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H.861

~~SHORT FORM~~

Introduced by Representative Burrows of West Windsor

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Human services; Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish an independent Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator within State government.

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An act relating to establishing an Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator

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

~~(TEXT OMITTED IN SHORT FORM BILLS)~~

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. chapter 45 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 45. ADMINISTRATION

* * *

Subchapter 7. Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator

§ 2331. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COORDINATOR

(a) There is created the permanent position of the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator within the Agency of Administration for the

purpose of coordinating, across State government and in collaboration with agency partners, all State programs, services, and activities, accessible to and available for individuals with disabilities.

(b) The Coordinator shall be an individual with the lived experience of a disability and shall have completed a recognized Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator certificate program. The Coordinator shall have comprehensive knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101–12213, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, and any related federal and State disability rights law. The Coordinator shall be familiar with the structure, programs, services, and personnel of State government and with alternative communication formats and assistive technologies.

(c) In hiring for the Coordinator position, the Secretary of Administration shall consider only those candidates nominated by the following entities:

- (1) the Human Rights Commission;
- (2) Disability Rights Vermont;
- (3) the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights; and
- (4) the Vermont Center for Independent Living.

(d) The Coordinator shall:

(1) work directly with State agencies and departments to advance, coordinate, and monitor statewide compliance efforts;

(2) act as a consultant for State employees, boards, and executive, legislative, and judicial leadership;

(3) ensure communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as those with individuals without disabilities, giving primary consideration to the individual's preferred method of communication;

(4) educate State employees on their legal obligations, disability access requirements, ableism, and prevention initiatives;

(5) audit programs, facilities, and activities for ongoing compliance;

(6) oversee self-evaluation processes throughout State government to identify and correct violations;

(7) monitor federally required transition plans to ensure timely completion of structural accessibility and improvement;

(8) provide federally required public notice of rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide contact information for a governmental entity's coordinator;

(9) apply for grants and accept donations to support the work of the Coordinator's position;

~~(9)~~(10) maintain collaborative relationships with disability advocacy organizations and stakeholders; and

~~(10)~~(11) facilitate partnerships among governmental departments and disability advocacy organizations to align policies, programs, and

implementation strategies that support compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and accessible services.

(e) The Coordinator shall have the administrative, legal, and technical support of the Agency of Administration.

~~SEC. 2. APPROPRIATION, AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
COORDINATOR~~

~~In fiscal year 2027, \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to establish the Americans with Disabilities Coordinator position established in 3 V.S.A. § 2331.~~

~~Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

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

~~Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026, provided that the sum of \$150,000.00 has been appropriated in the fiscal year 2027 budget for the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator position established in Sec. 1.~~