

House Calendar

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

114th DAY OF THE ADJOURNED SESSION

House Convenes at 1:00 P.M.

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ACTION CALENDAR

Action Postponed Until Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Favorable

S. 179

An act relating to the Uniform Disclaimer of Property Interests Act

Rep. Goodnow of Brattleboro, for the Committee on Judiciary, recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

(Committee Vote: 8-0-3)

Rep. Ode of Burlington, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

(Committee Vote: 10-0-1)

Amendment to be offered by Rep. Goodnow of Brattleboro to S. 179

That the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended in Sec. 1, 14 V.S.A. chapter 129, in subsection 4105(c), after the word "minor" by inserting the word "child"

New Business

Third Reading

S. 173

An act relating to vocational rehabilitation

Favorable with Amendment

S. 142

An act relating to a pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians and medical graduates

Rep. Taylor of Mendon, for the Committee on Health Care, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. PATHWAY TO LICENSURE FOR INTERNATIONALLY

TRAINED PHYSICIANS; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2027, the Department of Health, in collaboration with the Board of Medical Practice, shall provide to the House

Committees on Health Care and on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Government Operations a report detailing a pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians. The report shall include the following information:

(1) a summary of other states' processes for licensing internationally trained physicians to practice medicine and, if available, data on the outcomes of these processes and related programs;

(2) a description of the external resources needed to evaluate the education, experience, and examinations of internationally trained physicians and the availability of these resources;

(3) a proposal for licensing internationally trained physicians to practice medicine in Vermont, including potential qualifications and supervision requirements for licensure, proposed requirements for recency of practice, a summary of any additional resources and statutory authority needed, and a plan and timeline for implementing the licensing program; and

(4) any additional information that the Department deems relevant to a robust consideration of the issues related to licensing internationally trained physicians to practice medicine in Vermont.

(b) In preparing the report required by this section, the Department shall consult with other states that have implemented licensing programs for internationally trained physicians; the Windham County Branch of the NAACP; third-party credentialing services; the Vermont Medical Society; the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems; and other advocacy organizations, researchers, and other entities whose expertise is relevant to developing the report.

Sec. 2. 26 V.S.A. § 1391 is amended to read:

§ 1391. QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEDICAL LICENSURE

* * *

(g) Internationally trained physicians. The Board may issue:

(1) a provisional license to practice at a participating health care facility, as defined in section 1397 of this chapter, to an internationally trained physician who meets the requirements for provisional licensure established by the Board by rule pursuant to section 1396 of this chapter; and

(2) a full license to an internationally trained physician who has successfully completed the pathway to licensure established by the Board by rule pursuant to section 1396 of this chapter.

Sec. 3. 26 V.S.A. § 1396 is added to read:

§ 1396. PATHWAY TO LICENSURE FOR INTERNATIONALLY
TRAINED PHYSICIANS; RULEMAKING

Pursuant to the authority of the Commissioner in subsection 1351(e) of this chapter, the Board shall adopt rules in accordance with 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 as needed to enable the licensure of internationally trained physicians as set forth in subsection 1391(g) of this chapter. The rules adopted by the Board shall reflect the least restrictive form of regulation necessary to protect the public interest and shall include:

(1) the qualifications necessary for an internationally trained physician to obtain a provisional license to practice at a participating health care facility, as defined in section 1397 of this chapter;

(2) the standards for participating health care facilities to use for the evaluation and assessment of the holder of a provisional license; and

(3) the additional qualifications necessary for an internationally trained physician to obtain a full license to practice medicine in this State following successful completion of the provisional licensure period.

Sec. 4. 26 V.S.A. § 1397 is added to read:

§ 1397. PARTICIPATING HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Health care facility” means a hospital, federally qualified health center, or community health center.

(2) “Participating health care facility” means a health care facility that meets the requirements of this section and has the capacity to provide an assessment and evaluation program designed in accordance with rules adopted by the Board pursuant to section 1396 of this chapter to evaluate an internationally trained physician holding a provisional license issued pursuant to subdivision 1391(g)(1) of this chapter.

(b) In order to be eligible to be a participating health care facility for purposes of subdivision 1391(g)(1) and section 1396 of this chapter, a health care facility shall:

(1) agree to provide medical mentoring, evaluation, assessment, and support in navigating the U.S. health care system by one or more fully licensed physicians employed by the health care facility to a provisionally licensed physician using an evaluation and assessment system that meets the standards established by the Board by rule pursuant to section 1396 of this chapter;

(2) ensure that the mentoring, evaluation, assessment, and support of a provisionally licensed physician is provided by one or more physicians who are licensed under 26 V.S.A. chapter 33 or this chapter and who are physically located in Vermont and that the provisionally licensed physician provides services only to patients physically located in Vermont;

(3) carry medical malpractice insurance covering the provisionally licensed physician for the duration of that physician's employment by the participating health care facility; and

(4) not retaliate against or discipline a provisionally licensed physician for making a complaint or pursuing enforcement of an employment-related claim.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 1 (pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians; report) and this section shall take effect on passage.

(b) Sec. 3 (26 V.S.A. § 1396; pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians; rulemaking) shall take effect on July 1, 2027.

(c) Secs. 2 (26 V.S.A. § 1391; qualifications for medical licensure) and 4 (26 V.S.A. § 1397; participating health care facilities) shall take effect on July 1, 2028.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to a pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians”

(Committee vote: 11-0-0)

Rep. Branagan of Georgia, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Health Care.

(Committee Vote: 10-0-1)

S. 227

An act relating to creating immigration protocols in Vermont schools

Rep. Brady of Williston, for the Committee on Education, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is to secure the right of every child to equal access to a free public education and to a school that is safe from intimidation and fear, regardless of immigration status. In order to ensure the right to

educational equality, schools must take steps to protect the integrity of school learning environments for all children, so that no parent is discouraged from sending a child to, and no child is discouraged from attending, school, including due to the threat of immigration enforcement on a school campus.

Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. chapter 33 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 33. FIRE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS
AND, SAFETY PATROLS, AND IMMIGRATION PROTOCOLS

* * *

§ 1486. IMMIGRATION PROTOCOLS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1)(A) “Law enforcement officer” has the same meaning as in 20 V.S.A. § 2351a and includes any officer of a federal law enforcement agency or any person acting on behalf of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.

(B) “Law enforcement officer” does not include a school resource officer or safety officer who is stationed at a school.

(2) “Nonpublic area of a school” means an area of a school that normally requires authorization to enter, consistent with the policy required by section 1484 of this chapter, and includes any area a superintendent or head of school or designee determines to be nonpublic.

(3) “School” means a public school or an independent school approved under section 166 of this title.

(b) Immigration resources and support.

(1) A superintendent or head of school shall:

(A) distribute the immigration resource guide developed by the Office of the Attorney General pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection (b) to staff, students, and family members of students;

(B) at each school the superintendent or head of school oversees, designate at least one individual to serve as a resource for immigration-related matters who shall receive on an ongoing basis updated information and training material as provided to the superintendent or head of school by the Office of the Attorney General; and

(C) provide support, to the greatest extent possible, to a student with regard to immigration-related concerns, including connecting the student and the student’s family with an immigration advocacy institution and similar resources.

(2)(A) The Office of the Attorney General, in consultation with the Agency of Education, shall develop an immigration resource guide that shall:

(i) include immigration- and civil rights-related resources; information regarding standby guardianships pursuant to 14 V.S.A § 2626a; and a list of immigration, human rights, and relevant advocacy organizations available to provide immigration assistance to students and staff; and

(ii) be developed in a manner that serves to protect the privacy and safety of students and staff.

(B) The Office of the Attorney General shall review the guide at least once annually and send any updates made to the guide to the Agency of Education for distribution to all superintendents and heads of schools not later than 30 days after completing the update.

(c) Student information privacy. School districts and independent schools are prohibited from:

(1) collecting or requesting information regarding citizenship or immigration status of a student or of a family member of the student except as required by State or federal law or as required to administer a State- or federally supported educational program;

(2) disclosing a student's immigration status, citizenship, place of birth, nationality, or national origin:

(A) in any database that the school maintains; or

(B) as directory information, as that term is defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 C.F.R. Part 99; and

(3) voluntarily sharing student information, including immigration status, citizenship, place of birth, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, status as a survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault, status as a recipient of public assistance, or school discipline records, with a third party unless required to do so by State or federal law.

