

1 H.279

2 An act relating to the Uniform Trust Decanting Act

3 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

4 Sec. 1. 14A V.S.A. chapter 14 is added to read:

5 CHAPTER 14. UNIFORM TRUST DECANTING ACT

6 § 1401. SHORT TITLE

7 This chapter may be cited as the Uniform Trust Decanting Act.

8 § 1402. DEFINITIONS

9 As used in this chapter:

10 (1) “Appointive property” means the property or property interest  
11 subject to a power of appointment.

12 (2) “Ascertainable standard” has the same meaning as in subdivision  
13 103(2) of this title.

14 (3) “Authorized fiduciary” means:

15 (A) a trustee or other fiduciary, other than a settlor, that has  
16 discretion to distribute or direct a trustee to distribute part or all of the principal  
17 of the first trust to one or more current beneficiaries;

18 (B) a special fiduciary appointed under section 1409 of this title; or

19 (C) a special-needs fiduciary under section 1413 of this title.

20 (4) “Beneficiary” has the same meaning as in subdivision 103(3) of this  
21 title.

1           (5) “Charitable interest” means an interest in a trust that:

2                   (A) is held by an identified charitable organization and makes the  
3           organization a qualified beneficiary;

4                   (B) benefits only charitable organizations and, if the interest were  
5           held by an identified charitable organization, would make the organization a  
6           qualified beneficiary; or

7                   (C) is held solely for charitable purposes and, if the interest were held  
8           by an identified charitable organization, would make the organization a  
9           qualified beneficiary.

10           (6) “Charitable organization” means:

11                   (A) a person, other than an individual, organized and operated  
12           exclusively for charitable purposes; or

13                   (B) a government or governmental subdivision, agency, or  
14           instrumentality, to the extent it holds funds exclusively for a charitable  
15           purpose.

16                   (7) “Charitable purpose” means the relief of poverty, the advancement  
17           of education or religion, the promotion of health, a municipal or other  
18           governmental purpose, or another purpose the achievement of which is  
19           beneficial to the community.

20                   (8) “Court” means the court in this State having jurisdiction in matters  
21           relating to trusts.

1           (9) “Current beneficiary” means a beneficiary that on the date the  
2           beneficiary’s qualification is determined is a distributee or permissible  
3           distributee of trust income or principal. The term includes the holder of a  
4           presently exercisable general power of appointment but does not include a  
5           person that is a beneficiary only because the person holds any other power of  
6           appointment.

7           (10) “Decanting power” or “the decanting power” means the power of  
8           an authorized fiduciary under this chapter to distribute property of a first trust  
9           to one or more second trusts or to modify the terms of the first trust.

10           (11) “Expanded distributive discretion” means a discretionary power of  
11           distribution that is not limited to an ascertainable standard or a reasonably  
12           definite standard.

13           (12) “First trust” means a trust over which an authorized fiduciary may  
14           exercise the decanting power.

15           (13) “First-trust instrument” means the trust instrument for a first trust.

16           (14) “General power of appointment” means a power of appointment  
17           exercisable in favor of a powerholder, the powerholder’s estate, a creditor of  
18           the powerholder, or a creditor of the powerholder’s estate.

19           (15) “Jurisdiction,” with respect to a geographic area, includes a state or  
20           country.

21           (16) “Person” has the same meaning as in section 103 of this title.

1           (17) “Power of appointment” means a power that enables a powerholder  
2           acting in a nonfiduciary capacity to designate a recipient of an ownership  
3           interest in or another power of appointment over the appointive property. The  
4           term does not include a power of attorney.

5           (18) “Powerholder” means a person in which a donor creates a power of  
6           appointment.

7           (19) “Presently exercisable power of appointment” means a power of  
8           appointment exercisable by the powerholder at the relevant time. The term:

9                   (A) includes a power of appointment exercisable only after the  
10           occurrence of a specified event, the satisfaction of an ascertainable standard, or  
11           the passage of a specified time only after:

12                           (i) the occurrence of the specified event;

13                           (ii) the satisfaction of the ascertainable standard; or

14                           (iii) the passage of the specified time; and

15                   (B) does not include a power exercisable only at the powerholder’s  
16           death.

17           (20) “Qualified beneficiary” has the same meaning as in section 103 of  
18           this title.

19           (21) “Reasonably definite standard” means a clearly measurable  
20           standard under which a holder of a power of distribution is legally accountable

1 within the meaning of 26 U.S.C. § 674(b)(5)(A) and any applicable  
2 regulations.

3 (22) “Record” means information that is inscribed on a tangible medium  
4 or that is stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in  
5 perceivable form.

6 (23) “Second trust” means:

7 (A) a first trust after modification under this chapter; or

8 (B) a trust to which a distribution of property from a first trust is or  
9 may be made under this chapter.

10 (24) “Second-trust instrument” means the trust instrument for a second  
11 trust.

12 (25) “Settlor” has the same meaning as in section 103 of this title.

