

1

S.243

2 An act relating to distributing funds to the Vermont Language Justice  
3 Project

4 The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill by striking out all after  
5 the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

6 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

7 The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) Vermont ranks sixth per capita in refugee resettlement;

9 (2) the Governor has recognized the important role immigrants play in  
10 Vermont's economy;

11 (3) when health information is available in only one language and only  
12 in written format, it creates barriers that lead to confusion;

13 (4) the Vermont Language Justice Project's videos fill a critical gap in  
14 patient education, particularly for families with limited English proficiency;

15 (5) the Vermont Language Justice Project has created and distributed  
16 videos pertaining to COVID-19 and COVID-19 testing; the importance of  
17 immunizations and how immunizations work; Mpox; preventing mosquito and  
18 tick bites; and safety during flood events, hot and cold weather, cyanobacteria  
19 outbreaks, wildfires, and more;

1           (6) the Vermont Language Justice Project’s videos are made in 10 to 21  
2 of the languages commonly spoken in Vermont and in collaboration with the  
3 Vermont Department of Health;

4           (7) the Vermont Language Justice Project is usually able to respond to a  
5 crisis within 24 hours with information in multiple languages and in multiple  
6 formats, such as written translations, audio files, and videos; and

7           (8) in January 2025, the Vermont Language Justice Project’s grant from  
8 the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention abruptly ended, leaving it  
9 to be funded solely through donations from individuals and foundations and  
10 through fee-for-service work.

11 Sec. 2. VERMONT LANGUAGE JUSTICE PROJECT

12           In fiscal year 2027, the Office of Racial Equity may contract with the  
13 Vermont Language Justice Project to prepare informational materials at the  
14 request of State agencies and departments, as needed, to assist Vermonters who  
15 speak languages other than English in the event of a disease outbreak, natural  
16 disaster, or other public health emergency, including ongoing personal and  
17 public health information. The Department of Buildings and General Services  
18 shall assist the Vermont Language Justice Project as it navigates the process to  
19 become added to the State’s list of approved contractors.

20 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

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