1	H.277
2	Introduced by Representatives Masland of Thetford, Mrowicki of Putney, and
3	Olson of Starksboro
4	Referred to Committee on
5	Date:
6	Subject: Public service; health; weatherization; funding
7	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to increase the
8	tax on the purchase of fossil fuels to fund the Home Weatherization Assistance
9	Program. It would expand the eligibility criteria to apply for Home
10	Weatherization Assistance Program grants. It also proposes to accelerate and
11	increase administrative and financial support of weatherization trade workforce
12	recruitment and training programs funded through the Home Weatherization
13	Assistance Program.
14 15	An act relating to weatherization funding and weatherization workforce recruitment
16	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
17	Sec. 1. FINDINGS
18	The General Assembly finds that, in addition to the weatherization efforts
19	provided under the current Home Weatherization Assistance Program
20	established in 33 V.S.A. chapter 25, an increased pace of weatherization would

1	benefit the health of Vermont citizens, the environment, and the economy.
2	Accelerated weatherization efforts will:
3	(1) Provide fuel-cost savings and savings for the Low Income Home
4	Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Home Heating Fuel Assistance
5	Program.
6	(2) Increase job opportunities in the field of weatherization and
7	alternative heating systems by recruiting and training new applicants to the
8	industry.
9	(3) Weatherization is a means for homeowners to protect the
10	environment and diminish the outflow of the money to the fossil fuel industry.
11	(4) Workforce availability remains a limiting factor in Vermont's effort
12	to comply with required greenhouse gas emissions reductions from the
13	building sector. Increasing the wage level while aggressively recruiting and
14	training new applicants can eventually overcome the workforce shortage.
15	Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 2502 is amended to read:
16	§ 2502. HOME WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
17	* * *
18	(b) In addition, the Director shall supplement or supplant any federal
19	program with the State Home Weatherization Assistance Program.
20	* * *

1	(3) The Director, in collaboration with the weatherization service
2	providers and other stakeholders, shall develop the State program so that it will
3	include:
4	* * *
5	(C) Establishing Program eligibility levels at 80 125 percent of the
6	area median income or 80 125 percent of the State median income, whichever
7	is higher. Subject to the priority under section 2608 of this title given to
8	participants in the Home Heating Fuel Assistance Program, the State program
9	shall, when weighing factors to assign priority to buildings or units eligible for
10	weatherization assistance, assign the greatest weight to those buildings and
11	units that require the highest energy usage.
12	* * *
13	(H) Collaborating with and, if necessary, contributing funds and
14	administrative support to local workforce and education partnerships including
15	the Department of Economic Development Vermont Training Program, the
16	Department of Labor, Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, ReSource's
17	Weatherization 101 training program, organizations representing the interests
18	of Vermont's homeless population, recently completed substance abuse
19	rehabilitation clients, and high school career and technical education programs.
20	(I) Administering salary increases to the installation crew and
21	technical staff of the Home Weatherization Assistance Program as follows: 15

1	percent beginning in fiscal year 2026; 15 percent beginning in fiscal year 2027;
2	and 15 percent beginning in fiscal year 2028.
3	(J) Establishing a partnership with the energy efficiency utilities to
4	provide free weatherization services to eligible households with income less
5	than 125 percent of the county or State median income, whichever is greater.
6	The participating energy efficiency utilities shall comply with the salary
7	increases in subdivision (I) of this subdivision (b)(3). The Director shall
8	reimburse the utilities from funds in the Home Weatherization Assistance
9	Fund, provided, that reimbursement was made within a limit of 10 percent of
10	the Fund.
11	* * *
12	Sec. 3. 33 V.S.A. § 2503 is amended to read:
13	§ 2503. FUEL TAX
14	(a)(1) There is imposed a tax on the retail sale of heating oil, propane,
15	kerosene, and other dyed diesel fuel delivered in Vermont, at the rate of:
16	(A) \$0.02 per gallon <u>until June 30, 2026;</u>
17	(B) \$0.04 per gallon from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2028; and
18	(C) \$0.08 per gallon beginning on July 1, 2028.
19	(2) There is imposed a gross receipts tax of 0.75 percent on the retail
20	sale of natural gas and coal.

1	(3) There is imposed a gross receipts tax of 0.5 percent on the retail sale
2	of electricity.
3	* * *
4	(d) No tax under this section shall be imposed for any month ending after
5	June 30, 2029.
6	Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE
7	This act shall take effect on passage.