

1 H.498

2 SHORT FORM

3 Introduced by Representative Headrick of Burlington

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Municipal and county government; regulatory provisions; police

7 power of municipalities; prohibition on criminalizing homelessness;

8 grants for municipalities to address homelessness; annual reporting

9 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend  
10 various provisions of Title 24 to prohibit municipal corporations from adopting  
11 civil or criminal ordinances that would prevent an individual from engaging in  
12 life-sustaining activities on municipal property, such as sleeping, camping,  
13 resting, or loitering. This bill also proposes to authorize municipal  
14 corporations to adopt certain ordinances prohibiting the use of municipal  
15 property for life-sustaining activities whenever adequate shelter is available.  
16 This bill also proposes to establish a State-funded grant program to support  
17 municipal diversionary programs for unhoused individuals; municipal services  
18 relating to mental health care, addiction treatment, and job training; and  
19 partnerships between municipalities and nonprofit organizations to provide  
20 temporary, transitional, and permanent housing. This bill also proposes to  
21 allow municipalities to designate humanitarian zones in public spaces, in

1      which unhoused individuals may access sanitation facilities, water, and  
2      temporary shelter. This bill also proposes to appropriate monies to the Agency  
3      of Human Services for purposes of expanding housing programs that prioritize  
4      immediate, low-barrier housing solutions for unhoused individuals and  
5      families. This bill also proposes to amend statutes related to affordable  
6      housing to provide tax incentives for developers that create affordable housing  
7      units, enact rent stabilization and eviction protection for residential tenants,  
8      appropriate monies for the construction of affordable housing units by the  
9      State, and establish public-private partnerships to expand the availability of  
10     housing stock statewide. This bill also proposes to amend the statutes  
11     governing regional and municipal planning to require municipalities to include  
12     homelessness strategies within the municipal plan and to authorize grants to be  
13     used for purposes of technical assistance for municipalities that adopt and  
14     revise new plans. This bill also proposes to require annual reports from  
15     municipalities and State agencies concerning the status of homelessness within  
16     the State, the effectiveness of any measures that have been implemented, and  
17     progress towards the reduction of homelessness in Vermont. This bill also  
18     proposes to establish a task force, composed of legislators, municipal  
19     representatives, advocates, and individuals with lived experience, to study and  
20     oversee the implementation of the proposals within this bill.

1       An act relating to prohibiting municipal regulation of homelessness and  
2       supporting municipal programs to address homelessness

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

4                       (TEXT OMITTED IN SHORT-FORM BILLS)