(d) Law enforcement on-site and requests for information.

(1) A superintendent or head of school shall:

(A) subject to subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1), be the sole authority to admit a law enforcement officer who appears on an immigration-related matter into a nonpublic area of school; and

(B) designate at least one individual who works at each school to serve as a designee of the superintendent or head of school in the event that the

superintendent or head of school is not present when the law enforcement officer appears on-site.

(2) The superintendent or head of school or designee shall not allow a law enforcement officer appearing on an immigration-related matter into a nonpublic area of a school unless the officer provides official identification and a judicial warrant that authorizes entrance into a specific area of the school and names a specific individual located within the school who is subject to a search or arrest.

(3) Absent a judicial warrant pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, no school or individual working at a school shall reveal any information about a student or school staff member in response to an immigration-related request from a law enforcement officer unless otherwise required by law.

(4) As used in this subsection, “immigration-related matter” and “immigration-related request” mean an administrative warrant, civil warrant, immigration detainer, or any other document or request that pertains to an individual’s immigration or citizenship status.

(e) Immigration agreements.

(1) Except as required by State or federal law, no school, school district, or supervisory union shall enter into an agreement with a State, local, or federal government entity that furthers the enforcement of any immigration law.

(2)(A) Any proposed agreement pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (e) that purports to be required by State or federal law shall be subject to review by the superintendent or head of school after the superintendent or head of school has consulted with the Office of the Attorney General.

(B) The superintendent or head of school shall provide a recommendation on the proposed agreement to the school’s appropriate governing body after the superintendent’s or head of school’s review pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2).

(f) Applicability. Nothing in this section is intended to prohibit or impede any public agency from complying with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373 and 1644. To the extent any school, school district, or supervisory union policy or practice conflicts with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373 and 1644, the policy or practice is, to the extent of such conflict, abolished.

(g) Policy required.

(1) Model policy and recommended procedures. On or before January 1, 2027, the Agency of Education, in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General, the Vermont Independent Schools Association, and the Vermont School Boards Association, shall develop, and review at least annually, a model policy along with recommended procedures that reflect the requirements set forth in subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

(2) Adoption of policy and procedures.

(A) Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, each school board shall develop, adopt, ensure the enforcement of, and make available in the manner described under subdivision 563(1) of this title an immigration protocol policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed by the Agency. Any school board that fails to adopt a policy shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model policy published by the Agency.

(B) Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, each independent school shall develop, adopt, and ensure the enforcement of an immigration protocol policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed by the Agency. Any approved independent school that fails to adopt a policy shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model policy published by the Agency.

Sec. 3. IMMIGRATION RESOURCE GUIDE

The Office of the Attorney General shall complete the immigration resource guide required pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1486(b)(2) on or before August 1, 2026, and shall send the completed guide to the Agency of Education for distribution to all superintendents and heads of schools on or before August 31, 2026.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 11-0-0)

S. 230

An act relating to fair employment practices

Rep. Bartley of Fairfax, for the Committee on General and Housing, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 21 V.S.A. § 471 is amended to read:

§ 471. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(5) “Employee” means a person who, in consideration of direct or indirect gain or profit, has been continuously employed by the same employer for a period of one year for an average of at least 30 hours per week or meets the service requirement set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 825.801 (airline flight crew employees) or 29 C.F.R. § 825.110(c)(3) (full-time teachers, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 825.102, of an elementary or secondary school system or institution of higher education).

* * *

Sec. 2. 21 V.S.A. § 495d is amended to read:

§ 495d. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(15) “Crime victim” means any of the following:

(A) a person who has obtained a relief from abuse order issued under 15 V.S.A. § 1103;

(B) a person who has obtained an order against stalking or sexual assault issued under 12 V.S.A. chapter 178;

(C) a person who has obtained an order against abuse of a vulnerable adult issued under 33 V.S.A. chapter 69; ~~or~~

(D)(i) a victim as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301, provided that the victim is identified as a crime victim in an affidavit filed by a law enforcement official with a prosecuting attorney of competent state or federal jurisdiction; and

(ii) shall include the victim’s child, foster child, parent, spouse, stepchild or ward of the victim who lives with the victim, or a parent of the victim’s spouse, provided that the individual is not identified in the affidavit as the defendant; or

(E) a person who is a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking and who has supporting documentation from any one of the following sources:

- (i) a court or law enforcement or other government agency;
- (ii) a domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking assistance program;
- (iii) a legal, clerical, medical, or other professional from whom the person has received counseling or other assistance concerning domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or
- (iv) a self-attestation by the person describing the circumstances supporting the person's status as a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking for which no further corroboration shall be required unless otherwise mandated by law.

* * *

(18) "Domestic violence" has the same meaning as in 15 V.S.A. § 1151 and includes the definition of "abuse" in 15 V.S.A. § 1101.

(19) "Sexual assault" has the same meaning as in 12 V.S.A. § 5131.

(20) "Stalking" has the same meaning as in 12 V.S.A. § 5131.

Sec. 3. 21 V.S.A. § 495g is amended to read:

§ 495g. ~~PROVISION APPLICABLE TO COLLEGE PROFESSORS~~

~~Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prohibit any institution of higher education as defined by section 1201(a) of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965 from retiring any employee who is serving under a contract of unlimited tenure, who attains 70 years of age. Any employee whose tenure contract is terminated may, in the discretion of the institution, be allowed to continue in the employ of the institution on a nontenured basis. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. 3a. 21 V.S.A. § 383 is amended to read:

§ 383. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Labor or designee.

(2) "Employee" means any individual employed or permitted to work by an employer except:

* * *

(H) outside salespersons; ~~and~~

(I) students working during all or any part of the school year or regular vacation periods; and

(J) elected and appointed municipal officers.

* * *

Sec. 3b. 21 V.S.A. § 495q is added to read:

§ 495q. AGREEMENTS NOT TO COMPETE; PROHIBITION

(a) Nonexempt employees. Agreements not to compete between an employer and a nonexempt employee, per the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 201–219, are prohibited as presumptively coercive and a restraint on trade, unless bargained for as part of a collective bargaining agreement.

(b) Health care providers.

(1) Any provision in a contract or agreement that creates or establishes the terms of a partnership, employment, or any other form of professional relationship with a health care provider regarding the health care provider's provision of health care services in Vermont shall be void and unenforceable if the provision:

(A) includes a restriction on the right of the health care provider to provide health care services in any geographical area for any period of time after the termination of such partnership, agreement, or professional relationship;

(B) limits the ability of a separating health care provider to provide notice of the provider's change of employment to individuals to whom the separating provider provided direct health care services;

(C) restricts a health care provider from making disparaging statements about another party to the contract or agreement, or about another person specified in the agreement as a third-party beneficiary of the agreement;

(D) is inconsistent with Vermont law; or

(E) requires litigation arising from the performance of the contract or agreement in Vermont to be conducted in another state.

(2) The notice provided in subdivision (1)(B) of this subsection may include the following information:

(A) that the health care provider is continuing to practice the provider's profession;

(B) the health care provider's new professional contact information;
and

(C) the recipient's right to choose a health care provider.

(3) The provisions in subdivision (1) of this subsection do not apply to restrictions that limit a health care provider who contracts with a third-party company for nonclinical business support services from opening a business within a specific territory supported by a different third-party company providing nonclinical services.

(c) Retaliation and remedies. An employer shall not discharge or in any other manner retaliate against an employee who exercises or attempts to exercise the employee's rights under this section. The provisions against retaliation in subdivision 495(a)(8) of this subchapter and the penalty provisions of section 495b of this subchapter shall apply to this section.

(d) Effective date. This section shall apply to agreements not to compete entered into on or after July 1, 2026.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(Committee vote: 11-0-0)

S. 298

An act relating to creating the Vermont Voting Rights Act

Rep. Waters Evans of Charlotte, for the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Voter Protections Act * * *

Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE

This act may be cited as the "Voter Protections Act of 2026."

Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. chapter 35 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 35. OFFENSES AGAINST THE PURITY OF ELECTIONS

* * *

Subchapter 2. Penalties Upon Voters

* * *

§ 1972. ~~SHOWING BALLOT; INTERFERENCE WITH VOTER~~

(a) A voter who, except in cases of assistance as provided in this title, allows ~~his or her~~ the voter's ballot to be seen by another person with an apparent intention of letting it be known how ~~he or she~~ the voter is about to vote or makes a false statement to the presiding officer at an election as to ~~his~~

~~or her the voter's inability to mark his or her the voter's ballot or places a distinguishing mark on his or her the voter's ballot or a person who interferes with a voter when inside the guard rail or who, within the building in which the voting is proceeding, endeavors to induce a voter to vote for a particular candidate, shall be fined \$1,000.00.~~

~~(b) It shall be the duty of the election officers to see that the offender is duly prosecuted for a violation of this section.~~

* * *

§ 1975. INTERFERENCE WITH VOTERS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

(a) No person shall intentionally or recklessly intimidate, threaten, or coerce, or attempt to intimidate, threaten, or coerce:

(1) any other person for the purpose of:

(A) obstructing the right of the other person to vote or to vote as the other person may choose; or

(B) causing the other person to vote for, or not to vote for, any candidate for public office or public question at any election; or

(2) a public servant, an election official, or a public employee for the purpose of obstructing the administration of an election.

(b) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section shall be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than \$2,000.00, or both.

§ 1976. IMPAIRMENT OF VOTING RIGHTS OF REGISTERED VOTERS

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to deny, impair, or otherwise adversely affect the right to vote of any registered voter.

* * *

Subchapter 4. Use of Synthetic Media in Elections

* * *

Subchapter 5. Enforcement and Investigation

* * *

Subchapter 6. Voter Protections

§ 2045. VOTE DENIAL OR DILUTION

(a) No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by the State or any municipality in a manner that results in a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the

United States to vote based on race or color, membership in a language minority group, or having a disability as defined in 9 V.S.A. § 4501.

(b) A violation of subsection (a) of this section is established if, on the basis of the totality of circumstances, it is shown that the political processes leading to nomination or election in the State or a municipality are not equally open to participation by members of a protected class in that its members have less opportunity than other members of the electorate to participate in the political processes or to elect representatives of their choice. The extent to which members of a protected class have been elected to office in the State or municipality is one circumstance that may be considered.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to establish a right to have members of a protected class elected in numbers equal to their proportion in the population.

(d) As used in this section:

(1) “Municipality” means a town, city, village, school district, or other political subdivision that holds public elections.

(2) “Protected class” means a group of citizens protected from discrimination based on race or color, membership in a language minority group, or having a disability as defined in 9 V.S.A. § 4501.

§ 2046. CIVIL ACTIONS BY ATTORNEY GENERAL

(a) Whenever the Attorney General has reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this subchapter has occurred and that the rights of any voter or group of voters have been affected by such violation, the Attorney General may initiate a civil action in the Civil Division of the Superior Court in the county in which the alleged violation has occurred for appropriate relief.

(b) In such civil action, the court may:

(1) award such preventive relief, including a permanent or temporary injunction, restraining order, or other order against the person responsible for a violation of this title, as is necessary to ensure the full enjoyment of the rights granted by this title;

(2) assess a civil penalty against the respondent of not more than \$5,000.00 for a first violation and of not more than \$25,000.00 for any subsequent violation; and

(3) issue an order requiring reimbursement to the State of Vermont for the reasonable value of its services and its expenses in investigating and prosecuting the action.

* * * Voter Checklists * * *

Sec. 3. 17 V.S.A. § 2154 is amended to read:

§ 2154. STATEWIDE VOTER CHECKLIST

* * *

(c)(1) Any person wishing to obtain a copy of all of the statewide voter checklist ~~must~~, a municipality's portion of the statewide voter checklist, or any other municipal voter checklist shall swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury pursuant to 13 V.S.A. chapter 65, that the person will not:

(A) use the checklist for commercial purposes; or

(B) knowingly disclose the checklist to any foreign government or to a federal agency or commission or to a person acting on behalf of a foreign government or of such a federal entity in circumvention of the prohibited purposes for using the checklist set forth in subdivision (b)(2) of this section.

(2) ~~The~~ In the case of the statewide voter checklist, the affirmation shall be filed with the Secretary of State. In the case of a municipality's portion of the statewide voter checklist or any other municipal voter checklist, the affirmation shall be filed with the municipal clerk.

* * *

* * * Disclosures for Candidates for State, Legislative, and
County Office * * *

Sec. 4. 17 V.S.A. § 2414 is amended to read:

§ 2414. CANDIDATES FOR STATE ~~AND~~, LEGISLATIVE, ~~AND~~
COUNTY OFFICE; DISCLOSURE FORM

* * *

(f)(1) The State Ethics Commission shall provide informational resources to candidates and answer candidates' questions regarding the requirements of this section, how to accurately complete and submit the disclosure form, and the penalties for failing to properly file the disclosure form pursuant to section 2415 of this title. The Commission shall make available on its web page the disclosure form, prepared responses to frequently asked questions, and any informational resources and materials that it deems necessary to adequately inform candidates of how to comply with the provisions of this section. Upon contact by a candidate, the Commission shall provide answers to the candidate's questions by email or by phone, whichever the candidate may prefer.

(2) The Office of the Secretary of State shall provide hyperlinks from its web page connecting to the disclosure form and other materials and resources required of the State Ethics Commission pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

Sec. 5. SUSPENSION OF DISCLOSURE PENALTIES FOR
CANDIDATES FOR STATE, LEGISLATIVE, AND COUNTY
OFFICE

Notwithstanding 17 V.S.A. § 2415, through May 30, 2027, the State Ethics Commission shall not enforce against any delinquent filers, nor shall the Office of the Secretary of State notify the State Ethics Commission of the names of delinquent filers, nor shall the candidates for State office, county office, State Senator, and State Representative be otherwise penalized for delinquent filing a disclosure.

* * * Safety Protections for Candidates * * *

Sec. 6. 17 V.S.A. § 2901 is amended to read:

§ 2901. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(7) “Expenditure” means a payment, disbursement, distribution, advance, deposit, loan, or gift of money or anything of value, paid or promised to be paid, for the purpose of influencing an election, advocating a position on a public question, or supporting or opposing one or more candidates.

(A) Expenditures may include those expenses that are necessary to allow a candidate to campaign, such as expenses for the care of a dependent family member that are incurred as a direct result of campaign activity or for the provision of monitoring systems, protective detail, and cybersecurity related to a candidate’s security.

* * *

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to voter protections”

(Committee vote: 10-0-1)

Favorable

H. 902

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre

Rep. Pinsonault of Dorset, for the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, recommends that the bill ought to pass.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

Rep. Waszazak of Barre City, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends that the bill ought to pass.

(Committee Vote: 10-0-1)

Action Under Rule 52

J.R.H. 10

Joint resolution authorizing the 2026 Green Mountain Girls State educational program to use the State House

(For text, see House Journal of April 28, 2026)

NOTICE CALENDAR

Favorable with Amendment

S. 223

An act relating to water quality of the waters of Vermont

Rep. Hoyt of Hartford, for the Committee on Environment, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. WATER QUALITY, LAKE CLASSIFICATION, AND

ANTIDegradation STUDY GROUP; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created the Water Quality, Lake Classification, and Antidegradation Study Group, which shall conduct the evaluations set forth in subsection (c) of this section, including the review of existing classified waters of the State and candidate waters with water quality data supporting reclassification, assessment of antidegradation requirements, examination of the regulatory framework for Class A waters, and examination of the adequacy of the current water classification system for lakes and ponds. Based on these evaluations, the Study Group shall recommend to the General Assembly

legislative or policy changes to strengthen environmental protection, provide regulatory certainty, and support public uses of State waters.

(b) Membership. The Study Group shall be composed of the following members:

(1) two current members of the House of Representatives, not all from the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) two current members of the Senate, not all from the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;

(4) a Department of Environmental Conservation water quality scientist or technical staff member, appointed by the Secretary of Natural Resources;

(5) two persons representing businesses, industries, or development that interact with water quality permitting, including the State antidegradation policy, use of high quality waters, and water classification, one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(6) two persons representing nonprofit environmental advocacy groups, one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(7) one person representing the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds, appointed by the Governor; and

(8) one person representing the Green Mountain Water Environment Association, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

(c) Powers and duties. The Study Group shall:

(1) Develop an inventory of the waters of the State, with the existing classification designations, as set forth in the Vermont Water Quality Standards, including candidate high quality waters with water quality data that meets or exceeds the minimum criteria supporting reclassification for such waters.

