

1 S.232

2 Introduced by Senators Hardy, Chittenden, Clarkson, Gulick, Hashim, Lyons,
3 Major, Vyhovsky and White

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Libraries, history, and information technology; Vermont Libraries
7 Day; education; Universal Afterschool and Summer Special Fund;
8 early education grants; Department of Libraries; State Librarian;
9 duties; municipal government; bonding; improvements for public
10 libraries

11 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend the
12 statutes related to libraries and education grants to designate the third Monday
13 in October as Vermont Libraries Day, expressly include public libraries in the
14 list of eligible recipients of afterschool and summer reading funding from the
15 Universal Afterschool and Summer Special Fund, expressly include public
16 libraries in the list of community organizations eligible for early education
17 funding, modify the term “collection” to include digital or physical materials
18 wherever that term is used in the statute governing the duties of the
19 Department of Libraries, require the Department of Libraries to publish
20 guidance documents concerning grants and funding available to municipal

1 public libraries, and expressly authorize municipalities to bond for
2 improvements to any public library.

3 An act relating to public libraries and the Department of Libraries

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

5 * * * Findings * * *

6 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

7 The General Assembly finds:

8 (1) The State of Vermont and its communities depend on libraries as
9 centers for learning, social connection, technological access, disaster
10 preparedness and response, support of health care and social services, and
11 numerous other vital services.

12 (2) As places of public accommodation, public libraries are obligated to
13 ensure that their services, facilities, and resources are inclusive and accessible
14 to all. However, many of Vermont's existing library facilities require
15 improvements in order to fulfill this obligation and meet programming needs.

16 (3) Early literacy is integral to student preparedness and success.
17 Vermont's Department of Libraries and statewide network of public libraries
18 are uniquely suited to play a critical role in improving the literacy skills of
19 students throughout the State.

1 (4) It is essential that the State raise awareness about public libraries and
2 their offerings in order to ensure their continued beneficial impact and
3 continued accessibility for all Vermont residents.

4 * * * Vermont Libraries Day * * *

5 Sec. 2. 1 V.S.A. § 379 is added to read:

6 § 379. VERMONT LIBRARIES DAY

7 The third Monday in the month of October is designated as “Vermont
8 Libraries Day.”

9 * * * Afterschool, Summer Reading, and Early Education Funding for Public

10 Libraries * * *

11 Sec. 3. 16 V.S.A. § 51 is amended to read:

12 § 51. UNIVERSAL AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER SPECIAL FUND

13 (a) The Universal Afterschool and Summer Special Fund is created, to be
14 managed by the Agency of Education. The cannabis sales tax revenue shall be
15 deposited into the Universal Afterschool and Summer Special Fund. The Fund
16 shall be used as follows:

17 * * *

18 (2) Cannabis sales tax revenue shall be used to support a mixed delivery
19 system for afterschool and summer programming. Eligible recipients can be
20 public, private, or nonprofit organizations, including public libraries. A
21 reasonable portion of funding shall be allocated to the Department of Libraries

1 to support the Statewide Summer Reading Program and grants for afterschool
2 activities in libraries.

3 * * *

4 (b) An advisory committee is created to support the Secretary in
5 administering the funds. The Agency shall provide administrative and
6 technical support to the advisory committee. The advisory committee shall be
7 composed of:

8 * * *

9 (7) the Vermont Afterschool Executive Director or designee; ~~and~~

10 (8) a representative from the Governor's office; and

11 (9) the State Librarian or designee.

12 * * *

13 Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 4014 is amended to read:

14 § 4014. EARLY EDUCATION

15 * * *

16 (b) The Secretary shall solicit proposals for early education programs from
17 community organizations serving young children. Community organizations
18 include school districts; public libraries; other public agencies, including Head
19 Start programs; and private agencies, including child care programs and
20 parent-child centers.

21 * * *

* * * Department of Libraries; Duties * * *

Sec. 5. 22 V.S.A. § 605 is amended to read:

§ 605. DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
LIBRARIES

The duties and functions of the Department of Libraries shall be to provide,
administer, and maintain:

* * *

(2) A digital or physical collection of federal documents.