13 (26) “Sign” means, with present intent to authenticate or adopt a record:

14 (A) to execute or adopt a tangible symbol; or

15 (B) to attach to or logically associate with the record an electronic  
16 symbol, sound, or process.

17 (27) “State” has the same meaning as in subdivision 103(17) of this title.

18 (28) “Terms of the trust” has the same meaning as in subdivision  
19 103(18) of this title.

20 (29) “Trust instrument” has the same meaning as in subdivision 103(19)  
21 of this title.

1     § 1403. SCOPE

2           (a) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section,  
3     this chapter applies to an express trust that is irrevocable or revocable by the  
4     settlor only with the consent of the trustee or a person holding an adverse  
5     interest.

6           (b) This chapter does not apply to a trust held solely for charitable  
7     purposes.

8           (c) Subject to section 1415 of this title, a trust instrument may restrict or  
9     prohibit exercise of the decanting power.

10          (d) This chapter does not limit the power of a trustee, powerholder, or other  
11     person to distribute or appoint property in further trust or to modify a trust  
12     under the trust instrument, law of this State other than this chapter, common  
13     law, a court order, or a nonjudicial settlement agreement.

14          (e) This chapter does not affect the ability of a settlor to provide in a trust  
15     instrument for the distribution of the trust property or appointment in further  
16     trust of the trust property or for modification of the trust instrument.

17     § 1404. FIDUCIARY DUTY

18          (a) In exercising the decanting power, an authorized fiduciary shall act in  
19     accordance with its fiduciary duties, including the duty to act in accordance  
20     with the purposes of the first trust.

1        (b) This chapter does not create or imply a duty to exercise the decanting  
2        power or to inform beneficiaries about the applicability of this chapter.

3        (c) Except as otherwise provided in a first-trust instrument, for purposes of  
4        this chapter and section 801 and subsection 802(a) of this title, the terms of the  
5        first trust are deemed to include the decanting power.

6        § 1405. APPLICATION; GOVERNING LAW

7        This chapter applies to a trust created before, on, or after the effective date  
8        of this act that:

9            (1) has its principal place of administration in this State, including a  
10        trust whose principal place of administration has been changed to this State; or

11            (2) provides by its trust instrument that it is governed by the law of this  
12        State or is governed by the law of this State for the purpose of:

13            (A) administration, including administration of a trust whose  
14        governing law for purposes of administration has been changed to the law of  
15        this State;

16            (B) construction of terms of the trust; or

17            (C) determining the meaning or effect of terms of the trust.

18        § 1406. REASONABLE RELIANCE

19        A trustee or other person who reasonably relies on the validity of a  
20        distribution of part or all of the property of a trust to another trust, or a  
21        modification of a trust, under this chapter, law of this State other than this

1 chapter, or the law of another jurisdiction is not liable to any person for any  
2 action or failure to act as a result of the reliance.

3 § 1407. NOTICE; EXERCISE OF DECANTING POWER

4 (a) In this section, a notice period begins on the day notice is given under  
5 subsection (c) of this section and ends 59 days after the day notice is given.

6 (b) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, an authorized fiduciary  
7 may exercise the decanting power without the consent of any person and  
8 without court approval.

9 (c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (f) of this section, an  
10 authorized fiduciary shall give notice in a record of the intended exercise of the  
11 decanting power not later than 60 days before the exercise to:

12 (1) each settlor of the first trust, if living or then in existence;

13 (2) each qualified beneficiary of the first trust;

14 (3) each holder of a presently exercisable power of appointment over  
15 any part or all of the first trust;

16 (4) each person who currently has the right to remove or replace the  
17 authorized fiduciary;

18 (5) each other fiduciary of the first trust;

19 (6) each fiduciary of the second trust;

20 (7) the Attorney General, if subsection 1414(b) of this title applies; and



1           (8) each person acting as a trust director, as defined in section 1302 of  
2           this title, of the first trust.

3           (d) An authorized fiduciary is not required to give notice under  
4           subsection (c) of this section to a person that is not known to the fiduciary or is  
5           known to the fiduciary but cannot be located by the fiduciary after reasonable  
6           diligence.

7           (e) A notice under subsection (c) of this section shall:

8           (1) specify the manner in which the authorized fiduciary intends to  
9           exercise the decanting power;

10           (2) specify the proposed effective date for exercise of the power;

11           (3) include a copy of the first-trust instrument; and

12           (4) include a copy of all second-trust instruments.

13           (f) The decanting power may be exercised before expiration of the notice  
14           period under subsection (a) of this section if all persons entitled to receive  
15           notice waive the period in a signed record.

16           (g) The receipt of notice, waiver of the notice period, or expiration of the  
17           notice period does not affect the right of a person to file an application under  
18           section 1409 of this title asserting that:

19           (1) an attempted exercise of the decanting power is ineffective because  
20           it did not comply with this chapter or was an abuse of discretion or breach of  
21           fiduciary duty; or

1           (2) section 1422 of this title applies to the exercise of the decanting  
2 power.