(2) Assess the State's obligations under the federal Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1251–1388, as enacted as of January 1, 2026, with respect to the adoption of an antidegradation rule to implement the State's antidegradation policy under the Vermont Water Quality Standards, including an evaluation of State and federal statutory and regulatory requirements and the identification of any legal, administrative, policy, or practical barriers to full compliance.

(3) Identify and evaluate the statutory and regulatory frameworks, rules, policies, and procedures governing Class A waters, including whether modifications are needed to facilitate the reclassification of eligible waters, adequately protect and support designated and existing uses, and provide regulatory certainty for activities in Class A waters.

(4) Evaluate whether the existing water classification system in the State and related statutory and regulatory frameworks protect the ecological integrity of the State's lakes and ponds, adequately address current and potential threats to the water quality of the State's lakes and ponds, and provide regulatory certainty.

(5) Recommend legislative amendments and identify any rules, policies, or procedures that may require revision to implement the Study Group's recommendations.

(d) Assistance. The Study Group shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Natural Resources and shall have the legal and drafting assistance of the Office of Legislative Counsel.

(e) Report. On or before December 15, 2026, the Study Group shall submit a written report to the General Assembly that shall include its findings and recommendations under subsection (c) of this section.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Secretary of Natural Resources shall call the first meeting of the Study Group to occur on or before August 1, 2026.

(2) The Study Group shall select at its first meeting a chair from among the four legislators serving as members.

(3) A majority of the Study Group shall constitute a quorum.

(4) The Study Group shall cease to exist on February 15, 2027.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Study Group serving in the member's capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than eight meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Study Group shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.

§ 1010 for not more than eight meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

Sec. 2. CONTINGENCY OF FUNDING

Notwithstanding the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 23 and 32 V.S.A. § 1010 to the contrary, the required payment under Sec. 1(g) of this act of per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses to the legislative members and other members of the Water Quality, Lake Classification, and Antidegradation Study Group is contingent upon an appropriation of funds in fiscal year 2027 from the General Fund to the Vermont General Assembly for the specific purpose of compensation and reimbursement of the Study Group members.

Sec. 3. AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT ON ESTABLISHING A CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR WETLANDS PROFESSIONALS

(a)(1) On or before January 15, 2027, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall submit to the House Committee on Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy a report recommending whether to establish a program to certify wetlands professionals in the State for the purposes of identifying and delineating wetlands boundaries. The report shall:

(A) describe the benefits and disadvantages of a wetlands professional certification program, including whether it could accelerate wetlands permitting, reduce the amount of wetlands services available, increase the cost of wetlands services, or delay the permitting process; and

(B) discuss how a wetlands professional certification program could impact the liability of wetlands professionals, including whether certification requirements would subject wetlands professionals to increased risk of liability or increased liability insurance requirements.

(2) If the Secretary of Natural Resources recommends the establishment of a program to certify wetlands professionals in the State, the report shall include:

(A) a description of the proposed certification program;

(B) the proposed requirements for certification;

(C) a description of the activities that a wetlands professional would be authorized to conduct as part of or exclusively under a certification; and

(D) what benefit, if any, services from a certified wetlands professional would provide to customers or in regulatory proceedings.

(b) In developing the report required under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall consult with wetlands professionals who currently conduct wetlands delineations and other persons with knowledge of wetlands permitting and services provided by wetlands professionals.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 10-0-1)

Rep. Squirrell of Underhill, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommends that the report of the Committee on Environment be amended by striking out Sec. 2, contingency of funding, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

Sec. 2. [Deleted.]

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

S. 327

An act relating to economic development

Rep. Duke of Burlington, for the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. [Deleted.]

Sec. 2. [Deleted.]

Sec. 3. [Deleted.]

Sec. 4. [Deleted.]

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 6. [Deleted.]

* * * Business Resources and Growth Study * * *

Sec. 7. BUSINESS RESOURCES AND GROWTH; INVENTORY; STUDY;
REPORT

(a) Business growth and development study. The Commissioner of Economic Development, in consultation with the stakeholders set forth in subsection (b) of this section, for the purpose of determining how the State can better enable and support the growth of Vermont businesses, shall:

(1) clearly define each stage of business development in order to provide business leaders, investors, and the General Assembly with an understanding of the resources businesses need at each stage of development;

(2) identify the public and private resources available to businesses and determine how the resources are currently communicated to businesses;

(3) create an inventory of resources, pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, that are poised to serve businesses for each stage of development;

(4) determine how best to communicate the inventory of resources created pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection to Vermonters and the business community;

(5) determine how to better communicate succession planning options for businesses;

(6) identify what resources are available to businesses to access capital;

(7) determine the state of capital access opportunities, including the:

(A) investment environment in Vermont and the New England region;

(B) availability of tax credits to leverage private capital; and

(C) requirements to maintain Vermont's Tech Hub designation; and

(8) identify investor education opportunities for high net worth individuals interested in investing in Vermont businesses.

(b) Stakeholders. The Commissioner shall consult and convene with stakeholders to assist in the Commissioner's work pursuant to subsection (a) of this section that have relevant experience in business growth and access to capital, including representation from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Vermont Small Business Development Center, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, regional development corporations, regional planning commissions, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Vermont Professionals of Color Network, the Vermont Small Business Law Center, the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, the Vermont Employee Ownership Center, a regional community action agency, postsecondary institutions, and local and regional chambers of commerce.

(c) Report. On or before December 15, 2026, the Commissioner shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with the Commissioner's findings pursuant to the business resources and growth study set forth in this section along with any

recommendations for legislative action and a list of the stakeholders consulted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

* * * Convention Center Task Force * * *

Sec. 8. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 65, Sec. 3 is amended to read:

Sec. 3. TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT OF
CONVENTION CENTER AND PERFORMANCE VENUE

* * *

(b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

(1) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development or designee;

(4) the President of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce or designee;

(5) the Chief Executive Officer of the Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce or designee;

(6) the President of the Vermont Regional Development Corporations or designee; ~~and~~

(7) the Chair of the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies or designee; and

(8) the President of the University of Vermont or designee.

* * *

(e) Reports. On or before November 1, 2025, the Task Force shall submit an interim report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with an update on its work pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. On or before ~~November~~ December 1, 2026, the Task Force shall submit a final written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

(f) Meetings.

* * *

(4) The Task Force shall cease to exist on ~~December 1, 2026~~ July 1, 2027.

~~(5) The Task Force shall meet not more than six times.~~

(g) Reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Task Force serving in the member's capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than ~~six~~ 14 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Task Force shall be entitled to reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than ~~six~~ 14 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

* * *

* * * Repeal of VEGI Prospective Repeal * * *

Sec. 9. 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 157, Sec. H.12, as amended by 2022

Acts and Resolves No. 164, Sec. 5, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 72, Sec. 39, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 176, Sec. 1, is further amended to read:

Sec. H.12. ~~VEGI; REPEAL OF AUTHORITY TO AWARD INCENTIVES~~

~~Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Vermont Economic Progress Council shall not accept or approve an application for a Vermont Employment Growth Incentive under 32 V.S.A. chapter 105, subchapter 2 on or after January 1, 2027. [Repealed.]~~

* * * Study of Culinary and Hospitality Education * * *

Sec. 10a. CULINARY AND HOSPITALITY EDUCATION; STUDY;

REPORT

(a) Purpose and findings. The State of Vermont lost a significant contributor to its culinary and hospitality workforce pipeline when the New England Culinary Institute closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The General Assembly finds that the establishment of postsecondary educational programs in the fields of culinary arts and hospitality is critical for the long-term workforce needs in those sectors and for the economic health of the State.

(b) Task. The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, shall engage with the stakeholders set forth in subsection (c) of this section to determine how best to develop postsecondary educational programs in the fields of culinary arts and hospitality by:

- (1) investigating suitable locations that could host the programs;
- (2) researching and identifying possible educational and business models;
- (3) identifying organizations that could stand up, administer, or operate the programs;
- (4) gauging the interest from private investors to determine whether there is interest in private funding for the programs;
- (5) establishing relationships with culinary and hospitality businesses in Vermont that have or will have workforce needs;
- (6) cataloging opportunities currently available for culinary and hospitality training and certification;
- (7) determining whether there are gaps in the availability of culinary and hospitality training and certification programs; and
- (8) conducting any additional research or outreach that would promote the development of the programs.