(3) An information and reference service to State government, including
a comprehensive digital or physical collection of current information relating
to matters of public policy and topics pertinent to State government.

(4) A general library collection of a sufficient size and scope to
reinforce and supplement the resources of local and regional libraries. ~~All~~
~~materials of the Department of Libraries~~ The collection may be composed of
digital or physical materials and shall be available for free circulation to all
citizens, institutions, and organizations under procedures adopted by the State
Librarian except that the State Librarian may restrict rare or reference-type
materials to one location. The Department shall arrange, classify, and catalog
all materials in its custody and provide for their safekeeping and shall rebind
books as needed. The Department shall provide service to other libraries in the

1 State, schools, and individuals and may provide service by mail or book wagon
2 or otherwise.

3 * * *

4 Sec. 6. 22 V.S.A. § 606 is amended to read:

5 § 606. OTHER DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

6 The Department, in addition to the functions specified in section 605 of this
7 title:

8 * * *

9 (12) Shall publish guidance documents concerning current grants and
10 programs available for the support of municipal public libraries and post these
11 guidance documents on the Department's website. The Department, in
12 consultation with the Vermont Bond Bank, shall publish guidance concerning
13 municipal bonding for the improvement of public libraries.

14 * * * Municipal Bonds; Improvements to Public Libraries * * *

15 Sec. 7. 24 V.S.A. § 1752a is amended to read:

16 § 1752a. PUBLIC LIBRARIES; PRIVATELY OWNED MUNICIPALITY-
17 SUPPORTED LIBRARIES

18 By a majority vote of those present and voting at an annual or special
19 meeting warned for the purpose, a municipality may issue municipal bonds
20 under this chapter for the cost of capital improvements to any public library, as
21 defined in 22 V.S.A. § 101, including any privately owned municipality-

1 supported library situated within the municipality for use of residents of the
2 municipality; and ~~such~~ the improvements shall be considered “improvements”
3 for the purposes of this chapter.

4 * * * Grant Programs; Inclusion of Libraries in Plan Submissions * * *

5 Sec. 8. 24 V.S.A. § 2783 is amended to read:

6 § 2783. ELIGIBILITY FOR PERFORMANCE GRANTS

7 Upon receipt of a proposal for a performance grant, the Secretary shall
8 within 60 days determine whether or not the service provider may be awarded
9 a performance grant under this chapter. The Secretary shall enter into a
10 performance grant with a service provider if the Secretary finds:

11 * * *

12 (10) the service provider demonstrates a capability and willingness to
13 assist public libraries, to encourage the development and growth of programs
14 and services at public libraries, and to increase awareness of the resources
15 available through public libraries within the service area; and

16 (11) the service provider demonstrates a willingness to coordinate its
17 activities with the planning functions of any regional planning commission
18 located in the same geographic area as the service provider.

19 Sec. 9. 24 V.S.A. § 4307 is amended to read:

20 § 4307. MUNICIPAL BYLAW MODERNIZATION GRANTS

21 * * *

1 (f) To receive the grant, the municipality shall:

2 * * *

3 (7) update the municipal plan's housing element as provided in
4 subdivision 4382(a)(10) of this title related to addressing lower- and moderate-
5 income housing needs, implement that element of the plan including through
6 the bylaw amendments, and demonstrate how those bylaws support the
7 implementation of the housing element; ~~and~~

8 (8) update the municipal plan's utility and facility element as provided
9 in subdivision 4382(a)(4) of this title related to addressing present and
10 prospective library facilities, resources, and services and update the
11 municipality's recommendations for meeting future needs for library facilities
12 and services, with indications of priority of need, costs, and method of
13 financing; and

14 (9) comply with the State and Federal Fair Housing Act, including the
15 fair housing provisions of Vermont's Planning and Development Act.

16 * * *

17 * * * Effective Date * * *

18 Sec. 10. EFFECTIVE DATE

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