3           (h) An exercise of the decanting power is not ineffective because of the  
4 failure to give notice to one or more persons under subsection (c) of this  
5 section if the authorized fiduciary acted with reasonable care to comply with  
6 that subsection.

7           § 1408. REPRESENTATION

8           (a) Notice to a person with authority to represent and bind another person  
9 under a first trust instrument or the Vermont Trust Code has the same effect as  
10 notice given directly to the person represented.

11           (b) Consent of or waiver by a person with authority to represent and bind  
12 another person under a first-trust instrument or the Vermont Trust Code is  
13 binding on the person represented unless the person represented objects to the  
14 representation before the consent or waiver otherwise would become effective.

15           (c) A person with authority to represent and bind another person under a  
16 first-trust instrument or the Vermont Trust Code may file an application under  
17 section 1409 of this title on behalf of the person represented.

18           (d) A settlor shall not represent or bind a beneficiary under this chapter  
19 unless the settlor represents a minor or unborn child under subdivision 303(6)  
20 of this title.

1     § 1409. COURT INVOLVEMENT

2           (a) The court may, upon application of an authorized fiduciary, a person  
3           entitled to notice under subsection 1407(c) of this title, a beneficiary, or, with  
4           respect to a charitable interest, the Attorney General or another person with  
5           standing to enforce the charitable interest:

6                 (1) provide instructions to the authorized fiduciary regarding whether a  
7                 proposed exercise of the decanting power is permitted under this chapter and  
8                 consistent with the fiduciary duties of the authorized fiduciary;

9                 (2) appoint a special fiduciary and authorize the special fiduciary to  
10                determine whether the decanting power should be exercised under this chapter  
11                and to exercise the decanting power;

12                (3) approve an exercise of the decanting power;

13                (4) determine that a proposed or attempted exercise of the decanting  
14                power is ineffective because:

15                         (A) after applying section 1422 of this title, the proposed or  
16                         attempted exercise does not or did not comply with this chapter; or

17                         (B) the proposed or attempted exercise would be or was an abuse of  
18                         the fiduciary's discretion or a breach of fiduciary duty;

19                (5) determine the extent to which section 1422 of this title applies to a  
20                prior exercise of the decanting power;

1           (6) provide instructions to the trustee regarding the application of  
2           section 1422 of this title to a prior exercise of the decanting power; or

3           (7) order other relief to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

4           (b) On application of an authorized fiduciary, the court may approve:

5           (1) an increase in the fiduciary's compensation under section 1416 of  
6           this title; or

7           (2) a modification under section 1418 of this title of a provision granting  
8           a person the right to remove or replace the fiduciary.

9           § 1410. FORMALITIES

10           An exercise of the decanting power shall be made in a record signed by an  
11           authorized fiduciary. The signed record shall, directly or by reference to the  
12           notice required by section 1407 of this title, identify the first trust and the  
13           second trust or trusts and state the property of the first trust being distributed to  
14           each second trust and the property, if any, that remains in the first trust.

15           § 1411. DECANTING POWER UNDER EXPANDED DISTRIBUTIVE

16                   DISCRETION

17           (a) As used in this section:

18           (1) "Noncontingent right" means a right that is not subject to the  
19           exercise of discretion or the occurrence of a specified event that is not certain  
20           to occur. The term does not include a right held by a beneficiary if any person

1 has discretion to distribute property subject to the right to any person other  
2 than the beneficiary or the beneficiary's estate.

3 (2) "Presumptive remainder beneficiary" means a qualified beneficiary  
4 other than a current beneficiary.

5 (3) "Successor beneficiary" means a beneficiary that is not a qualified  
6 beneficiary on the date the beneficiary's qualification is determined. The term  
7 does not include a person that is a beneficiary only because the person holds a  
8 nongeneral power of appointment.

9 (4) "Vested interest" means:

10 (A) a right to a mandatory distribution that is a noncontingent right as  
11 of the date of the exercise of the decanting power;

12 (B) a current and noncontingent right, annually or more frequently, to  
13 a mandatory distribution of income, a specified dollar amount, or a percentage  
14 of value of some or all of the trust property;

15 (C) a current and noncontingent right, annually or more frequently, to  
16 withdraw income, a specified dollar amount, or a percentage of value of some  
17 or all of the trust property;

18 (D) a presently exercisable general power of appointment; or

19 (E) a right to receive an ascertainable part of the trust property on the  
20 trust's termination that is not subject to the exercise of discretion or to the  
21 occurrence of a specified event that is not certain to occur.

1       (b) Subject to subsection (c) of this section and section 1414 of this title, an  
2       authorized fiduciary that has expanded distributive discretion over the principal  
3       of a first trust for the benefit of one or more current beneficiaries may exercise  
4       the decanting power over the principal of the first trust.

