

House Calendar

Thursday, February 27, 2025

51st DAY OF THE BIENNIAL SESSION

House Convenes at 3:00 P.M.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

ACTION CALENDAR

Committee Bill for Second Reading

H. 339

An act relating to removing the repeal of 7 V.S.A. § 230

(Rep. Boyden of Cambridge will speak for the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.)

NOTICE CALENDAR

Favorable with Amendment

H. 57

An act relating to survivor benefits for law enforcement officers

Rep. Howard of Rutland City, for the Committee on General and Housing, recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE

This act may be cited as “Jessica’s Law.”

Sec. 2. 20 V.S.A. chapter 181 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 181. BENEFITS FOR THE SURVIVORS OF EMERGENCY
PERSONNEL

§ 3171. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) “Board” means the Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Review Board.

(2) “Child” means a natural or legally adopted child, regardless of age, the deceased’s biological child, foster child, adoptive child, or stepchild; a child for whom the deceased is listed as a parent on the child’s birth certificate; a legal ward of the deceased; a child of the deceased’s spouse; or a child for whom the deceased had day-to-day responsibilities to care and financially support at the time of death or when the child was under 18 years of age.

(3) “Correctional officer” has the same meaning as in 28 V.S.A. § 3.

(4) “Domestic partner” means an individual with whom the deceased had an enduring domestic relationship of a spousal nature at the time of death, provided that at the time of death the deceased and the domestic partner:

(A) had shared a residence for at least six consecutive months;

(B) were at least 18 years of age;

(C) were not married to or considered a domestic partner of another individual;

(D) were not related by blood closer than would bar marriage under State law; and

(E) had agreed between themselves to be responsible for each other’s welfare.

(5) “Firefighter” has the same meaning as in subdivision 3151(3) of this title.

(6) “Emergency medical personnel” has the same meaning as in 24 V.S.A. § 2651.

(7) “Emergency personnel” means:

(A) firefighters as defined in subdivision 3151(3) of this title; and

(B) emergency medical personnel and volunteer personnel as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2651;

(C) law enforcement officers; and

(D) correctional officers.

(8) “Law enforcement officer” means a law enforcement officer who has been certified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council pursuant to section 2358 of this title.

(4)(9) “Line of duty” means:

(A) answering or returning from With respect to firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and volunteer personnel:

(i) service in answer to a call of the department or service for a fire or emergency or training drill, including going to and returning from a fire or emergency or participating in a fire or emergency training drill; or

(B)(ii) similar service in another town or district to which the department or service has been called for firefighting or emergency purposes.

(B) With respect to law enforcement officers:

(i) service as a law enforcement officer in answer to a complaint lodged with the department or in response to a disorder, including going to, returning from, and investigating or responding to the complaint or disorder; or

(ii) service under orders from the department or in any emergency for which the law enforcement officer serves as a law enforcement officer.

(C) With respect to correctional officers:

(i) supervision or monitoring of inmates in a correctional facility;

(ii) supervision or monitoring of one or more persons serving a sentence of incarceration outside a correctional facility; or

(iii) supervision or monitoring of a person on parole or probation.

~~(5)~~(10) “Occupation-related illness” means a disease that directly arises out of, and in the course of, service, including a heart injury or disease symptomatic within 72 hours from the date of last service in the line of duty, which shall be presumed to be incurred in the line of duty.

~~(6)~~(11) “Parent” means ~~a natural or adoptive parent~~ the deceased’s biological parent, foster parent, adoptive parent, or stepparent; an individual who is listed as a parent on the deceased’s birth certificate; a legal guardian of the deceased; or an individual who had day-to-day responsibilities to care for and financially support the deceased when the deceased was under 18 years of age.

(12) “Spouse” includes an individual’s domestic partner or civil union partner.

~~(7)~~(13) “Survivor” means a spouse, child, or parent of deceased emergency personnel.

(14) “Volunteer personnel” has the same meaning as in 24 V.S.A. § 2651.

§ 3172. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL SURVIVORS BENEFIT REVIEW

BOARD

~~(a)~~(1) There is created the Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Review Board, which shall consist of the State Treasurer or designee, the Attorney General or designee, the Chief Fire Service Training Officer of the Vermont Fire Service Training Council or designee, ~~and one member of the public to represent the interests of emergency personnel appointed by the Governor for a term of two years~~ the Chair of the Law Enforcement Advisory Board or designee, and the Commissioner of Corrections or designee.

(2) Survivors of emergency personnel, employed by or who volunteer for the State of Vermont, a county or municipality of the State, or a nonprofit entity that provides services in the State, who die in the line of duty or of an occupation-related illness may, within 24 months after the death of the emergency personnel or a longer period due to extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Board, request the Board award a monetary benefit under section 3173 of this title chapter.

(3) The Board shall be responsible for determining whether to award monetary benefits under section 3173 of this chapter. A decision to award monetary benefits shall be made by unanimous vote of the Board and shall be made within 60 days after the receipt of all information necessary to enable the Board to determine eligibility.

(4) The Board may request any information necessary for the exercise of its duties under this section. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Board from initiating the investigation or determination of a claim before being requested by a survivor or employer of emergency personnel.

* * *

(d) Upon a Board decision to award a monetary benefit under this chapter, the Treasurer shall make payment to the beneficiaries as described in subsection (c) of this section. The Treasurer shall have up to one year from the date the claim is received to disburse the funds.