(c) Stakeholders. The Department shall consult and convene with stakeholders to assist in its work pursuant to subsection (b) of this section that have relevant experience in the food and hospitality sectors, including representation from the State Workforce Development Board, Office of Workforce Strategy and Development, Vermont Association of Career and Technical Directors, Vermont Professionals of Color, Vermont Independent Restaurants, Vermont Specialty Foods Association, Vermont Lodging Association, University of Vermont, Vermont State Colleges System, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, Vermont Employee Ownership Center, and an institutional food and beverage provider.

(d) Report. On or before December 1, 2026, the Department shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with its findings and information gathered pursuant to subsection (b) of this section along with any recommendations concerning the development of postsecondary educational programs for culinary arts and hospitality. The report shall also list the stakeholders consulted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

* * * Culinary Apprenticeship Pilot Program * * *

Sec. 10b. HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY APPRENTICESHIP PILOT;
REPORT

(a) Creation and purpose; coordination.

(1) The Department of Labor, through the Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program, shall establish and maintain a two-year hospitality and culinary apprenticeship pilot that develops and evaluates a new registered apprenticeship training program specific to accommodation and food services. The pilot shall be structured as a regional, multi-employer model, with the goal of the program being to strengthen workforce pathways and improve job quality in the hospitality and culinary services, which have been identified as priority sectors by the State Workforce Development Board.

(2) The Department shall coordinate its work on the pilot with the Department of Tourism and Marketing, Department of Economic Development, Office of Workforce Strategy and Development, and Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

(b) Pilot details.

(1) The Department shall:

(A) implement the pilot in a hospitality-based regional economy and include multiple employers, including at least one large employer, located within the same regional economy;

(B) incorporate an intermediary or coordinating entity;

(C) include structured work-based learning across more than one employer;

(D) align with education and training providers, including secondary and adult career technical education programs;

(E) be structured to rely on existing resources, including the physical assets of schools, technical centers, and restaurants;

(F) be built around not more than two apprenticeable occupations, as that term is defined in 21 V.S.A. § 1111(4); and

(G) establish specific numeric targets and track outcomes including completion, retention, and wage progression.

(2) The pilot shall be designed to achieve, at minimum:

(A) participation of multiple employers;

(B) enrollment of at least one apprentice cohort; and

(C) measurable completion outcomes.

(c) Funding. The Department shall implement the pilot using existing State and federal funds to the extent practicable and may seek additional grants or funding as such funds become available.

(d) Report. The Department shall, based on its work on the hospitality and culinary apprenticeship pilot set forth in this section, submit to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs:

(1) on or before December 15, 2026, an interim written report on the progress of the pilot program that includes the design, participation, and preliminary results of the pilot; and

(2) on or before December 15, 2028, a final written report on the pilot program, including outcomes, evaluation of effectiveness, and recommendations for future legislative action.

Sec. 11. [Deleted.]

* * * Rural Industry Development Grant Program * * *

Sec. 12a. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. F.8 is amended to read:

Sec. F.8 RURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

~~(a) Creation; purpose.~~

~~(1) A Rural Industry Development Grant Program is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide grant funding through local development corporations for business relocation and expansion efforts, including the purchase, demolition, and renovation of property for industrial use.~~

~~(2)(A) To the extent funding is appropriated, the Agency shall make grants through the Program to assist local development corporations with business relocation and expansion efforts throughout Vermont.~~

~~(B) The Agency shall ensure an accounting of the respective State and Grantee shares of investment in any property be maintained to refund to the State an appropriate share of any net proceeds resulting from future sale or transfer of such property acquired or improved through a grant awarded under this program.~~

~~(b) Grant considerations. In making grant awards, the Agency shall consider:~~

~~(1) the real estate needs of growing and relocating businesses, including nonprofit organizations, in the applicant's region;~~

~~(2) the ability of the proposed project to meet the site-specific needs of businesses considering whether to expand or locate in this State;~~

~~(3) the funding that the applicant has identified, or secured, to leverage a grant award; and~~

~~(4) the readiness of an applicant to move a project forward.~~

~~(c) Eligible applicants; priority.~~

~~(1) To be eligible for a grant, an applicant must be a local development corporation, as defined in subdivision 212(10) of this title, located within this State.~~

~~(2) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development may designate projects and agreements as first priority based on rural communities that continue to experience insufficient economic and grand list growth.~~

~~(d) Eligible activities. A grant recipient may use funding for the following:~~

~~(1) to purchase land for potential industrial use;~~

~~(2) for the costs of site development, permitting, or providing infrastructure for property the recipient owns;~~

~~(3) for the equity investment required for a loan transaction through the Vermont Economic Development Authority under 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, subchapter 3; or~~

~~(4) for the matching requirement of another State or federal grant consistent with this section.~~

~~(e) Application; market assessment.~~

~~(1) An applicant shall include in its application a local and regional market assessment that demonstrates reasonable need for the proposed development and identifies imminent, potential, or existing business growth opportunities.~~

~~(2) An applicant shall submit the following to demonstrate a readiness to begin and complete the proposed project:~~

~~(A) community and regional support for the project;~~

~~(B) that grant funding is needed to complete the proposed project;~~

~~(C) an ability to manage the project, with requisite experience and a plan for fiscal viability; and~~

~~(D) a description of the permitting required to proceed with the project and a plan for obtaining the permits.~~

~~(f) Awards; amount.~~

~~(1) An award shall not exceed the lesser of \$1,000,000 or 20 percent of the total project cost.~~

~~(2) A recipient may combine grant funds with funding from other sources.~~

~~(3) The Agency shall release grant funds upon determining that the applicant has met all application conditions and requirements.~~

~~(4) A grant recipient may apply for additional grant funds if future amounts are appropriated for the Program and the funds are for a separate but eligible use.~~

~~(g) Deed restrictions; property sales. The Agency shall include deed restrictions that require the return of the principal amount to the state and may require the payment of a percentage of the sales profit. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. 12b. 10 V.S.A. § 6 is added to read:

§ 6. RURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Creation; purpose.

(1) The Rural Industry Development Grant Program is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide grant funding through local development corporations for the purpose of business relocation and expansion activities set forth in subsection (d) of this section.

(2) To the extent funding is appropriated, the Agency shall make grants through the Program fund to assist local development corporations with business relocation and expansion efforts throughout Vermont.

(3) As used in this section, “federally impacted property” means real property that is:

(A) owned by the United States or by any federal agency or an instrumentality thereof; or

(B) under the custody or control of a federally appointed receiver, trustee, or conservator, and includes property subject to federal court jurisdiction.

(b) Grant considerations. In making grant awards, the Agency shall consider:

(1) the real estate needs of growing and relocating businesses, including nonprofit organizations, in the applicant's region;

(2) the ability of the proposed project to meet the site-specific needs of businesses considering whether to expand or locate in this State;

(3) the funding that the applicant has identified, or secured, to leverage a grant award; and

(4) the readiness of an applicant to move a project forward.

(c) Eligible applicants; priority.

(1) To be eligible for a grant, an applicant must be a local development corporation, as defined in subdivision 212(10) of this title, located within this State.

(2) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development may designate projects and agreements as first priority based on rural communities that continue to experience insufficient economic and grand list growth.

(d) Eligible activities. A grant recipient shall use any funding provided through this section only for the following:

(1) to purchase real property for potential industrial, commercial, or, in the case of a federally impacted property, residential use;

(2) for the costs of site development, permitting, or providing infrastructure for property the recipient owns;

(3) for a project that supports future commercial or industrial development as outlined in a development agreement;

(4) for the equity investment required for a loan transaction through the Vermont Economic Development Authority under 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, subchapter 3;

(5) for the matching requirement of another State or federal grant consistent with this section; or

(6) for the purchasing, holding, and renovation of property for the repurposing or redevelopment of a federally impacted property.

(e) Application; market assessment.

(1) An applicant shall include in its application a local and regional market assessment that demonstrates reasonable need for the proposed development and identifies imminent, potential, or existing business growth opportunities.

(2) An applicant shall submit the following to demonstrate a readiness to begin and complete the proposed project:

(A) community and regional support for the project;

(B) that grant funding is needed to complete the proposed project;

(C) an ability to manage the project, with requisite experience and a plan for fiscal viability; and

(D) a description of the permitting required to proceed with the project and a plan for obtaining the permits.