5       (c) Subject to section 1413 of this title, in an exercise of the decanting  
6       power under this section, a second trust shall not:

7           (1) include as a current beneficiary a person who is not a current  
8           beneficiary of the first trust, except as otherwise provided in subsection (d) of  
9           this section;

10          (2) include as a presumptive remainder beneficiary or successor  
11          beneficiary a person who is not a current beneficiary, presumptive remainder  
12          beneficiary, or successor beneficiary of the first trust, except as otherwise  
13          provided in subsection (d) of this section; or

14          (3) reduce or eliminate a vested interest.

15       (d) Subject to subdivision (c)(3) of this section and section 1414 of this  
16       title, in an exercise of the decanting power under this section, a second trust  
17       may be a trust created or administered under the law of any jurisdiction and  
18       may:

19           (1) retain a power of appointment granted in the first trust;

20           (2) omit a power of appointment granted in the first trust, other than a  
21       presently exercisable general power of appointment;

1           (3) create or modify a power of appointment if the powerholder is a  
2           current beneficiary of the first trust and the authorized fiduciary has expanded  
3           distributive discretion to distribute principal to the beneficiary; and

4           (4) create or modify a power of appointment if the powerholder is a  
5           presumptive remainder beneficiary or successor beneficiary of the first trust,  
6           but the exercise of the power may take effect only after the powerholder  
7           becomes, or would have become if then living, a current beneficiary.

8           (e) A power of appointment described in subdivisions (d)(1)–(4) of this  
9           section may be general or nongeneral. The class of permissible appointees in  
10           favor of which the power may be exercised may be broader than or different  
11           from the beneficiaries of the first trust.

12           (f) If an authorized fiduciary has expanded distributive discretion over part  
13           but not all of the principal of a first trust, the fiduciary may exercise the  
14           decanting power under this section over that part of the principal over which  
15           the authorized fiduciary has expanded distributive discretion.

16           § 1412. DECANTING POWER UNDER LIMITED DISTRIBUTIVE  
17           DISCRETION

18           (a) As used in this section, “limited distributive discretion” means a  
19           discretionary power of distribution that is limited to an ascertainable standard  
20           or a reasonably definite standard.

1       (b) An authorized fiduciary who has limited distributive discretion over the  
2       principal of the first trust for benefit of one or more current beneficiaries may  
3       exercise the decanting power over the principal of the first trust.

4       (c) Under this section and subject to section 1414 of this title, a second  
5       trust may be created or administered under the law of any jurisdiction. Under  
6       this section, the second trusts, in the aggregate, shall grant each beneficiary of  
7       the first trust beneficial interests that are substantially similar to the beneficial  
8       interests of the beneficiary in the first trust.

9       (d) A power to make a distribution under a second trust for the benefit of a  
10       beneficiary who is an individual is substantially similar to a power under the  
11       first trust to make a distribution directly to the beneficiary. A distribution is  
12       for the benefit of a beneficiary if:

13               (1) the distribution is applied for the benefit of the beneficiary;

14               (2) the beneficiary is under a legal disability or the trustee reasonably  
15       believes the beneficiary is incapacitated, and the distribution is made as  
16       permitted under the Vermont Trust Code; or

17               (3) the distribution is made as permitted under the terms of the first-trust  
18       instrument and the second-trust instrument for the benefit of the beneficiary.

19       (e) If an authorized fiduciary has limited distributive discretion over part  
20       but not all of the principal of a first trust, the fiduciary may exercise the



1 decanting power under this section over that part of the principal over which  
2 the authorized fiduciary has limited distributive discretion.

3 § 1413. TRUST FOR BENEFICIARY WITH DISABILITY

4 (a) As used in this section:

5 (1) “Beneficiary with a disability” means a beneficiary of a first trust  
6 who the special-needs fiduciary believes may qualify for governmental  
7 benefits based on disability, whether or not the beneficiary currently receives  
8 those benefits or is an individual who is subject to a guardianship or a  
9 protective arrangement.

10 (2) “Best interests” of a beneficiary with a disability include, without  
11 limitation, consideration of the financial impact to the family of the beneficiary  
12 who has a disability.

13 (3) “Governmental benefits” means financial aid or services from a  
14 state, federal, or other public agency.

15 (4) “Special-needs fiduciary” means, with respect to a trust that has a  
16 beneficiary with a disability:

17 (A) a trustee or other fiduciary, other than a settlor, who has  
18 discretion to distribute part or all of the principal of a first trust to one or more  
19 current beneficiaries;

20 (B) if no trustee or fiduciary has discretion under subdivision (A) of  
21 this subdivision (4), a trustee or other fiduciary, other than a settlor, who has

1 discretion to distribute part or all of the income of the first trust to one or more  
2 current beneficiaries; or

3 (C) if no trustee or fiduciary has discretion under subdivision (A)  
4 or (B) of this subdivision (4), a trustee or other fiduciary, other than a settlor,  
5 who is required to distribute part or all of the income or principal of the first  
6 trust to one or more current beneficiaries.