* * *

~~(f) The member of the public appointed by the Governor shall be entitled to per diem compensation authorized under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for each day spent in the performance of his or her duties. [Repealed.]~~

§ 3173. MONETARY BENEFIT

(a) The survivors of emergency personnel who ~~dies~~ die while in the line of duty or from an occupation-related illness may apply for a payment of \$80,000.00 from the State.

* * *

§ 3175. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL SURVIVORS BENEFIT SPECIAL FUND

(a) The Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Special Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the purpose of the payment of claims distributed pursuant to this chapter. The Fund shall comprise appropriations made by the General Assembly, amounts transferred by the

Emergency Board when the General Assembly is not in session, and contributions or donations from any other source. All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain in the Fund.

* * *

(c) In the event that the balance of the Fund is insufficient to pay monetary benefits awarded by the Board when the General Assembly is not in session, the Emergency Board may, pursuant to its authority under 32 V.S.A. § 133, transfer into the Fund additional amounts necessary to pay the monetary benefits.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to survivor benefits for law enforcement and correctional officers”

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

CONSENT CALENDAR FOR NOTICE

Concurrent Resolutions for Adoption Under Joint Rules 16a - 16d

The following concurrent resolutions have been introduced for approval by the Senate and House and will be adopted automatically unless a Senator or Representative requests floor consideration in that member’s chamber prior to adjournment of the next legislative day. Requests for floor consideration in either chamber should be communicated to the Senate Secretary’s Office or the House Clerk’s Office, as applicable. For text of resolutions, see Addendum to House Calendar.

H.C.R. 41

House concurrent resolution congratulating Keeler’s Bay Variety Store of South Hero on the 50th anniversary of the Horne family’s ownership

H.C.R. 42

House concurrent resolution honoring Oxbow Union High School CoPrincipal and Gather author Kenneth M. Cadow of Norwich

H.C.R. 43

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Thetford Academy Panthers Division II boys’ championship indoor track and field team

H.C.R. 44

House concurrent resolution recognizing July 2025 as Park and Recreation Month in Vermont and designating July 18, 2025 as Vermont Park and Recreation Professionals Day in Vermont

H.C.R. 45

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets Division I boys' indoor track and field team on winning a second consecutive Division I championship

H.C.R. 46

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Essex High School Hornets girls' volleyball program on winning a fourth consecutive State championship

H.C.R. 47

House concurrent resolution recognizing March 2025 as National Senior Nutrition Program Month in Vermont

H.C.R. 48

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative Curt McCormack of Burlington

For Informational Purposes

CROSSOVER DATES

The Joint Rules Committee established the following crossover dates:

(1) All **Senate/House** bills must be reported out of the last committee of reference (including the Committees on Appropriations and Finance/Ways and Means, except as provided below in (2) and the exceptions listed below) on or before **Friday, March 14, 2025**, and filed with the Secretary/Clerk so they may be placed on the Calendar for Notice the next legislative day – Committee bills must be voted out of Committee by **Friday, March 14, 2025**.

(2) All **Senate/House** bills referred pursuant to Senate Rule 31 or House Rule 35(a) to the Committees on Appropriations and Finance/Ways and Means must be reported out by the last of those committees on or before **Friday, March 21, 2025**, and filed with the Secretary/Clerk so they may be placed on the Calendar for Notice the next legislative day.

Exceptions to the foregoing deadlines include the major money bills (the general Appropriations bill (“The Big Bill”), the Transportation Capital bill, the Capital Construction bill, and the Fee/Revenue bills).

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION (H.C.R.) PROCESS

Joint Rules 16a–16d provide the procedure for the General Assembly to adopt concurrent resolutions pursuant to the Consent Calendar. Here are the steps for Representatives to introduce an H.C.R. and to have it ceremonially read during a House session:

1. Meet with Legislative Counselor Michael Chernick regarding your H.C.R. draft request. Come prepared with an idea and any relevant supporting documents.
2. Have a date in mind if you want a ceremonial reading. You should meet with Counselor Chernick at least two weeks prior to the week you want your ceremonial reading to happen.
3. Counselor Chernick will draft your H.C.R., and Resolutions Editor and Coordinator Jill Pralle will edit it. Upon completion of this process, a paper or electronic copy will be released to you. If a paper copy is released to you, a sponsor signout sheet will also be included.
4. Please submit the sponsor list to Counselor Chernick by paper *or* electronically, but not both.
5. The final list of sponsors needs to be submitted to Counselor Chernick not later than 12:00 noon the Thursday of the week prior to the H.C.R.'s appearance on the Consent Calendar.
6. The Office of Legislative Counsel will then send your H.C.R. to the House Clerk's Office for incorporation into the Consent Calendar and House Calendar Addendum for the following week.
7. The week that your H.C.R. is on the Consent Calendar, any presentation copies that you requested will be mailed or available for pickup on Friday, after the House and Senate adjourn, which is when your H.C.R. is adopted pursuant to Joint Rules.
8. Your H.C.R. can be ceremonially read during a House session once it is adopted. If you would like to schedule a ceremonial reading, contact Second Assistant Clerk Courtney Reckord to confirm your requested ceremonial reading date.

JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE NOTICES

Grants and Positions that have been submitted to the Joint Fiscal Committee by the Administration, under 32 V.S.A. §5(b)(3)(D):

JFO #3244: \$2,335,401.00 to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Health from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Funds support continued crisis counseling assistance and training in response to the July 2024 flood event. *[Received February 7, 2025]*

JFO #3245: \$250,000.00 to the Agency of Human Services, Department of Health from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. Funds used to provide trainings for crisis staff and to make improvements to the State's crisis system dispatch platform. *[Received February 7, 2025]*