State, regardless of the patient's location or
5	whether the health care provider is licensed in the state where the patient is
6	located at the time the service is rendered.
7	(c) "Reproductive health care services" means all supplies, care, and
8	services of a medical, behavioral health, mental health, surgical, psychiatric,
9	therapeutic, diagnostic, preventative, rehabilitative, or supportive nature
10	relating to pregnancy, contraception, assisted reproduction, pregnancy loss
11	management, or the termination of a pregnancy.
12	* * * Medical Malpractice * * *
13	Sec. 2. 8 V.S.A. chapter 129 is amended to read:
14	CHAPTER 129. INSURANCE TRADE PRACTICES
15	* * *
16	§ 4722. DEFINITIONS
17	* * *
18	(4)(A) "Abusive litigation" means litigation or other legal action to
19	deter, prevent, sanction, or punish any person engaging in legally protected
20	health care activity by:

1	(i) filing or prosecuting any action in any other state where
2	liability, in whole or part, directly or indirectly, is based on legally protected
3	health care activity that occurred in this State, including any action in which
4	liability is based on any theory of vicarious, joint, or several liability derived
5	therefrom; or
6	(ii) attempting to enforce any order or judgment issued in
7	connection with any such action by any party to the action or any person acting
8	on behalf of a party to the action.
9	(B) A lawsuit shall be considered to be based on conduct that
10	occurred in this State if any part of any act or omission involved in the course
11	of conduct that forms the basis for liability in the lawsuit occurs or is initiated
12	in this State, whether or not such act or omission is alleged or included in any
13	pleading or other filing in the lawsuit.
14	(5) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as in 1
15	V.S.A. § 150.
16	* * *
17	§ 4724. UNFAIR METHODS OF COMPETITION OR UNFAIR OR
18	DECEPTIVE ACTS OR PRACTICES DEFINED
19	The following are hereby defined as unfair methods of competition or unfair
20	or deceptive acts or practices in the business of insurance:
21	* * *

1	(7) Unfair discrimination; arbitrary underwriting action.
2	(A) Making or permitting any unfair discrimination between insureds
3	of the same class and equal risk in the rates charged for any contract of
4	insurance, or in the dividends or other benefits payable thereon, or in any other
5	of the terms and conditions of such contracts.
6	* * *
7	(F)(i) Discriminating against a health care provider, as defined by
8	18 V.S.A. § 9496, or adjusting or otherwise calculating a health care provider's
9	risk classification or premium charges on the basis that:
10	(I) the health care provider provides or assists in the provision
11	of legally protected health care activity that is unlawful in another state;
12	(II) another state's laws create potential or actual liability for
13	that activity;
14	(III) abusive litigation against a provider concerning legally
15	protected health care activity resulted in a claim, settlement, or judgement
16	against the provider; or
17	(IV) the license of the provider has been disciplined in any way
18	by another state based solely on the provider's provision of legally protected
19	health care activity.
20	(ii) purposes of this subdivision (F), it shall not be unfairly
21	discriminatory nor an arbitrary underwriting action against a health care

1	provider if the risk classifications, premium charges, or other underwriting
2	considerations are based on factors other than those listed in subdivision (i) of
3	this subdivision (F).
4	* * *
5	* * * Insurance Coverage * * *
6	Sec. 3. 8 V.S.A. § 4088m is added to read:
7	§ 4088m. COVERAGE FOR GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTH CARE
8	<u>SERVICES</u>
9	(a) Definitions. As used in this section:
10	(1) "Gender-affirming health care services" has the same meaning as in
11	1 V.S.A. § 150.
12	(2) "Health insurance plan" means Medicaid and any other public health
13	care assistance program, any individual or group health insurance policy, any
14	hospital or medical service corporation or health maintenance organization
15	subscriber contract, or any other health benefit plan offered, issued, or renewed
16	for any person in this State by a health insurer as defined by 18 V.S.A. § 9402.
17	For purposes of this section, health insurance plan shall include any health
18	benefit plan offered or administered by the State or any subdivision or
19	instrumentality of the State. The term shall not include benefit plans providing
20	coverage for a specific disease or other limited benefit coverage, except that it
21	shall include any accident and sickness health plan.