7 (5) “Special-needs trust” means a trust the trustee believes would not be  
8 considered a resource for purposes of determining whether a beneficiary with a  
9 disability is eligible for governmental benefits.

10 (b) A special-needs fiduciary may exercise the decanting power under  
11 section 1411 of this title over the principal of a first trust as if the fiduciary had  
12 authority to distribute principal to a beneficiary with a disability subject to  
13 expanded distributive discretion if:

14 (1) a second trust is a special-needs trust that benefits the beneficiary  
15 with a disability; and

16 (2) the special-needs fiduciary determines that exercise of the decanting  
17 power will further the purposes of the first trust.

18 (c) In an exercise of the decanting power under this section, the following  
19 rules shall apply:

20 (1) Notwithstanding subdivision 1411(c)(2) of this title, the interest in  
21 the second trust of a beneficiary with a disability may:

1           (A) be a pooled trust as defined by Medicaid law for the benefit of  
2           the beneficiary with a disability under 42 U.S.C. § 1396p(d)(4)(C); or

3           (B) contain payback provisions complying with reimbursement  
4           requirements of Medicaid law under 42 U.S.C. § 1396p(d)(4)(A).

5           (2) Subdivision 1411(c)(3) of this title shall not apply to the interests of  
6           the beneficiary with a disability.

7           (3) Except as affected by any change to the interests of the beneficiary  
8           with a disability, the second trust, or if there are two or more second trusts, the  
9           second trusts in the aggregate, shall grant each other beneficiary of the first  
10           trust beneficial interests in the second trusts that are substantially similar to the  
11           beneficiary's beneficial interests in the first trust.

12           § 1414. PROTECTION OF CHARITABLE INTEREST

13           (a) As used in this section:

14           (1) "Determinable charitable interest" means a charitable interest that is  
15           a right to a mandatory distribution currently, periodically, on the occurrence of  
16           a specified event, or after the passage of a specified time and that is  
17           unconditional or will be held solely for charitable purposes.

18           (2) "Unconditional" means not subject to the occurrence of a specified  
19           event that is not certain to occur, other than a requirement in a trust instrument  
20           that a charitable organization be in existence or qualify under a particular  
21           provision of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986 on the date of the

1 distribution, if the charitable organization meets the requirement on the date of  
2 determination.

3 (b) If a first trust contains a determinable charitable interest, the Attorney  
4 General shall have the rights of a qualified beneficiary and may represent and  
5 bind the charitable interest.

6 (c) If a first trust contains a charitable interest, the second trust or trusts  
7 shall not:

8 (1) diminish the charitable interest;

9 (2) diminish the interest of an identified charitable organization that  
10 holds the charitable interest;

11 (3) alter any charitable purpose stated in the first-trust instrument; or

12 (4) alter any condition or restriction related to the charitable interest.

13 (d) If there are two or more second trusts, the second trusts shall be treated  
14 as one trust for purposes of determining whether the exercise of the decanting  
15 power diminishes the charitable interest or diminishes the interest of an  
16 identified charitable organization for purposes of subsection (c) of this section.

17 (e) If a first trust contains a determinable charitable interest, the second  
18 trust or trusts that include a charitable interest pursuant to subsection (c) of this  
19 section shall be administered under the law of this State unless:

1           (1) the Attorney General, after receiving notice under section 1407 of  
2           this title, fails to object in a signed record delivered to the authorized fiduciary  
3           within the notice period;

4           (2) the Attorney General consents in a signed record to the second trust  
5           or trusts being administered under the law of another jurisdiction; or

6           (3) the court approves the exercise of the decanting power.

7           (f) This chapter shall not limit the powers and duties of the Attorney  
8           General under the law of this State other than as provided in this chapter.

9           § 1415. TRUST LIMITATION ON DECANTING

10           (a) An authorized fiduciary shall not exercise the decanting power to the  
11           extent the first trust instrument expressly prohibits exercise of:

12           (1) the decanting power; or

13           (2) a power granted by State law to the authorized fiduciary to distribute  
14           part or all of the principal of the trust to another trust or to modify the trust.

15           (b) Exercise of the decanting power is subject to any restriction in the first-  
16           trust instrument that expressly applies to exercise of:

17           (1) the decanting power; or

18           (2) a power granted by State law to an authorized fiduciary to distribute  
19           part or all of the principal of the trust to another trust or to modify the trust.

1       (c) A general prohibition of the amendment or revocation of a first trust, a  
2       spendthrift clause, or a clause restraining the voluntary or involuntary transfer  
3       of a beneficiary's interest does not preclude exercise of the decanting power.

4       (d) Subject to subsections (a) and (b) of this section, an authorized  
5       fiduciary may exercise the decanting power under this chapter even if the first-  
6       trust instrument permits the authorized fiduciary or another person to modify  
7       the first-trust instrument or to distribute part or all of the principal of the first  
8       trust to another trust.

