

H.854

Introduced by Representatives Bosch of Clarendon, Luneau of St. Albans

City, Nelson of Derby, Pritchard of Pawlet, and Southworth of

Walden

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Taxation and finance; salaries and fees; General Assembly

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to incentivize

members of the General Assembly to complete the legislative session before

the first Friday in May by providing that members will receive the same

amount of compensation if the regular session concludes before the first Friday

in May and by providing that members will receive only expense

reimbursement if the regular session extends up to three weeks beyond the first

Friday in May, with no compensation or expense reimbursement if the regular

session extends more than three weeks beyond the first Friday in May.

An act relating to legislative pay

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

Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE

This act may be cited as the “Legislative Economic Incentive Act of 2026.”

1       Sec. 2. 32 V.S.A § 1051 is amended as follows:

2       § 1051. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
3               OF THE SENATE; COMPENSATION AND EXPENSE  
4               REIMBURSEMENT

5       (a) The Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
6       shall be entitled to receive annual compensation of \$10,080.00 for the 2005  
7       Biennial Session and thereafter, to be paid in biweekly payments, provided  
8       that, beginning on January 1, 2007, the annual compensation shall be adjusted  
9       annually thereafter by the cost of living adjustment negotiated for State  
10      employees under the most recent collective bargaining agreement, except that,  
11      beginning on July 1, 2021, and annually thereafter on January 1, the annual  
12      compensation shall be adjusted consistent with the compensation increases  
13      provided to other constitutional officers.

14      (b) In addition to the annual compensation, the Speaker and President Pro  
15      Tempore shall be entitled to receive:

16           (1) \$652.00 a week for the 2005 Biennial Session and thereafter, to be  
17      paid in biweekly payments during the regular and adjourned sessions of the  
18      General Assembly, provided that, beginning on January 1, 2007, the weekly  
19      compensation shall be adjusted annually thereafter by the cost of living  
20      adjustment negotiated for State employees under the most recent collective  
21      bargaining agreement, except that, beginning on July 1, 2021, and annually

1 thereafter on January 1, the weekly compensation shall be adjusted consistent  
2 with the compensation increases provided to other constitutional officers;

3 (2) an amount equal to one-fifth of the annually adjusted weekly  
4 compensation set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, rounded up to the  
5 nearest dollar, per day during a special session of the General Assembly; and

6 (3) mileage, meals, and lodging expenses as provided to members of the  
7 General Assembly under subsection 1052(b) of this title during the biennial,  
8 adjourned, and special sessions of the General Assembly and in addition such  
9 other actual and necessary expenses incurred while engaged in duties imposed  
10 by law.

11 (c) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, the biweekly payments  
12 to the Speaker and President Pro Tempore shall be paid commencing with the  
13 first day of the session and concluding on the first Friday in May, regardless of  
14 whether the session adjourns prior to the first Friday in May. The Speaker and  
15 President Pro Tempore shall not receive any additional payments if the regular  
16 session continues beyond the first Friday in May and shall not receive any  
17 reimbursement of expenses if the regular session extends more than three  
18 weeks beyond the first Friday in May.

1       Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 1052 is amended as follows:

2       § 1052. MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; COMPENSATION  
3               AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

4           (a)(1)(A) Each member of the General Assembly, other than the Speaker of  
5       the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, is entitled to a weekly  
6       salary of \$589.00 for the 2005 Biennial Session and thereafter, provided that,  
7       beginning on January 1, 2007, the weekly compensation shall be adjusted  
8       annually thereafter by the cost of living adjustment negotiated for State  
9       employees under the most recent collective bargaining agreement, except that,  
10      beginning on July 1, 2021, and annually thereafter on January 1, the weekly  
11      compensation shall be adjusted consistent with the compensation increases  
12      provided to other constitutional officers.

13           (B) The salary of members shall be paid in biweekly installments,  
14      commencing with the first day of the session and concluding on the first Friday  
15      in May, regardless of whether the session adjourns prior to the first Friday in  
16      May. Members shall not receive any additional salary if the regular session  
17      continues beyond the first Friday in May.

18           (2) During a special session, a member is entitled to an amount equal to  
19      one-fifth of the annually adjusted weekly compensation set forth in subdivision  
20      (1)(A) of this subsection, rounded up to the nearest dollar, for each day of a

1 special session ~~on which~~ that the House ~~of~~ in which ~~he or she is a~~ the member  
2 serves shall sit.