1	(b) Coverage.
2	(1) A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for gender-affirming
3	health care services that:
4	(A) are medically necessary and clinically appropriate for the
5	individual's diagnosis or health condition; and
6	(B) are included in the State's essential health benefits benchmark
7	<u>plan.<mark>; and</mark></u>
8	(C) that meet generally accepted practice standards, such as
9	recommendations and guidelines issued by the World Professional Association
10	for Transgender Health, its successor, or a comparable organization identified
11	by the Department of Financial Regulation.
12	(2) Coverage provided pursuant to this section:
13	(A) may be subject to a prior authorization requirement under the
14	health insurance plan concerning the amount, frequency, and duration of
15	treatment; and
16	(B) for commercial health insurance plans, shall be provided in
17	compliance with rules and guidance issued by the Department of Financial
18	Regulation regarding gender affirming health care services; and
19	(C) for by Medicaid or any other public health care assistance
20	program shall comply with all federal requirements imposed by the Centers for
21	Medicare and Medicaid Services.

1	(3) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a health insurance plan from
2	providing greater coverage for gender-affirming health care services than is
3	required under this section.
4	(c) Cost sharing. A health insurance plan shall not impose greater
5	coinsurance, co-payment, deductible, or other cost-sharing requirements for
6	coverage of gender-affirming health care services than apply to the diagnosis
7	and treatment of any other physical or mental condition under the plan.
8	Sec. 4. 8 V.S.A. § 4099e is added to read:
9	§ 4099e. COVERAGE FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION-RELATED
10	<u>SERVICES</u>
11	(a) Definitions. As used in this section:
12	(1) "Abortion" means any medical treatment intended to induce the
13	termination of, or to terminate, a clinically diagnosable pregnancy except for
14	the purpose of producing a live birth.
15	(2) "Health insurance plan" means Medicaid and any other public health
16	care assistance program, any individual or group health insurance policy, any
17	hospital or medical service corporation or health maintenance organization
18	subscriber contract, or any other health benefit plan offered, issued, or renewed
19	for any person in this State by a health insurer as defined by 18 V.S.A. § 9402.
20	For purposes of this section, health insurance plan shall include any health
21	benefit plan offered or administered by the State or any subdivision or

1	instrumentality of the State. The term shall not include benefit plans providing
2	coverage for a specific disease or other limited benefit coverage, except that it
3	shall include any accident and sickness health plan.
4	(b) Coverage. A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for abortion
5	and abortion-related care.
6	(c) Cost sharing. The coverage required by this section shall not be subject
7	to any co-payment, deductible, coinsurance, or other cost-sharing requirement
8	or additional charge-, except:
9	(1) to the extent such coverage would disqualify a high-deductible
10	health plan from eligibility for a health savings account pursuant to 26
11	U.S.C. § 223; and
12	(2) for coverage provided by Medicaid.
13	Sec. 5. STATE PLAN AMENDMENT
14	The Agency of Human Services shall seek a state plan amendment from the
15	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services or federal authorities if needed to
16	allow Vermont's Medicaid program to provide coverage consistent with this
17	act.
18	* * * Professional Regulation * * *
19	Sec. 6. 3 V.S.A. § 129a is amended to read:
20	§ 129a. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
21	* * *

1	(f)(1) Health care providers. Notwithstanding subsection (e) of this section
2	or any other law to the contrary, no health care provider shall be subject to
3	professional disciplinary action by a board or the Director, nor shall a board or
4	the Director take adverse action on an application for certification, registration,
5	or licensure of a qualified health care provider, based solely on:
6	(A) the health care provider providing or assisting in the provision of
7	legally protected health care activity; or
8	(B) a criminal or civil action or disciplinary action against the health
9	care provider by a licensing board of another state based solely on the provider
10	providing or assisting in the provision of legally protected health care activity.
11	(2) Definitions. As used in this subsection:
12	(A) "Health care provider" has the same meaning as in 18 V.S.A.
13	<u>§ 9496.</u>
14	(B) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as
15	<u>in 1 V.S.A. § 150.</u>
16	Sec. 7. 26 V.S.A. § 1354 is amended to read:
17	§ 1354. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
18	* * *
19	(d)(1) Health care providers. Notwithstanding any other law to the
20	contrary, no health care provider shall be subject to professional disciplinary
21	action by the Board, nor shall the Board take adverse action on an application