(f) Awards; amount.

(1)(A) An award shall not exceed the lesser of \$1,000,000.00 or 50 percent of the total project cost, subject to the exception in subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1).

(B) An award may exceed \$1,000,000.00 but shall not exceed \$2,000,000.00 if the property is classified as a federally impacted property and the Secretary certifies that the project is located in:

(i) a designated downtown development district; and

(ii) a rural economic area partnership program (REAP Zone); or

(iii) a federally declared natural disaster area, provided the declaration was made not more than five years from the application date.

(2) A recipient may combine grant funds with funding from other sources.

(3) The Agency shall release grant funds upon determining that the applicant has met all application conditions and requirements.

(4) A grant recipient may apply for additional grant funds if future amounts are appropriated for the Program and the funds are for a separate but eligible use.

(g) Deed restrictions. Any deed restriction requiring a Rural Industry Development Grant Program award recipient to return to the State the principal amount of the grant or a percentage of the sales profit is void and shall not be enforced.

(h) Retroactive project cost. An applicant that received a Rural Industry Development Grant Program award before the effective date of this act shall:

(1) be eligible to have the applicant's invoices that are submitted on or after the effective date of this act to the Agency reimbursed at 50 percent of the total project cost, pursuant to subdivision (f)(1)(A) of this section; and

(2) not be eligible for an increased award amount.

* * * Nickel Rounding * * *

Sec. 13a. PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is to authorize the rounding of cash transactions to the nearest five cents where one-cent coins are unavailable or impractical, while ensuring legal clarity and consumer fairness.

Sec. 13b. 9 V.S.A. chapter 1 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 1. MONEY OF ACCOUNT

§ 1. DOLLAR, CENT, AND MILL

The money of account in the State shall be the dollar, cent, and mill; and accounts in public offices and proceedings in court shall be in conformity herewith; but this section shall not affect an account, charge, or entry originally made or a contract expressed in other money of account, but the same shall be reduced to dollars and parts of a dollar in an action thereon.

§ 2. NICKEL ROUNDING; AUTHORIZED

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Cash" means coins or paper currency of the United States offered in physical form.

(2) "Cash transaction" means a sale of goods or services where payment is made entirely or partially in cash.

(3) "Rounding" means adjusting the final total amount due, after taxes and fees, to the nearest five-cent increment.

(b) Rounding authorization.

(1) A person or business engaged in a cash transaction may round the final amount due to the nearest \$0.05 as follows:

(A) If the final digit of the amount due is \$0.01, \$0.02, \$0.06, or \$0.07, rounded down to the nearest amount divisible by five.

(B) If the final digit of the amount due is \$0.03, \$0.04, \$0.08, or \$0.09, rounded up to the nearest amount divisible by five.

(2) If a person or business rounds a cash transaction under this section, any cash refund of the amount paid shall be issued to the purchaser in the exact amount initially paid for the goods or service.

(c) Exclusions. This section shall not apply to:

- (1) electronic and other noncash payments;
- (2) payment of wages as that term is defined in 21 V.S.A. § 341;
- (3) rebates or cash disbursements; and
- (4) transactions governed by federal law that prohibits rounding.

(d) Application. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, rounding under this section shall not constitute an unlawful price increase, surcharge, unfair or deceptive act or practice in commerce, or discrimination.

(e) Notice requirements.

(1) On or before July 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Liquor and Lottery shall prepare and provide individuals and businesses with a model notice pursuant to this section that, at minimum, includes a reference to the Vermont Consumer Assistance Program. The notice provided by the Commissioner shall be available for free.

(2) A person or business rounding transactions under this section shall post the model notice developed pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(3) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets may issue a penalty for the failure to provide the notice required under this subsection in accordance with 6 V.S.A. § 687.

(f) Taxes and fees. All taxes and fees shall be calculated and remitted based on the prerounding amount.

* * * C-PACE Program * * *

Sec. 14a. 24 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 3 is added to read:

Subchapter 3. Commercial Property-Assessed Clean Energy

§ 3275. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY-ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY

DISTRICTS; APPROVAL OF LEGISLATIVE BODY

(a) The legislative body of a town, city, or incorporated village may vote to designate the municipality as a commercial property-assessed clean energy district or C-PACE district. In a district, only those property owners who have entered into written agreements with the municipality under section 3276 of this title would be subject to a special assessment, as set forth in section 3255 of this title.

(b) Upon a vote of approval by a majority of the legislative body of the municipality voting at a duly warned meeting, the municipality shall allow for the imposition of a special assessment to secure private financing for property owners of commercial or industrial buildings within the boundaries of the

municipality for renewable energy projects as defined in 30 V.S.A. § 8002(17), energy efficiency projects as defined by section 3267 of this title, water conservation projects, and resiliency improvement projects.

(c) As used in this subchapter:

(1) “Commercial or industrial building” means any building other than a residential dwelling with fewer than five units.

(2) “District” means a commercial property-assessed clean energy district which includes the entire municipality.

(3) “Resilience” means the ability of interconnected ecological, social, physical, and economic systems to anticipate, adapt, withstand, respond, and thrive in the face of current and future conditions and disasters.

(4) “Resiliency improvement” means improvements that increase the resilience of a property, including air quality and stormwater infrastructure improvements, snow and flood mitigation, energy storage and microgrids, alternative vehicle charging infrastructure, and fire and wind resistance.

(5) “Water conservation improvement” means measures, equipment, or devices that decrease the consumption of or demand for water, address safe drinking water, or eliminate lead from water used for drinking or cooking.

§ 3276. WRITTEN AGREEMENTS; CONSENT OF PROPERTY

OWNERS; ENERGY SAVINGS ANALYSIS; LENDER CONSENT

(a) Upon an affirmative vote made pursuant to section 3275 of this title and the performance of an analysis pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, an owner of a commercial or industrial building, within the boundaries of a district, may enter into a written agreement with the municipality that shall constitute the owner’s consent to be subject to a special assessment, as set forth in section 3255 of this title. Entry into such an agreement may occur only after January 1, 2027.

(b) Prior to entering into a written agreement, a property owner shall have an analysis performed that includes the following components:

(1) where energy or water usage improvements are proposed, an energy analysis by a licensed professional engineer or engineering firm stating that the proposed qualified improvements will result in either more efficient use or conservation of energy or water, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, or the addition of renewable sources of energy or water;

(2) where renewable energy is proposed, an engineering study showing that the improvements are feasible;

(3) where resiliency improvements are proposed, certification by a licensed professional engineer stating that the qualified improvements will result in improved resilience; or

(4) for new construction, certification by a licensed professional engineer or engineering firm stating that the proposed qualified improvements will enable the project to meet or exceed the energy efficiency or water efficiency or renewable energy or water usage requirements of the current building code and the Commercial Building Energy Standards established under 30 V.S.A. § 53.

(c) A written agreement shall provide that:

(1) The length of time allowed for the property owner to repay the assessment shall not exceed the life expectancy of the improvement. In instances where multiple improvements have been installed, the length of time shall not exceed the average lifetime of all improvements, weighted by cost.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law:

(A) A lien under this section:

(i) is a first and prior lien on the property, subordinate only to a lien for property taxes, from the date on which the notice of special assessment is recorded until the assessment, interest, or penalty is paid; and

(ii) runs with the land, and that portion of the assessment under the assessment contract that is not yet due shall not be accelerated or extinguished by foreclosure of a property tax lien or any other foreclosure.

(B) In the event of a foreclosure action, all payments on an assessment under this subchapter that are due and unpaid as of the date the action is filed, and all payments on the assessment that become due after that date and that accrue up to and including the date title to the property is transferred to the mortgage holder, the lienholder, or a third party in the foreclosure action shall be paid in order for title to transfer.

(3) A capital provider shall disclose to participating property owners each of the following:

(A) the risks associated with participating in the program, including risks related to the failure of participating property owners to make payments and the risk of foreclosure; and

(B) the provisions of subsection (h) of this section that pertain to prepayment of the assessment.

