

1 H.437

2 Introduced by Representative Burrows of West Windsor

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Commerce and trade; housing; residential building codes

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish a
7 study committee to examine implementation of statewide universal design
8 standards for residential buildings.

9 An act relating to establishing a study committee to examine universal
10 design standards for residential buildings

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

12 Sec. 1. RESIDENTIAL UNIVERSAL DESIGN STANDARDS; STUDY
13 COMMITTEE; REPORT

14 (a) Creation. There is created the Residential Universal Design Study
15 Committee to explore implementation of statewide universal design standards
16 for all residential buildings.

17 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
18 members:

19 (1) one member of the House of Representatives, who shall be
20 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

1 (2) one member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee
2 on Committees;

3 (3) one member, appointed by the Vermont Builders and Remodelers
4 Association;

5 (4) one member, appointed by the Vermont Chapter of the American
6 Institute of Architects;

7 (5) the Director of Fire Safety of designee;

8 (6) one member of the Vermont Access Board, appointed by the Chair;

9 (7) one member, appointed by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency;

10 (8) one member, appointed by the Vermont Housing Conservation
11 Board;

12 (9) one member, appointed by the Housing & Homelessness Alliance of
13 Vermont;

14 (10) one member, appointed by the Vermont Center for Independent
15 Living;

16 (11) one member, appointed by the Vermont Developmental Disabilities
17 Council;

18 (12) one member of the Land Access and Opportunity Board;

19 (13) one member, appointed by the American Association of Retired
20 Persons Vermont;

1 (14) the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development or
2 designee;

3 (15) one member, appointed by the NeighborWorks of Western
4 Vermont;

5 (16) one member, appointed by the Vermont Mortgage Bankers
6 Association;

7 (17) one member, appointed by the Vermont Bankers Association;

8 (18) one member, appointed by the Association of Vermont Credit
9 Unions;

10 (19) one member, appointed by the Vermont Leagues of Cities and
11 Towns;

12 (20) one member, appointed by the Vermont Assessors and Listers
13 Association;

14 (21) one member, appointed by the Vermont Association of Realtors;
15 and

16 (22) one member, appointed by ADA Inspections Nationwide, LLC.

17 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study the development and
18 implementation of statewide universal design standards for residential
19 buildings, including identification and analysis of the following issues:

20 (1) existing federal and state laws regarding Americans with Disabilities
21 Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101–12213, standards and building codes;

1 (2) existing federal, state, and international best practices and standards
2 addressing accessibility and adaptability characteristics of single-family and
3 multiunit buildings;

4 (3) opportunities and challenges for supporting the residential building
5 industry in meeting universal design standards, including considerations of
6 workforce education and training;

7 (4) cost benefits and impacts of adopting a universal design standard for
8 residential buildings;

9 (5) opportunities and challenges with enforcement of identified
10 standards; and

11 (6) impacts to the valuation and financing of impacted buildings.

12 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,
13 and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Counsel and the Joint Fiscal
14 Office.

15 (e) Report. On or before November 1, 2025, the Committee shall submit a
16 written report to the House Committee on General and Housing and the Senate
17 Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with its
18 findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

19 (f) Meetings.

20 (1) The member of the House of Representatives shall call the first
21 meeting of the Committee to occur on or before June 1, 2025.

1 (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the
2 first meeting.

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

4 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on December 1, 2025.

5 (g) Compensation and reimbursement. For attendance at meetings during
6 adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee
7 serving in the member's capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem
8 compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for
9 not more than six meetings. These payments shall be made from monies
10 appropriated to the General Assembly.

11 (h) Appropriation. The sum of \$200,000.00 is appropriated from the
12 General Fund in fiscal year 2026 for per diem compensation and
13 reimbursement of expenses for members of the Committee and to engage the
14 services of one or more experts as necessary to assist the Committee in its
15 work pursuant to this section.

16 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

17 This act shall take effect on passage.