

S.174

Introduced by Senator Watson

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Finance; climate mitigation infrastructure; clean energy; agriculture;
farming; funding and investment; Treasurer; study

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the
State Treasurer to conduct a study of Green Bank models existing in other
jurisdictions and determine whether implementation of any elements of these
models in Vermont would promote and accelerate investment in climate
mitigation infrastructure, agriculture, and farming.

An act relating to the study of Green Bank models to support and accelerate
investments in climate mitigation infrastructure, farming, and agriculture in
Vermont

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

Sec. 1. TREASURER STUDY OF GREEN BANK MODELS

(a) The Treasurer shall conduct a study of Green Bank models
implemented in other jurisdictions to determine whether and, if so, how
implementation of any elements of such models in Vermont would benefit the
State by facilitating and accelerating investment in climate mitigation
infrastructure, farming, and agriculture in a manner consistent with State goals

1 and policies. The basis of this study shall reflect “recommendation five” in the
2 Treasurer’s Climate Infrastructure Financing Report of 2024. Accordingly, the
3 Treasurer shall consider the creation of a stand-alone financing entity, a Green
4 Bank, or the provision of Green Bank–like authority to one or more existing
5 State entities. As used in this section, “Green Bank” has the same meaning as
6 used in the above-referenced report and, in addition, also includes the
7 financing of farming and agricultural projects. Specifically, “Green Bank”
8 means an entity that functions like a loan or investment fund and that uses a
9 wide array of financial tools to support and accelerate the investment in
10 climate mitigation infrastructure, farming, and agriculture.

11 (b) In conducting the study required by this section, the Treasurer shall
12 seek input from the Vermont Public Finance Climate Collaborative; the
13 Vermont Climate Council; the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee; the
14 Commissioner of Public Service or designee; the Vermont members of the
15 Coalition for Green Capital; the Secretary of Agriculture, Food, and Markets or
16 designee; and any other public or private stakeholders deemed appropriate by
17 the Treasurer. In addition, the Treasurer shall establish a mechanism for
18 receiving written public comments and shall hold at least one public hearing on
19 the Treasurer’s draft findings and recommendations before they are finalized in
20 a report to the General Assembly as required in subsection (d) of this section.

1 (c) In designing a structure or approach that would achieve the greatest
2 effectiveness in Vermont, the Treasurer shall consider the value created; the
3 possible trade-offs; potential risks; long-term sustainability; coordination
4 among existing State entities; the short- and long-term economic impact,
5 including with regard to funds retained or recirculated within the Vermont
6 economy; opportunities for maximizing the availability of public and private
7 funds; and any other considerations deemed appropriate by the Treasurer.

8 (d) The Treasurer shall submit the Treasurer's findings and
9 recommendations, particularly with regard to specific recommended
10 implementation strategies, in a written report to the House Committees on
11 Energy and Digital Infrastructure; on Environment; and on Agriculture, Food
12 Resiliency, and Forestry and the Senate Committees on Finance, on Natural
13 Resources and Energy, and on Agriculture on or before December 1, 2026.

14 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on passage.