

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.”

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

12 § 51. UNIVERSAL AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER SPECIAL FUND

17 * * *

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 * * *

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 * * *

1 * * * Department of Libraries; Duties * * *

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

3 § 605. DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
4 LIBRARIES

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

7 * * *

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

12 (4) A general library collection of a sufficient size and scope to
13 reinforce and supplement the resources of local and regional libraries. All
14 ~~materials of the Department of Libraries~~ The collection may be composed of
15 digital or physical materials and shall be available for free circulation to all
16 citizens, institutions, and organizations under procedures adopted by the State
17 Librarian except that the State Librarian may restrict rare or reference-type
18 materials to one location. The Department shall arrange, classify, and catalog
19 all materials in its custody and provide for their safekeeping and shall rebind
20 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 * * *

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.