

1 S.219

2 Introduced by Senators Hardy, Watson and White

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Public service; energy; energy efficiency

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to direct

7 Efficiency Vermont to study the creation of a community-based energy

8 navigator program statewide.

9 An act relating to an energy navigator program report

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

11 Sec. 1. ENERGY NAVIGATOR PROGRAM; REPORT

12 (a) In collaboration with existing community-based energy navigator
13 programs in Vermont, such as the Climate Economy Action Center of Addison
14 County, Efficiency Vermont shall design a Vermont community-based home
15 energy navigator and coaching program that will provide in-person and remote
16 energy coaching services to residential consumers in communities statewide.
17 Efficiency Vermont shall consult with the Vermont State Energy Office, the
18 Vermont Climate Action Office, Vermont's community action agencies, the
19 Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network, Vermont's electric utilities, and
20 other states, including Connecticut and Massachusetts, that have experience

1 with community-based energy programs. For the purposes of this section,
2 “residential consumers” includes homeowners, landlords, and renters.

3 (b) The program shall:

4 (1) provide guidance to residential consumers, particularly those with
5 low and moderate incomes, to better understand and navigate energy efficiency
6 and clean energy investment options to affordably meet their home energy
7 needs;

8 (2) advise residential consumers on accessing available grants, rebates,
9 financing, and other assistance programs and incentives to meet their home
10 energy needs;

11 (3) assist residential consumers in prioritizing identified energy-saving
12 opportunities, including through the integration of weatherization strategies to
13 reduce heating and cooling loads that could minimize the need for the
14 installation of new equipment and lower future electric demands on the grid;

15 (4) help residential consumers connect to local contractors and review
16 and analyze contractor recommendations regarding cost, payment, and other
17 relevant factors;

18 (5) advise residential consumers in person, as necessary, and over time,
19 recognizing that hands-on coaching help may be needed at a consumer’s home
20 and over several years;

1 (6) provide ongoing State funding to support the operations of
2 community-based energy coaching programs; and

3 (7) use available grant funds and private partnerships to support
4 program implementation.

5 (c) On or before January 15, 2027, Efficiency Vermont shall submit a
6 report on the program design to the House Committee on Energy and Digital
7 Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.
8 The report shall include a description of the design of the program, which
9 could include the creation of a pilot program or expansion and support of
10 existing community-based programs, a description of the technical assistance
11 and educational materials to be developed as part of the program, an estimate
12 of program costs, funding sources to provide ongoing support to community-
13 based energy coaching programs, a target number of residential consumers to
14 be served by the program, energy and emissions savings that will result from
15 the program, and a proposed timeline for the implementation of the program.

16 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATIONS

17 (a) In fiscal year 2027, the sum of \$15,000.00 is appropriated from the
18 General Fund to Efficiency Vermont for the energy navigator program report.

19 (b) In fiscal year 2027, the sum of \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the
20 General Fund to the Climate Economy Action Center to collaborate with
21 Efficiency Vermont on the energy navigator program design; continue to

1 develop its community-based energy navigator resources, programming, and
2 expertise; and support the expansion of its Energy Navigator Program to a
3 neighboring county.

4 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

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