1	for certification, registration, or licensure of a qualified health care provider,
2	based solely on:
3	(A) the health care provider providing or assisting in the provision of
4	legally protected health care activity; or
5	(B) a criminal or civil action or disciplinary action against the health
6	care provider by a licensing board of another state based solely on the provider
7	providing or assisting in the provision of legally protected health care activity.
8	(2) Definitions. As used in this subsection:
9	(A) "Health care provider" has the same meaning as in 18 V.S.A.
10	<u>§ 9496.</u>
11	(B) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as
12	<u>in 1 V.S.A. § 150.</u>
13	* * * Pregnancy Centers * * *
14	Sec. 8. 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 11 is added to read:
15	Subchapter 11. Pregnancy Services Center Fraud
16	§ 2491. FINDINGS; LEGISLATIVE INTENT
17	(a) Findings. The General Assembly finds that:
18	(1) Centers that seek to counsel clients against abortion, often
19	referred to as crisis pregnancy centers or limited-services pregnancy
20	centers, have become common across the country, including in Vermont.
21	Honest information about the services that a limited-services pregnancy

1	center performs, in addition to forthright acknowledgement of its
2	limitations, is essential to enable pregnant individuals in this State to make
3	informed decisions about their care.
4	(2) Although some limited-services pregnancy centers openly
5	acknowledge in their advertising, on their websites, and at their facilities
6	that they neither provide abortions nor refer clients to other providers of
7	abortion services, others provide confusing and misleading information to
8	pregnant individuals contemplating abortion by leading those individuals
9	to believe that their facilities offer abortion services and unbiased
10	counseling. Many limited-services pregnancy centers have promoted
11	patently false or biased medical claims about abortion, pregnancy,
12	contraception, and reproductive health care providers.
13	(3) False and misleading advertising by centers that do not offer or
14	refer clients for abortion is of special concern to the State because of the
15	time-sensitive and constitutionally protected nature of the decision to
16	terminate a pregnancy. When a pregnant individual is misled into
17	believing that a center offers services that it does not in fact offer or
18	receives false or misleading information regarding health care options, the
19	individual loses time crucial to the decision whether to terminate a
20	pregnancy and may lose the option to choose a particular method or to
21	terminate a pregnancy at all.

1	(4) Telling the truth is how trained health care providers
2	demonstrate respect for patients, foster trust, promote self-determination,
3	and cultivate an environment where best practices in shared decision-
4	making can flourish. Without veracity in information and communication,
5	it is difficult for individuals to make informed, voluntary choices essential
6	in fulfilling autonomy-based obligations.
7	(5) Advertising strategies and educational information about health
8	care options that lack transparency, use misleading or ambiguous
9	terminology, misrepresent or obfuscate services provided, or provide
10	factually inaccurate information are a form of manipulation that
11	disrespects individuals, undermines trust, broadens health disparity, and
12	can result in patient harm.
13	(b) Intent.
14	(1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that the public
15	is provided with accurate, factual information about the types of health
16	care services that are available to pregnant individuals in this State. The
17	General Assembly respects the constitutionally protected right of each
18	individual to personal reproductive autonomy, which includes the right to
19	receive clear, honest, and non-misleading information about the
20	individual's options and to make informed, voluntary choices after
21	considering all relevant information.