9       (e) If a first-trust instrument contains an express prohibition described in  
10       subsection (a) of this section or an express restriction described in  
11       subsection (b) of this section, the provision shall be included in the second  
12       trust instrument.

13       § 1416. CHANGE IN COMPENSATION

14       (a) If a first-trust instrument specifies an authorized fiduciary's  
15       compensation, the fiduciary shall not exercise the decanting power to increase  
16       the fiduciary's compensation above the specified compensation unless:

17               (1) all qualified beneficiaries of the second trust consent to the increase  
18       in a signed record; or

19               (2) the increase is approved by the court.

20       (b) If a first-trust instrument does not specify an authorized fiduciary's  
21       compensation, the fiduciary shall not exercise the decanting power to increase

1 the fiduciary's compensation above the compensation permitted by the  
2 Vermont Trust Code unless:

3 (1) all qualified beneficiaries of the second trust consent to the increase  
4 in a signed record; or

5 (2) the increase is approved by the court.

6 (c) A change in an authorized fiduciary's compensation that is incidental to  
7 other changes made by the exercise of the decanting power is not an increase  
8 in the fiduciary's compensation for purposes of subsections (a) and (b) of this  
9 section.

10 § 1417. RELIEF FROM LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION

11 (a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a second-trust instrument  
12 shall not relieve an authorized fiduciary from liability for breach of trust to a  
13 greater extent than the first trust instrument.

14 (b) A second-trust instrument may provide for indemnification of an  
15 authorized fiduciary of the first trust or another person acting in a fiduciary  
16 capacity under the first trust for any liability or claim that would have been  
17 payable from the first trust if the decanting power had not been exercised.

18 (c) A second-trust instrument shall not reduce fiduciary liability in the  
19 aggregate.

20 (d) Subject to subsection (c) of this section, a second-trust instrument may  
21 divide and reallocate fiduciary powers among fiduciaries, including one or

1 more trustees, distribution advisors, investment advisors, trust protectors, or  
2 other persons, and relieve an authorized fiduciary from liability for an act or  
3 failure to act of another fiduciary as permitted by the law of this State other  
4 than this chapter.

5 § 1418. REMOVAL OR REPLACEMENT OF AUTHORIZED  
6 FIDUCIARY

7 An authorized fiduciary shall not exercise the decanting power to modify a  
8 provision in a first-trust instrument granting another person power to remove  
9 or replace the fiduciary unless:

10 (1) the person holding the power consents to the modification in a  
11 signed record and the modification applies only to the person;

12 (2) the person holding the power and the qualified beneficiaries of the  
13 second trust consent to the modification in a signed record and the  
14 modification grants a substantially similar power to another person; or

15 (3) the court approves the modification and the modification grants a  
16 substantially similar power to another person.

17 § 1419. TAX-RELATED LIMITATIONS

18 (a) As used in this section:

19 (1) “Grantor trust” means a trust as to which a settlor of a first trust is  
20 considered the owner under 26 U.S.C. §§ 671–677 or 26 U.S.C. § 679.



1           (2) “Internal Revenue Code” means the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of  
2           1986.

3           (3) “Nongrantor trust” means a trust that is not a grantor trust.

4           (4) “Qualified benefits property” means property subject to the  
5           minimum distribution requirements of 26 U.S.C. § 401(a)(9) and any  
6           applicable regulations, or subject to any similar requirements that refer to 26  
7           U.S.C. § 401(a)(9) or any applicable regulations.

8           (b) An exercise of the decanting power is subject to the following  
9           limitations:

10           (1) If a first trust contains property that qualified, or would have  
11           qualified but for provisions of this chapter other than this section, for a marital  
12           deduction for purposes of the gift or estate tax under the Internal Revenue  
13           Code or a state gift, estate, or inheritance tax, the second trust instrument shall  
14           not include or omit any term that, if included in or omitted from the trust  
15           instrument for the trust to which the property was transferred, would have  
16           prevented the transfer from qualifying for the deduction, or would have  
17           reduced the amount of the deduction, under the same provisions of the Internal  
18           Revenue Code or state law under which the transfer qualified.

19           (2) If the first trust contains property that qualified, or would have  
20           qualified but for provisions of this chapter other than this section, for a  
21           charitable deduction for purposes of the income, gift, or estate tax under the

1 Internal Revenue Code or a state income, gift, estate, or inheritance tax, the  
2 second-trust instrument shall not include or omit any term that, if included in  
3 or omitted from the trust instrument for the trust to which the property was  
4 transferred, would have prevented the transfer from qualifying for the  
5 deduction, or would have reduced the amount of the deduction, under the same  
6 provisions of the Internal Revenue Code or state law under which the transfer  
7 qualified.

