

1 H.421

2 Introduced by Representative Masland of Thetford

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Municipal government; intermunicipal services; regional planning
6 commissions; regional council of governments

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require
8 regional planning commissions to enter into an agreement with municipalities
9 to create regional councils of governments. The council would assist those
10 municipalities in planning for common needs.

11 An act relating to the authority to create a regional council of governments

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

13 Sec. 1. 24 V.S.A. chapter 121, subchapter 7 is added to read:

14 Subchapter 7. Regional Council of Governments

15 § 4948. CREATION OF REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

16 (a) On or before July 1, 2027, every regional planning commission shall
17 enter into an agreement between or among its municipalities to establish a
18 regional council of governments.

19 (b) The agreement shall:

1 (1) provide that its representatives be elected municipal officials from
2 member municipalities; and

3 (2) specify the organization, method of withdrawal, method of
4 terminating the agreement, and the grounds for suspension of member
5 municipalities.

6 (c) The council shall adopt bylaws designating the officers of the council
7 and providing for the conduct of its business.

8 (d) On or before January 1, 2027, the Secretary of Commerce and
9 Community Development and representatives from each regional planning
10 commission shall meet and develop a process for determining the number of
11 councils of government in the State and how many municipalities should be in
12 each.

13 § 4949. FINANCES; STAFF

14 (a) Expenses. The legislative bodies of the member municipalities may
15 appropriate funds to meet the expenses of the council.

16 (b) Funds. The council may accept funds, grants, gifts, and services from:

17 (1) the federal government;

18 (2) the State of Vermont or its agencies, departments, or
19 instrumentalities;

20 (3) any other governmental unit, whether a member of the council or
21 not; and

1 (4) private and civic sources.

2 (c) Staff. The council may employ any staff and consult and retain any
3 experts that it considers necessary.

4 § 4950. POWERS AND DUTIES

5 (a) The council may:

6 (1) Assist local governments in planning for common need and mutual
7 benefit through cooperation and coordination. The council may undertake
8 activities that it considers appropriate, including engineering, inspectional and
9 planning services, economic development, public safety, emergency
10 management, animal control, land use management, tourism promotion, social,
11 health, education, data management, regional sewerage, housing, mapping,
12 household hazardous waste collection, recycling, public facility siting,
13 coordination of master planning, vocational training and development, solid
14 waste disposal, fire protection, regional resource protection, regional impact
15 studies, and transportation.

16 (2) Promote cooperative arrangements and coordinate action among its
17 members, including arrangements and actions with respect to planning,
18 community development, joint purchasing, intermunicipal services, and
19 infrastructure.

20 (3) Make recommendations for review and action to its members and
21 other public agencies that perform functions within the region.

1 (b) The council, on behalf of a majority of its member municipalities, may
2 exercise any power, privilege, or authority capable of exercise by a member
3 municipality and necessary or desirable for dealing with problems of local or
4 regional concern, except essential legislative powers, taxing authority, or
5 eminent domain power. This authority is in addition to any other authority
6 granted to regional planning commissions in statute.

7 (c) Where a regional planning commission has been established, the
8 member municipalities, by appropriate action, may provide for the transfer of
9 all assets, liabilities, rights, and obligations of the commission to the council
10 and provide for the dissolution of the commission.

11 § 4950a. INTERCOUNCIL COMMITTEES AND STAFF SHARING

12 (a) Two or more regional councils of governments may establish one or
13 more intercouncil committees to recommend policies relating to matters of an
14 interregional nature, provided each participating council shall have first
15 adopted a resolution authorizing establishment of any such intercouncil
16 committees and defining the scope of its duties.

17 (b) Two or more regional councils of governments may share staff and staff
18 from one council may work in the area of another council, provided each
19 council involved in such a cooperative effort shall have first adopted a
20 resolution authorizing such action and specifying the extent of cooperation and
21 the terms under which it is to be provided.

- 1 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE
- 2 This act shall take effect on passage.