

1 H.356

2 Introduced by Representatives Priestley of Bradford, Burrows of West

3 Windsor, Headrick of Burlington, Howard of Rutland City,

4 Logan of Burlington, McGill of Bridport, and Pouech of

5 Hinesburg

6 Referred to Committee on

7 Date:

8 Subject: Labor; unemployment compensation; Unemployment Compensation

9 Benefit Modernization Advisory Committee

10 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the  
11 Unemployment Compensation Benefit Modernization Advisory Committee for  
12 the purpose of advising the Department of Labor regarding the implementation  
13 and deployment of technological upgrades to the delivery system for  
14 unemployment compensation benefits.

15 An act relating to the creation of the Unemployment Compensation Benefit  
16 Modernization Advisory Committee

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

18 Sec. 1. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFIT

19 MODERNIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE; REPORT

1        (a) Creation. There is created the Unemployment Compensation Benefit  
2        Modernization Advisory Committee to advise the Department of Labor on the  
3        implementation and deployment of technological upgrades to the delivery  
4        system for unemployment compensation benefits.

5        (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following  
6        members:

7            (1) two current members of the House of Representatives, not all from  
8            the same political party, appointed by the Speaker of the House, of whom one  
9            shall be a member of the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee  
10           and one shall be a member of the House Committee on Commerce and  
11           Economic Development;

12           (2) two current members of the Senate, not all from the same political  
13           party, appointed by the Committee on Committees, of whom one shall be a  
14           member of the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee and one  
15           shall be a member of the Senate Committee on Economic Development,  
16           Housing and General Affairs;

17           (3) three employees of the Department of Labor who will regularly use  
18           the technological upgrades, who shall be appointed by the Commissioner of  
19           Labor;

20           (4) one employee from the Agency of Digital Services, who shall be  
21           appointed by the Secretary of Digital Services;

1           (5) one representative of organized labor associated with the  
2           construction trades, who shall be nominated by a State labor federation and  
3           appointed by the Governor;

4           (6) one representative of a group representing employers, who shall be  
5           appointed by the Governor; and

6           (7) one attorney experienced in representing unemployment insurance  
7           claimants, who shall be appointed by the Director of Vermont Legal Aid.

8           (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study the technological  
9           upgrades to the delivery system for unemployment compensation benefits and  
10          shall have the following powers and duties:

11           (1) to monitor the implementation and deployment of the upgrades;

12           (2) to be able to request information related to the upgrades at any time;

13           (3) to make recommendations to the Department of Labor at any time;

14          and

15           (4) to provide assistance on testing the upgrades.

16          (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative and technical  
17          assistance of the Department of Labor, including for the purpose of scheduling  
18          meetings.

19          (e) Report. The Committee shall submit a written report to the Joint  
20          Information Technology Oversight Committee, the House Committee on  
21          Commerce and Economic Development, and the Senate Committee on

1 Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on a quarterly basis,  
2 with the first report due on or before September 30, 2025. The report shall  
3 include the Committee's assessment of the progress regarding implementation  
4 and testing of the technological upgrades, a list of recommendations that the  
5 Committee has made to the Department of Labor, and whether the Department  
6 of Labor has accepted those recommendations. The Committee shall provide  
7 the Department of Labor with a draft copy of the report at least 30 days prior to  
8 its submission, and the Department of Labor shall be permitted to have its  
9 response included in the quarterly report.

10 (f) Meetings.

11 (1) The Commissioner of Labor, or the Commissioner's designee, shall  
12 call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before May 1, 2025.

13 (2) The Committee shall meet at least once every two months.

14 (3) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the  
15 first meeting.

16 (4) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

17 (5) The Committee shall cease to exist on June 30, 2026 or whenever  
18 the Committee determines by a two-thirds vote that the technological upgrades  
19 have been successfully implemented, whichever is later.

20 (g) Compensation and reimbursement.

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

5           (2) Other members of the Committee who are not employed by the  
6           Department of Labor or the Agency of Digital Services shall be entitled to per  
7           diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under  
8           32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than eight meetings.

9           (3) These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the  
10          General Assembly.

11          Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

12          This act shall take effect on passage.