8 (3) If the first trust contains property that qualified, or would have  
9 qualified but for provisions of this chapter other than this section, for the  
10 exclusion from the gift tax described in 26 U.S.C. § 2503(b), the second-trust  
11 instrument shall not include or omit a term that, if included in or omitted from  
12 the trust instrument for the trust to which the property was transferred, would  
13 have prevented the transfer from qualifying under 26 U.S.C. § 2503(b). If the  
14 first trust contains property that qualified, or would have qualified but for  
15 provisions of this chapter other than this section, for the exclusion from the gift  
16 tax described in 26 U.S.C. § 2503(b) by application of 26 U.S.C. § 2503(c), the  
17 second-trust instrument shall not include or omit a term that, if included or  
18 omitted from the trust instrument for the trust to which the property was  
19 transferred, would have prevented the transfer from qualifying under 26 U.S.C.  
20 § 2503(c).

1           (4) If the property of the first trust includes shares of stock in an S  
2           corporation as defined in 26 U.S.C. § 1361 and the first trust is, or but for  
3           provisions of this chapter other than this section would be, a permitted  
4           shareholder under any provision of 26 U.S.C. § 1361, an authorized fiduciary  
5           may exercise the power with respect to part or all of the S corporation stock  
6           only if any second trust receiving the stock is a permitted shareholder under 26  
7           U.S.C. § 1361(c)(2). If the property of the first trust includes shares of stock in  
8           an S corporation and the first trust is, or but for provisions of this chapter other  
9           than this section would be, a qualified subchapter-S trust within the meaning of  
10           26 U.S.C. § 1361(d), the second-trust instrument shall not include or omit a  
11           term that prevents the second trust from qualifying as a qualified subchapter-S  
12           trust.

13           (5) If the first trust contains property that qualified, or would have  
14           qualified but for provisions of this chapter other than this section, for a zero  
15           inclusion ratio for purposes of the generation-skipping transfer tax under 26  
16           U.S.C. § 2642(c), the second-trust instrument shall not include or omit a term  
17           that, if included in or omitted from the first-trust instrument, would have  
18           prevented the transfer to the first trust from qualifying for a zero inclusion ratio  
19           under 26 U.S.C. § 2642(c).

20           (6) If the first trust is directly or indirectly the beneficiary of qualified  
21           benefits property, the second-trust instrument shall not include or omit any

1 term that, if included in or omitted from the first-trust instrument, would have  
2 increased the minimum distributions required with respect to the qualified  
3 benefits property under 26 U.S.C. § 401(a)(9) and any applicable regulations,  
4 or any similar requirements that refer to 26 U.S.C. § 401(a)(9) or any  
5 applicable regulations. If an attempted exercise of the decanting power  
6 violates this subsection, the trustee is deemed to have held the qualified  
7 benefits property and any reinvested distributions of the property as a separate  
8 share from the date of the exercise of the power, and section 1422 of this title  
9 shall apply to the separate share.

10 (7) If the first trust qualifies as a grantor trust because of the application  
11 of 26 U.S.C. § 672(f)(2)(A), the second trust shall not include or omit a term  
12 that, if included in or omitted from the first-trust instrument, would have  
13 prevented the first trust from qualifying under 26 U.S.C. § 672(f)(2)(A).

14 (8) As used in this subdivision, “tax benefit” means a federal or state tax  
15 deduction, exemption, exclusion, or other benefit not listed in this section,  
16 except for a benefit arising from being a grantor trust. Subject to  
17 subdivision (9) of this subsection (b), a second-trust instrument shall not  
18 include or omit a term that, if included in or omitted from the first-trust  
19 instrument, would have prevented qualification for a tax benefit if:

1           (A) the first-trust instrument expressly indicates an intent to qualify  
2           for the benefit or the first-trust instrument is clearly designed to enable the first  
3           trust to qualify for the benefit; and

4           (B) the transfer of property held by the first trust or the first trust  
5           qualified or, but for provisions of this chapter other than this section, would  
6           have qualified for the tax benefit.

7           (9) Subject to subdivision (4) of this subsection:

8           (A) except as otherwise provided in subdivision (7) of this  
9           subsection (b), the second trust may be a nongrantor trust, even if the first trust  
10          is a grantor trust; and

11          (B) except as otherwise provided in subdivision (10) of this  
12          subsection (b), the second trust may be a grantor trust, even if the first trust is a  
13          nongrantor trust.

14          (10) An authorized fiduciary shall not exercise the decanting power if a  
15          settlor objects in a signed record delivered to the fiduciary within the notice  
16          period and:

17          (A) the first trust and a second trust are both grantor trusts, in whole  
18          or in part, the first trust grants the settlor or another person the power to cause  
19          the first trust to cease to be a grantor trust, and the second trust does not grant  
20          an equivalent power to the settlor or other person; or

1           (B) the first trust is a nongrantor trust and a second trust is a grantor  
2 trust, in whole or in part, with respect to the settlor, unless:

3           (i) the settlor has the power at all times to cause the second trust to  
4 cease to be a grantor trust; or

5           (ii) the first-trust instrument contains a provision granting the  
6 settlor or another person a power that would cause the first trust to cease to be  
7 a grantor trust and the second-trust instrument contains the same provision.