1	(2) The General Assembly respects the right of limited-services
2	pregnancy centers to counsel individuals against abortion, and nothing in
3	this subchapter should be construed to regulate, limit, or curtail such
4	advocacy.
5	§ 2491 2492. DEFINITIONS
6	As used in this subchapter:
7	(1) "Abortion" means any medical treatment intended to induce the
8	termination of, or to terminate, a clinically diagnosable pregnancy except for
9	the purpose of producing a live birth.
10	(2) "Client" means an individual who is inquiring about or seeking
11	services at a pregnancy services center.
12	(3) "Emergency contraception" means any drug approved by the U.S.
13	Food and Drug Administration as a contraceptive method for use after sexual
14	intercourse, whether provided over the counter or by prescription.
15	(4) "Health information" means any oral or written information in any
16	form or medium that relates to health insurance or the past, present, or future
17	physical or mental health or condition of a client.
18	(5) "Limited-services pregnancy center" means a pregnancy services
19	center that does not directly provide, or provide referrals to clients, for
20	abortions or emergency contraception.

1	(6) "Pregnancy services center" means a facility, including a mobile
2	facility, where the primary purpose is to provide services to individuals who
3	are or may be pregnant and that either offers obstetric ultrasounds, obstetric
4	sonograms, or prenatal care to pregnant individuals or has the appearance of a
5	medical facility. A pregnancy services center has the appearance of a medical
6	facility if two or more of the following factors are present:
7	(A) The center offers pregnancy testing or pregnancy diagnosis, or
8	both.
9	(B) The center has staff or volunteers who wear medical attire or
10	uniforms.
11	(C) The center contains one or more examination tables.
12	(D) The center contains a private or semiprivate room or area
13	containing medical supplies or medical instruments.
14	(E) The center has staff or volunteers who collect health information
15	from clients.
16	(F) The center is located on the same premises as a State-licensed
17	medical facility or provider or shares facility space with a State-licensed
18	medical provider.
19	(7) "Premises" means land and improvements or appurtenances or any
20	part thereof.

§ 2492 2493. UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE ACT

1

2	(a) It is an unfair and deceptive act and practice in commerce and a
3	violation of section 2453 of this title for any limited-services pregnancy center
4	to disseminate or cause to be disseminated to the public any advertising about
5	the services or proposed services performed at that center that is untrue or
6	clearly designed to mislead the public about the nature of services provided.
7	Advertising includes representations made directly to consumers; marketing
8	practices; communication in any print medium, such as newspapers,
9	magazines, mailers, or handouts; and any broadcast medium, such as television
10	or radio, telephone marketing, or advertising over the Internet such as through
11	websites and web ads. For purposes of this chapter, advertising or the
12	provision of services by a limited-services pregnancy center is an act in
13	commerce.
14	(b) The medical director of a pregnancy services center, or the individual
15	charged with supervising health care services provided by center staff or
16	volunteers at a pregnancy services center, shall be responsible, legally and
17	professionally, for the activities of staff and volunteers performing duties for
18	and on behalf of the pregnancy services center. The medical director or
19	individual shall ensure that the staff of the pregnancy services center, including
20	the medical director or individual, and any volunteers providing health care
21	services maintain a level of supervision, training, and practice consistent with

1	legal requirements established under Vermont law, including those set forth in
2	Title 26, and professional standards of practice. Failure to conduct or to ensure
3	that health care services are conducted in accordance with State law and
4	professional standards of practice may constitute unprofessional conduct under
5	3 V.S.A. § 129a and 26 V.S.A. § 1354.
6	(c) The Attorney General or State's Attorney has the same authority to
7	make rules, conduct civil investigations, and bring civil actions with respect to
8	violations of subsection (a) of this section as provided under subchapter 1 of
9	this chapter. For purposes of this chapter, advertising or the provision of
10	services by a limited services pregnancy center is an act in commerce. The
11	Attorney General or State's Attorney has the power to issue subpoenas in
12	connection with an investigation conducted pursuant to this subchapter.
13	* * * Reports; Interstate Compacts * * *
14	Sec. 9. AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE
15	BOARD; ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND
16	GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE SERVICES
17	(a) The Agency of Human Services shall include access to reproductive
18	health care services and access to gender-affirming health care services as
19	indicators for equitable access to health care in its Community Profiles of
20	Health and Well-Being analysis.