3 (b) During any session of the General Assembly, each member is entitled  
4 to receive reimbursement of expenses as set forth in this subsection, except  
5 that, beginning on July 1, 2026, members shall not receive reimbursement of  
6 expenses if the regular session extends more than three weeks beyond the first  
7 Friday in May.

8 (1) Mileage reimbursement. Each member shall be entitled to receive  
9 reimbursement in an amount equal to the actual mileage traveled for each day  
10 of session in which the member travels between Montpelier and the member's  
11 home or from Montpelier or from the member's home to another site on  
12 officially sanctioned legislative business. Reimbursement of actual mileage  
13 traveled under this subdivision shall be at the rate per mile determined by the  
14 federal Office of Government-wide Policy and published in the Federal  
15 Register for the year of the session.

16 (2) Meals. Each member shall receive either a meals allowance or  
17 reimbursement of actual meals expenses. A member shall be presumed to have  
18 elected to receive the meals allowance unless the member informs the ~~Office~~  
19 ~~of Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office by a date established by the  
20 ~~Office of Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office that the member wishes to  
21 receive reimbursement of actual meals expenses. A member's election to

1 receive reimbursement of actual meals expenses shall remain in effect through  
2 the remainder of that session unless the member notifies the Office, in writing,  
3 that the member needs to change to the meals allowance due to a change in  
4 circumstances or for another compelling reason.

5 (A) Meals allowance. A member who elects to receive a meals  
6 allowance shall receive an amount equal to the daily amount for meals  
7 determined for Montpelier, Vermont, by the federal Office of Government-  
8 wide Policy and published in the Federal Register for the year of the session  
9 for each day the House in which the member serves shall sit.

10 (B) Meals reimbursement. A member who elects to receive  
11 reimbursement of expenses shall receive reimbursement equal to the actual  
12 amounts expended by the member for meals for each day that the House in  
13 which the member serves shall sit; provided, however, that the total amount of  
14 the weekly reimbursement available pursuant to this subdivision (B) shall not  
15 exceed the amount the member would have received for the same week if the  
16 member had elected the meals allowance pursuant to subdivision (A) of this  
17 subdivision (2). The member shall provide meal receipts or otherwise  
18 substantiate the amounts expended to the ~~Office of Legislative Operations~~  
19 Joint Fiscal Office in the form and manner prescribed by the ~~Director of~~  
20 ~~Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office.

1           (3) Lodging. Each member shall receive either a lodging allowance or  
2 reimbursement of actual lodging expenses. A member shall be presumed to  
3 have elected to receive the lodging allowance unless the member informs the  
4 ~~Office of Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office by a date established by  
5 the ~~Office of Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office that the member wishes  
6 to receive reimbursement of actual lodging expenses. A member's election to  
7 receive reimbursement of actual lodging expenses shall remain in effect  
8 through the remainder of that session unless the member notifies the Office, in  
9 writing, that the member needs to change to the lodging allowance due to a  
10 change in circumstances or for another compelling reason.

11           (A) Lodging allowance. A member who elects to receive a lodging  
12 allowance shall receive an amount equal to the daily amount for lodging  
13 determined for Montpelier, Vermont, by the federal Office of Government-  
14 wide Policy and published in the Federal Register for the year of the session  
15 for each day the House in which the member serves shall sit.

16           (B) Lodging reimbursement. A member who elects to receive  
17 reimbursement of expenses shall receive reimbursement equal to the actual  
18 amounts expended by the member for lodging for each day that the House in  
19 which the member serves shall sit; provided, however, that the total amount of  
20 the weekly reimbursement available pursuant to this subdivision (B) for each  
21 week shall not exceed the amount the member would have received for the

1 same week if the member had elected the lodging allowance pursuant to  
2 subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3). The member shall provide lodging  
3 receipts or otherwise substantiate the amounts expended to the ~~Office of~~  
4 ~~Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office in the form and manner prescribed  
5 by the ~~Director of Legislative Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office.

6 (4) Absences. If a member is absent for reasons other than sickness or  
7 legislative business for one or more entire days while the House in which the  
8 member sits is in session, the member shall notify the ~~Office of Legislative~~  
9 ~~Operations~~ Joint Fiscal Office of that absence, and the member shall not be  
10 entitled to receive or be reimbursed for mileage, meals, or lodging expenses  
11 incurred during the period of that absence, except that lodging expenses  
12 associated with a lease or rental agreement may be received or reimbursed  
13 upon approval of either the Speaker of the House or the President Pro Tempore  
14 of the Senate.

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16 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

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