(d) The notice of an agreement shall include at least each of the following:

- (1) the name of the property owner as grantor;
 - (2) the name of the municipality as grantee;
 - (3) the date of the agreement;
 - (4) a legal description of the real property against which the assessment is made pursuant to the agreement;
 - (5) the amount of the assessment and the period during which the assessment will be made on the property;
 - (6) a statement that the assessment will remain a lien on the property until paid in full or released; and
 - (7) the location at which the original agreement may be examined.
- (e) Prior to entering into the written assessment contract, the property owner shall obtain and furnish to the municipality a written statement, executed by each holder of a mortgage or deed of trust on the property securing indebtedness, in their sole and absolute discretion, that consents to the assessment and indicates that the assessment does not constitute an event of default under the mortgage or deed of trust.
- (f) The combined amount of the assessment plus any outstanding mortgage obligations for the property shall not exceed 90 percent of the appraised real property value of that property, as stabilized or as complete.
- (g) With respect to an agreement under this section:
- (1) the assessments to be repaid under the agreement, when calculated as if they were the repayment of a loan, shall not violate 9 V.S.A. §§ 41a, 43, 44, and 46–50; and
 - (2) the maximum length of time for the owner to repay the assessment shall not exceed 30 years.
- (h) For projects under subchapter 2 of this chapter, there shall be no penalty or premium for prepayment of the outstanding balance of an assessment under this subchapter if the balance is prepaid in full. Projects under this subchapter 3 are not subject to these provisions, but shall be subject to the private agreement for the financing of improvements.
- (i) Property may be eligible for financing if otherwise qualified improvements were completed and operational not more than 36 months prior to submission of the application to the Program. Waivers to the 36-month requirement may be granted in the sole discretion of the program administrator.

§ 3277. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

(a) An entity that administers the commercial property-assessed clean energy program or C-PACE Program under this subchapter shall be referred to as a program administrator. A municipality, a public agency, or a private entity may serve as a program administrator.

(b) A municipality that has adopted a C-PACE district may:

(1) enter into a contract with an entity to serve as the program administrator and to administer the functions of the C-PACE Program for the municipality; or

(2) serve as the program administrator itself, to administer the functions of a C-PACE Program, including entering into C-PACE agreements with commercial property owners in its jurisdiction and collecting C-PACE assessments.

(c) An entity may:

(1) enter into a contract with a C-PACE municipality where the entity shall serve as the program administrator in the municipality; and

(2) collect fees necessary to administer the C-PACE Program.

(d) Other than the fulfillment of its obligations specified in a C-PACE agreement, neither the program administrator nor a municipality has any liability to a commercial property owner for or related to energy savings or resiliency improvements financed under a C-PACE Program.

Sec. 14b. 24 V.S.A. § 3263 is amended to read:

§ 3263. COSTS OF OPERATION OF DISTRICT

The owners of real property who have entered into written agreements with the municipality under section 3262 of this title shall be obligated to cover the costs of operating the district. A municipality may use other available funds to operate the district. A municipality may charge fees to cover the operation of the C-PACE Program under subchapter 3 of this chapter.

Sec. 14c. 24 V.S.A. § 3264 is amended to read:

§ 3264. RIGHTS OF PROPERTY OWNERS

A property owner who has entered into a written agreement with the municipality under section 3262 or section 3276 of this title may enter into a private agreement for the installation or construction of a project relating to renewable energy, as defined in 30 V.S.A. § 8002(17), relating to resiliency

improvements as defined in section 3275 of this title, or relating to energy efficiency as defined in section 3267 of this title.

Sec. 14d. 24 V.S.A. § 3265 is amended to read:

§ 3265. LIABILITY OF MUNICIPALITY

(a) A municipality that incurs indebtedness for or otherwise finances projects under this subchapter shall not be liable for the failure of performance of a project.

(b) A municipality that incurs indebtedness for bonding under this subchapter shall pledge the full faith and credit of the municipality.

(c) A municipality that enters into a written agreement with a property owner under subchapter 3 of this chapter shall not incur any indebtedness or otherwise finance projects under this chapter, nor shall be liable for the failure of the performance of a project, nor shall pledge the full faith and credit of the municipality.

Sec. 14e. 24 V.S.A. § 3268 is amended to read:

§ 3268. RELEASE OF LIEN

(a) A municipality shall release a participating property owner of the lien on the property against which the assessment under this subchapter or subchapter 3 of this chapter is made upon full payment of the value of the assessment.

(b) Notice of a release of a lien for an assessment under this subchapter or subchapter 3 of this chapter shall be filed with the clerk of the applicable municipality for recording in the land records of that municipality.

Sec. 14f. 24 V.S.A. § 3255 is amended to read:

§ 3255. COLLECTION OF ASSESSMENTS; LIENS

(a) Special assessments under this chapter shall constitute a lien on the property against which the assessment is made in the same manner and to the same extent as taxes assessed on the grand list of a municipality, and all procedures and remedies for the collection of taxes shall apply to special assessments.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a lien for an assessment under subchapter 2 of this chapter shall be subordinate to all liens on the property in existence at the time the lien for the assessment is filed ~~on~~ in the land records, shall be subordinate to a first mortgage on the property recorded after such filing, and shall be superior to any other lien on the property recorded after such filing. In no way shall this subsection affect the status or

priority of any municipal lien other than a lien for an assessment under subchapter 2 of this chapter. A lien for an assessment under subchapter 3 of this chapter shall be exempt from the provisions of this section and, upon receipt of consent from lenders, pursuant to subsection 3276(e) of this title, shall not be subordinate to all liens on the property in existence at the time the lien for the assessment is filed in the land records.

Sec. 14g. 9 V.S.A. § 46 is amended to read:

§ 46. EXCEPTIONS

Section 43 of this title, relating to deposit requirements, and section 45 of this title, relating to prepayment penalties, shall not apply and the parties may contract for a rate of interest in excess of the rate provided in section 41a of this title in the case of:

(1) obligations of corporations, including municipal and nonprofit corporations; ~~or~~

(2) obligations incurred by any person, partnership, association, or other entity to finance in whole or in part income-producing business or activity, but not including obligations incurred to finance family dwellings of four units or fewer when used as a residence by the borrower or to finance real estate that is devoted to agricultural purposes as part of an operating farming unit when used as a residence by the borrower; ~~or~~

(3) obligations to finance the purchase, construction, or improvement of property for seasonal or part-time occupancy and not as a place of legal residence; ~~or~~

(4) obligations guaranteed or insured by the United States of America or any agency thereof; or

(5) obligations incurred for commercial property-assessed clean energy projects pursuant to 24 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 3.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 11-0-0)

Rep. Kimbell of Woodstock, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommends that the report of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development be amended as follows:

First: By adding a new reader assistance heading and a new section to be Sec. 9a to read as follows:

* * * VEGI Annual Cap * * *

Sec. 9a. 32 V.S.A. § 3342 is amended to read:

§ 3342. ANNUAL PROGRAM CAP

(a) In each calendar year the Vermont Economic Progress Council may approve one or more incentives under this subchapter, the total value of which shall not exceed:

(1) ~~\$15,000,000.00~~ \$10,000,000.00 for one or more initial approvals;
and

(2) ~~\$10,000,000.00~~ \$5,000,000.00 for one or more final approvals.

(b) The Council may increase the cap imposed in subdivision (a)(2) of this section by not more than \$5,000,000.00 upon application by the Governor to, and approval of, the Joint Fiscal Committee.

(c) In evaluating the Governor's request, the Committee shall consider the economic and fiscal condition of the State, including recent revenue forecasts and budget projections.

(d) The Council shall provide the Committee with testimony, documentation, company-specific data, and any other information the Committee requests to demonstrate that increasing the cap will create an opportunity for return on investment to the State.

Second: In Sec. 12b, 10 V.S.A. § 6, by striking out subsection (h) in its entirety.

Third: By adding a new section to be Sec. 12c to read as follows:

Sec. 12c. INTENT AND RETROACTIVITY

The intent of Secs. 12a and 12b of this act is to move the Rural Industry Development Grant Program from its original placement in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. F.8 to Title 10 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated. The move is intended to increase the visibility of the Program. Any person that was awarded a grant through the Program before the effective date of this act shall:

(1) not have its award rescinded solely due to the Program language being moved to Title 10;

(2) if the award has not been fully paid out, be eligible to have the applicant's invoices that are submitted on or after the effective date of this act to the Agency reimbursed at a rate of 50 percent; and

(3) not be eligible for an increased total award amount.

Fourth: In Sec. 13a, purpose, by striking out "The purpose of this act" and inserting in lieu thereof "The purpose of Sec. 13b of this act"

Fifth: In Sec. 13b, 9 V.S.A. chapter 1, in section 2, by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) Rounding authorization.