(b) The Green Mountain Care Board shall include reproductive health care
service and gender-affirming health care service needs in the Health Resource
Allocation Plan analysis pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 9405.
Sec. 10. BOARD OF MEDICAL PRACTICE; OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL
REGULATION; INTERSTATE COMPACTS; REPORT;
On or before November 1, 2024, the Office of Professional Regulation, in
consultation with the Board of Medical Practice, shall submit a report to the
House Committee on Health Care and the Senate Committee on Health and
Welfare with findings and recommendations for legislative action to address
any concerns regarding the State's participation, or contemplated participation,
in interstate licensure compacts as a result of the provisions of this act,
including the State's participation in the Nurse Licensure Compact pursuant to

1	26 V.S.A. chapter 28, subchapter 5 and the Interstate Medical Licensure
2	Compact pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 23, subchapter 3A.
3	Sec. 10a. 26 V.S.A. chapter 56 is amended to read:
4	CHAPTER 56. OUT-OF-STATE TELEHEALTH LICENSURE &
5	REGISTRATION AND INTERSTATE COMPACTS
6	Subchapter 1. Out-of-State Telehealth Licensure And Registration
7	* * *
8	Subchapter 2. Interstate Compacts; Legally Protected Health Care Activity
9	Health Care Provider Compacts
10	§ 3071. LEGALLY PROTECTED HEALTH CARE ACTIVITY HEALTH
11	CARE PROVIDER COMPACTS; DIRECTION TO
12	VERMONT REPRESENTATIVES
13	(a) The General Assembly finds that a state's prohibition of or limitation on
14	legally protected health care activity the provision of gender-affirming
15	health care services or reproductive health care services, or both, as
16	defined by 1 V.S.A. § 150, prohibits health care providers from following
17	health care best practices and is a failure on the part of the state to provide
18	health care services that are medically necessary and clinically appropriate for
19	its residents. Therefore, it is the General Assembly's intent to protect the
20	ability of professionals licensed, certified, or registered in Vermont, and
21	applicants from other member states seeking to practice a profession in

1	Vermont pursuant to an interstate compact or agreement, to have the benefit of
2	compacts and agreements while at the same time engaging in, providing, or
3	otherwise facilitating, personally or professionally, legally protected health
4	care activity gender-affirming health care and reproductive health care
5	services.
6	(b) Vermont's representative or delegate for an interstate compact or
7	agreement related to health care shall seek an amendment or exception to the
8	compact or agreement language, rules, or bylaws, as necessary, to recognize
9	and permit the provision of legally protected health care activity in states
10	that are participating in the compact or agreement so that if a licensee is
11	disciplined by another state solely for providing or assisting in the
12	provision of gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health
13	care services that would be legal and meet professional standards of care
14	if provided in Vermont, the compact or agreement does not require that
15	Vermont take professional disciplinary action against the licensee.
16	* * * Emergency Contraception * * *
17	Sec. 11. 26 V.S.A. chapter 36, subchapter 1 is amended to read:
18	Subchapter 1. General Provisions
19	* * *
20	§ 2022. DEFINITIONS
21	As used in this chapter:

1	* * *
2	(22) "Emergency contraception" means any drug approved by the U.S.
3	Food and Drug Administration as a contraceptive method for use after sexual
4	intercourse, whether provided over the counter or by prescription.
5	§ 2023. CLINICAL PHARMACY; PRESCRIBING
6	* * *
7	(b) A pharmacist may prescribe in the following contexts:
8	* * *
9	(2) State protocol.
10	(A) A pharmacist may prescribe, order, or administer in a manner
11	consistent with valid State protocols that are approved by the Commissioner of
12	Health after consultation with the Director of Professional Regulation and the
13	Board and the ability for public comment:
14	* * *
15	(ix) emergency prescribing of albuterol or glucagon while
16	contemporaneously contacting emergency services; and
17	(x) tests for SARS-CoV for asymptomatic individuals or related
18	serology for individuals by entities holding a Certificate of Waiver pursuant to
19	the Clinical Laboratory Amendments of 1988 (42 U.S.C. § 263a); and
20	(xi) emergency contraception.