8 § 1420. DURATION OF SECOND TRUST

9           (a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, a second trust may have a  
10 duration that is the same as or different from the duration of the first trust.

11           (b) To the extent that property of a second trust is attributable to property  
12 of the first trust, the property of the second trust is subject to any rules  
13 governing maximum perpetuity, accumulation, or suspension of the power of  
14 alienation that apply to property of the first trust.

15 § 1421. NEED TO DISTRIBUTE NOT REQUIRED

16           An authorized fiduciary may exercise the decanting power whether or not  
17 under the first trust's discretionary distribution standard the fiduciary would  
18 have made or could have been compelled to make a discretionary distribution  
19 of principal at the time of the exercise.

1     § 1422. SAVINGS PROVISION

2           (a) If exercise of the decanting power would be effective under this chapter  
3     except that the second-trust instrument in part does not comply with this  
4     chapter, the exercise of the power is effective and the following rules apply  
5     with respect to the principal of the second trust attributable to the exercise of  
6     the power:

7           (1) a provision in the second-trust instrument that is not permitted under  
8     this chapter is void to the extent necessary to comply with this chapter; and

9           (2) a provision required by this chapter to be in the second-trust  
10    instrument that is not contained in the instrument is deemed to be included in  
11    the instrument to the extent necessary to comply with this chapter.

12          (b) If a trustee or other fiduciary of a second trust determines that  
13    subsection (a) of this section applies to a prior exercise of the decanting power,  
14    the fiduciary shall take corrective action consistent with the fiduciary's duties.

15    § 1423. TRUST FOR CARE OF ANIMAL

16          (a) As used in this section:

17           (1) "Animal trust" means a trust or an interest in a trust created to  
18    provide for the care of one or more animals.

19           (2) "Protector" means a person appointed in an animal trust to enforce  
20    the trust on behalf of the animal or, if no such person is appointed in the trust, a  
21    person appointed by the court for that purpose.

1        (b) The decanting power may be exercised over an animal trust that has a  
2        protector to the extent the trust could be decanted under this chapter if each  
3        animal that benefits from the trust were an individual, if the protector consents  
4        in a signed record to the exercise of the power.

5        (c) A protector for an animal has the rights under this chapter of a qualified  
6        beneficiary.

7        (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, if a first trust is an  
8        animal trust, in an exercise of the decanting power, the second trust shall  
9        provide that trust property may be applied only to its intended purpose for the  
10       period the first trust benefitted the animal.

11       § 1424. TERMS OF SECOND TRUST

12       A reference in the Vermont Trust Code to a trust instrument or terms of the  
13       trust includes a second-trust instrument and the terms of the second trust.

14       § 1425. SETTLOR

15       (a) For purposes of the law of this State other than this chapter and subject  
16       to subsection (b) of this section, a settlor of a first trust is deemed to be the  
17       settlor of the second trust with respect to the portion of the principal of the first  
18       trust subject to the exercise of the decanting power.

19       (b) In determining settlor intent with respect to a second trust, the intent of  
20       a settlor of the first trust, a settlor of the second trust, and the authorized  
21       fiduciary may be considered.



1     § 1426. LATER-DISCOVERED PROPERTY

2           (a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c) of this section, if  
3     exercise of the decanting power was intended to distribute all the principal of  
4     the first trust to one or more second trusts, later discovered property belonging  
5     to the first trust and property paid to or acquired by the first trust after the  
6     exercise of the power is part of the trust estate of the second trust or trusts.

7           (b) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c) of this section, if  
8     exercise of the decanting power was intended to distribute less than all the  
9     principal of the first trust to one or more second trusts, later-discovered  
10    property belonging to the first trust or property paid to or acquired by the first  
11    trust after exercise of the power remains part of the trust estate of the first trust.

12          (c) An authorized fiduciary may provide in an exercise of the decanting  
13    power or by the terms of a second trust for disposition of later-discovered  
14    property belonging to the first trust or property paid to or acquired by the first  
15    trust after exercise of the power.

16    § 1427. OBLIGATIONS

17          A debt, liability, or other obligation enforceable against property of a first  
18    trust is enforceable to the same extent against the property when held by the  
19    second trust after exercise of the decanting power.

1     § 1428. UNIFORMITY OF APPLICATION AND CONSTRUCTION

2             In applying and construing this Uniform Act, consideration shall be given to  
3     the need to promote uniformity of the law with respect to its subject matter  
4     among states that enact it.

5     § 1429. RELATION TO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES IN GLOBAL AND  
6             NATIONAL COMMERCE ACT

7             This chapter modifies, limits, or supersedes the Electronic Signatures in  
8     Global and National Commerce Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 7001 et seq., but does not  
9     modify, limit, or supersede subsection 101(c) of that act, 15 U.S.C. § 7001(c),  
10    or authorize electronic delivery of any of the notices described in subsection  
11    103(b) of that act, 15 U.S.C. § 7003(b).

12    Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

13            This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.