

H.577

Introduced by Representatives Black of Essex and Berbeco of Winooski

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Health; prescription drugs; cost-containment; State Treasurer;

Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program, to be administered by the Office of the State Treasurer.

An act relating to establishing the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program

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

Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. chapter 91, subchapter 7 is added to read:

Subchapter 7. Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program

§ 4691. VERMONT PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD

PROGRAM

(a) There is established the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program, administered by the Office of the State Treasurer, for the purpose of pooling prescription drug purchasing power with other U.S. states and

1 territories and nongovernmental organizations. The Program shall be made
2 available to all Vermont residents.

3 (b)(1) To further the purposes of the Program, the State Treasurer may
4 cooperate with other U.S. states and territories, regional consortia, or
5 nongovernmental organizations, or a combination of these, to pool prescription
6 drug purchasing power to:

7 (A) reduce prescription drug costs;

8 (B) negotiate discounts with prescription drug manufacturers;

9 (C) centralize prescription drug purchasing; and

10 (D) establish volume discount contracting.

11 (2) As used in subdivision (1)(D) of this subsection, “volume discount
12 contracting” means the negotiated purchase of a large quantity of a prescription
13 drug at a decreased cost.

14 (c) The Treasurer may require that reasonable fees be charged to defray
15 Program costs. Notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 603 to the
16 contrary, the amount and method of collection of any fee shall be determined
17 by the Treasurer based on actual costs.

18 (d) On or before January 15, 2028, and annually thereafter, the State
19 Treasurer shall submit a report to the House Committee on Health Care, the
20 Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the Governor detailing the
21 activities of the Program during the previous calendar year, including the

1 number of Vermont residents and pharmacies participating in the Program and
2 the amount of savings on prescription drug costs achieved.

3 § 4692. VERMONT PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD

4 PROGRAM FUND

5 (a) The Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program Fund is
6 established as a special fund to be administered by the State Treasurer to
7 support the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program established in
8 this subchapter.

9 (b) The Fund shall consist of:

10 (1) any monies appropriated to the Fund by the General Assembly;

11 (2) any monies transferred to the Fund from the federal government,
12 other State agencies, or other government source;

13 (3) any monies from the payment of fees or other monies due to the
14 Program; and

15 (4) any gifts, grants, or donations made to the Fund and any gifts, grants,
16 donations, or investments received by the Treasurer for the Program.

17 (c) The Treasurer shall credit to the Fund all interest earned on Fund
18 balances and any other income derived from the deposit and investment of
19 monies in the Fund.

20 (d) Any unexpended and unencumbered monies in the Fund at the end of a
21 fiscal year shall remain in the Fund.

1 Sec. 2. VERMONT PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD

2 PROGRAM; IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

3 On or before January 15, 2027, the State Treasurer shall report to the
4 General Assembly regarding implementation of the Vermont Prescription Drug
5 Discount Card Program established in 18 V.S.A. chapter 91, subchapter 7, as
6 added by Sec. 1 of this act, as of that date, including any recommendations for
7 improving the administration of the Program, any fees to be charged to
8 participants, and an estimate of the projected costs to the State in the event that
9 additional financial support is determined to be necessary to administer the
10 Program.

11 Sec. 3. VERMONT PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD

12 PROGRAM; EVALUATION AND START-UP FUNDING

13 In fiscal year 2027, the sum of \$50,000.00 is appropriated from the General
14 Fund to the Office of the State Treasurer for the costs of developing and
15 implementing the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program as set
16 forth in this act.

17 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

18 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.