1	* * *
2	Sec. 11a. 26 V.S.A. § 2077 is added to read:
3	§ 2077. EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION; VENDING MACHINES
4	(a) A retail or institutional drug outlet licensed under this chapter or a
5	postsecondary school, as defined in and subject to 16 V.S.A. § 176, may
6	make over-the-counter emergency contraception and other nonprescription
7	drugs or articles for the prevention of pregnancy or conception available
8	through a vending machine or similar device.
9	(b) The Board may adopt rules in accordance with 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to
10	regulate the location, operation, utilization, and oversight of the vending
11	machines and similar devices described in subsection (a) of this section in a
12	manner that balances consumer access with appropriate safeguards for theft
13	prevention and safety.
14	* * * Higher Education; Health Care Services * * *
15	Sec. 12. 16 V.S.A. chapter 78 is added to read:
16	CHAPTER 78. ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE AND GENDER-
17	AFFIRMING HEALTH CARE SERVICES
18	§ 2501. DEFINITIONS
19	As used in this chapter:
20	(1) "Gender-affirming health care readiness" means each institution's
21	preparedness to provide gender-affirming health care services to students or

1	assist students in obtaining gender-affirming health care services, including
2	having in place equipment, protocols, patient educational materials,
3	informational websites, and training for staff; provided, however, that gender-
4	affirming health care readiness may include the provision of gender-affirming
5	health care services.
6	(2) "Gender-affirming health care services" has the same meaning as in
7	1 V.S.A. § 150.
8	(3) "Institution" means the University of Vermont or a college in the
9	Vermont State College system.
10	(4) "Medication abortion" means an abortion provided by medication
11	techniques.
12	(5) "Reproductive health care services" has the same meaning as in 1
13	V.S.A. § 150 and includes medication abortion.
14	(6) "Reproductive health care readiness" means each institution's
15	preparedness to provide reproductive health care services to students or assist
16	students in obtaining reproductive health care services, including having in
17	place equipment, protocols, patient educational materials, informational
18	websites, and training for staff; provided, however, that reproductive health
19	care readiness may include the provision of reproductive health care services.
20	(7) "Telehealth" has the same meaning as in 26 V.S.A. § 3052.
21	§ 2502. GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTH CARE AND REPRODUCTIVE

1	HEALTH CARE READINESS; REPORTS
2	(a) Each institution shall report to the Department of Health Agency of
3	Human Services annually, on or before November 1, on the current status of
4	its gender-affirming health care and reproductive health care readiness,
5	including:
6	(1) whether the institution has an operational health center on campus;
7	(2) whether the institution employs health care providers on campus;
8	(3) the types of gender-affirming health care services and reproductive
9	health care services that the institution offers to its students on campus and the
10	supports that the institution provides to students who receive those services;
11	(4) the institution's efforts to assist students with obtaining gender-
12	affirming health care services and reproductive health care services from
13	licensed health care professionals through telehealth;
14	(5) the institution's proximity to a hospital, clinic, or other facility that
15	provides gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care
16	services, or both, that are not available to students on campus;
17	(6) the referral information that the institution provides regarding
18	facilities that offer gender-affirming health care services and reproductive
19	health care services that are not available to students on campus, including
20	information regarding the scope of the services that are available at each such
21	facility; and

1	(7) the availability, convenience, and cost of public transportation
2	between the institution and the closest facility that provides gender-affirming
3	health care services or reproductive health care services, or both, and whether
4	the institution provides transportation.
5	(b) On or before January 31 of each year, the Department of Health
6	Agency of Human Services shall compile the materials submitted pursuant to
7	subsection (a) of this section and report to the House Committees on
8	Education, on Health Care, and on Human Services and the Senate Committees
9	on Education and on Health and Welfare on the status of gender-affirming
10	health care and reproductive health care readiness at Vermont's institutions.
11	Sec. 13. GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTH CARE AND REPRODUCTIVE
12	HEALTH CARE READINESS; IMPLEMENTATION
13	Each institution shall submit its first report on the status of its gender-
14	affirming health care and reproductive health care readiness as required under
15	16 V.S.A. § 2502(a) to the Department of Health Agency of Human Services
16	on or before November 1, 2023, and the Department Agency shall provide its
17	first legislative report on or before January 31, 2024.
18	* * * Prohibition on Disclosure of Protected Health Information * * *
19	Sec. 14. 18 V.S.A. § 1881 is amended to read:
20	§ 1881. DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION
21	PROHIBITED

1	(a) As used in this section:
2	(1) "Business associate" has the same meaning as in 45 C.F.R.
3	<u>§ 160.103.</u>
4	(2) "Covered entity" shall have <u>has</u> the same meaning as in 45 C.F.R.
5	§ 160.103.
6	(3) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as in
7	1 V.S.A. § 150.
8	(2)(4) "Protected health information" shall have has the same meaning
9	as in 45 C.F.R. § 160.103.
10	(b) A covered entity or business associate shall not disclose protected
11	health information unless the disclosure is permitted under the Health
12	Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).
13	(c) In order to protect patients and providers who engage in legally
14	protected health care activity, a covered entity or business associate shall not
15	disclose protected health information related to a legally protected health care
16	activity for use in a civil or criminal action; a proceeding preliminary to a civil
17	or criminal action; or a probate, legislative, or administrative proceeding unless
18	the disclosure meets one or more of the following conditions:
19	(1) The disclosure is authorized by the patient; or the patient's
20	conservator, guardian, or other authorized legal representative; or, if the patient
21	is a minor, the patient's parent or legal guardian.

1	(2) The disclosure is specifically required by federal law, Vermont law,	
2	or rules adopted by the Vermont Supreme Court.	
3	(3) The disclosure is ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction	
4	pursuant to federal law, Vermont law, or rules adopted by the Vermont	
5	Supreme Court. An order compelling disclosure under this subdivision shall	
6	include the court's determination that good cause exists to require disclosure of	
7	the information related to legally protected health care activity.	
8	(4) The disclosure is to be made to a person designated by the covered	
9	entity or business associate and will be used solely in the defense of the	
10	covered entity or business associate against a claim that has been made, or	
11	there is a reasonable belief will be made, against the covered entity or business	
12	associate in a civil or criminal action, a proceeding preliminary to a civil or	
13	criminal action, or a probate, legislative, or administrative proceeding.	
14	(5) The disclosure is to Vermont's Board of Medical Practice or Office	
15	of Professional Regulation, as applicable, in connection with a bona fide	
16	investigation in Vermont of a licensed, certified, or registered health care	
17	provider.	
18	* * * Effective Dates * * *	
19	Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES	
20	(a) This section, Sec. 1 (definitions), Sec. 2 (medical malpractice), Secs. 6	
21	and 7 (unprofessional conduct), Sec. 8 (pregnancy services centers), Secs. 9	

1	and 10 (reports), Sec. 11a (emergency contraception; vending machines),
2	Secs. 12 and 13 (gender-affirming health care and reproductive health care
3	readiness; reports), and Sec. 14 (prohibition on disclosure of protected health
4	information) shall take effect on passage.
5	(b) Secs. 3 and 4 (insurance coverage) shall take effect on January 1, 2024
6	and shall apply to all health insurance plans issued on and after January 1,
7	2024 on such date as a health insurer offers, issues, or renews the health
8	insurance plan, but in no event later than January 1, 2025.
9	(c) Sec. 5 (state plan amendment) shall take effect on January 1, 2024,
10	except that the Agency of Human Services shall submit its request for approva
11	of Medicaid coverage of the services prescribed in Sec. 4 of this act, if needed,
12	to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on or before July 1, 2023,
13	and the Medicaid coverage shall begin on the later of the date of approval or
14	<u>January 1, 2024.</u>
15	(d) Sec. 10a (interstate compacts; state representatives) shall take effect on
16	<u>July 1, 2023.</u>
17	(e) Sec. 11 (emergency contraception) shall take effect on or before
18	September 1, 2023, on such date as the Commissioner of Health approves the
19	State protocol.
20	
21	

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2		
3	(Committee vote:)	
4		
5		Senator
6		FOR THE COMMITTEE