(1) A person engaged in a cash transaction may round the final amount due to the nearest \$0.05 as follows:

(A) If the final digit of the amount due is \$0.01, \$0.02, \$0.06, or \$0.07, rounded down to the nearest amount divisible by five.

(B) If the final digit of the amount due is \$0.03, \$0.04, \$0.08, or \$0.09, rounded up to the nearest amount divisible by five.

(2) If a person rounds a cash transaction under this section, any cash refund of the amount paid shall be issued to the purchaser in the exact amount initially paid for the goods or service.

Sixth: In Sec. 13b, 9 V.S.A. chapter 1, in section 2, by striking out subsection (e) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (e) to read as follows:

(e) Notice requirements.

(1) On or before July 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Liquor and Lottery shall prepare and provide individuals and businesses with a model notice pursuant to this section that shall also include a reference to the Vermont Consumer Assistance Program.

(2) A person rounding transactions under this section shall post the model notice developed pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection in a clear and conspicuous manner at the point of sale or at the entrance to the business.

(3) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets may issue a penalty for the failure to provide the notice required under this subsection in accordance with 6 V.S.A. § 687.

Seventh: In Sec. 14a, 24 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 3, in section 3276, in subsection (a), by striking out the last sentence.

Eighth: In Sec. 14a, 24 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 3, in section 3276, by adding a new subsection to be subsection (j) to read as follows:

(j) This section shall not be construed to affect a taxpayer's liability, or municipality's responsibility for payment, under 32 V.S.A. § 5402.

Ninth: By adding four new sections to be Sec. 10, Sec. 12, Sec. 13, and Sec. 14 to read as follows:

Sec. 10. [Deleted.]

Sec. 12. [Deleted.]

Sec. 13. [Deleted.]

Sec. 14. [Deleted.]

(Committee Vote: 10-0-1)

Rep. Stevens of Waterbury, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment when amended as recommended by the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, when further amended as recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)

Senate Proposal of Amendment

H. 519

An act relating to Vermont State Employees' Retirement System Group G membership.

The Senate proposes to the House to amend the bill by striking out Sec. 1, 3 V.S.A. § 455, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 1 to read as follows:

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 455 is amended to read:

§ 455. DEFINITIONS

(a) As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(11) "Member" means any employee included in the membership of the Retirement System under section 457 of this title.

* * *

(F) “Group G member” means:

(i) the following employees who are first employed in the positions listed in this subdivision (F)(i) on or after July 1, 2023, or who are members of the System as of June 30, ~~2022~~ 2023, and make an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before June 30, 2023, pursuant to the terms set by the Board: facility employees of the Department of Corrections, as Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, and employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its successor in interest, who provide direct patient care; and

(ii) the following employees who are first employed in the positions listed in this subdivision (F)(ii) or first included in the membership of the System on or after January 1, 2025, or who are members of the System as of December 31, 2024, and make an irrevocable election to join Group G on or before December 31, 2024, pursuant to the terms set by the Board:

(I) all sheriffs; and

(II) deputy sheriffs who:

(aa) are employed by county sheriff’s departments that participate in the Vermont Employees’ Retirement System;

(bb) have attained Level II or Level III law enforcement officer certification from the Vermont Criminal Justice Council;

(cc) are required to perform law enforcement duties as the primary function of their employment; and

(dd) are not full-time deputy sheriffs compensated by the State of Vermont whose primary function is transports as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 290(b) and eligible for Group C pursuant to subdivision (9)(B) of this subsection (a); and

(iii) the following employees who are first employed in the positions listed in this subdivision (F)(iii) or first included in the membership of the System on or after January 1, 2027, or who are members of the System as of December 31, 2026, and make an irrevocable election to join Group G on or before December 31, 2026, pursuant to the terms set by the Board and who:

(I) are employed by a municipal employer that participates in the Vermont Employees’ Retirement System;

(II) have attained Level II or Level III law enforcement officer certification from the Vermont Criminal Justice Council; and

(III) are required to perform law enforcement duties as the primary function of their employment.

* * *

(13) “Normal retirement date” means:

* * *

(E) with respect to a Group G member:

(i) for facility employees of the Department of Corrections, Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, or employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its predecessor or successor in interest, who provide direct patient care, who were first included in the membership of the System on or before June 30, 2008, who were employed as of June 30, 2022 2023, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before July 1, 2023, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 62 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) completion of 30 years of creditable service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(ii) for facility employees of the Department of Corrections, Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, as employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, or employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its predecessor or successor in interest, who provide direct patient care, who were first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who were employed as of June 30, 2022 2023, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before July 1, 2023, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) attainment of 87 points reflecting a combination of the age of the member and number of years of service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(iii) for facility employees of the Department of Corrections, Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, or employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its predecessor or successor in interest, who provide direct patient care, who first become a Group G member on or after July 1, 2023, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) attainment of 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(II) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(iv) for all sheriffs and those deputy sheriffs who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(ii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or before June 30, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2024, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2025, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 62 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) completion of 30 years of creditable service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(v) for all sheriffs and those deputy sheriffs who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(ii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2024, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2025, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) attainment of 87 points reflecting a combination of the age of the member and number of years of service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(vi) for all sheriffs and those deputy sheriffs who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(ii) of this subsection (a), who first become a Group G member on or after January 1, 2025, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) attainment of 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(II) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(vii) for all municipal law enforcement officers who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(iii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or before June 30, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2026, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2027, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 62 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) completion of 30 years of creditable service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(viii) for all municipal law enforcement officers who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(iii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2026, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2027, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) attainment of 87 points reflecting a combination of the age of the member and number of years of service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(ix) for all municipal law enforcement officers who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(iii) of this subsection (a) who first become a Group G member on or after January 1, 2027, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) attainment of 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(II) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service.

* * *

H. 762

An act relating to the County and Regional Governance Study Committee.

The Senate proposes to the House to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 118, Sec. 1, by striking out subsection (e) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (e) to read:

(e) Report. On or before November 1, ~~2025~~ 2027, the Committee shall report to the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

Second: In Sec. 1, 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 118, Sec. 1, by striking out subsection (f) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (f) to read:

(f) Meetings.

* * *

~~(2) The Committee shall be co-chaired by the Chair of the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Government Operations. [Repealed.]~~

* * *

(4) The Committee shall cease to exist on ~~July 1, 2026~~ November 2, 2027.

* * *

For Informational Purposes
ANNOUNCEMENT: PUBLIC HEARING ON
ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

*Room 11,
Broadcast via YouTube*

The Vermont House Committee on Health Care will hold a **public hearing on Thursday, April 30 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** in Room 11 of the State House. Those interested in testifying may attend the hearing in person or virtually.

The Committee will take testimony on access to primary care and invites individuals to share their experiences, recommendations, and insights to inform members as they consider legislation related to primary care. **Anyone interested in testifying must sign up in advance of the hearing through the following online form no later than 4:30 p.m. on April 29.** For those planning to testify, instructions on how to access and participate in the hearing will be sent the morning of the hearing. Each participant will be given 2.5 minutes to testify.

Online sign-up form: **<https://legislature.vermont.gov/public-hearing-on-primary-care>**

For those not planning to testify, the hearing will be available to watch live on YouTube at the following link:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/streaming/house-health-care>.

Written testimony is encouraged and can be submitted through email at testimony@leg.state.vt.us or mailed to the House Committee on Health Care, c/o Megan Cannella, 115 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05633. For more information about the format of this event, contact Megan Cannella at Megan.Cannella@vtleg.gov.

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 13, 2026**, 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 13, 2026**.

(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 20, 2026**, 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 or email 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 communicate 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 sign-out sheet will also be included.
4. Please submit a final sponsor list (with all sponsors listed) to Counselor Chernick by paper *or* electronically, but not both.
5. The final list of sponsors needs to be submitted, by email *or* on a paper sign-out sheet, to Counselor Chernick **not later than 1:00 p.m. the Wednesday 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, meaning it must have been adopted through the House Consent Calendar not later than the week prior to your requested ceremonial reading date. Contact Second Assistant Clerk Courtney Reckord to confirm your requested ceremonial reading date.
9. A Note: If there is a **specific date, week, or month that your resolution must be read** (e.g. to designate a specified period of time or to recognize a group on a certain day), please inform Second Assistant Clerk Courtney Reckord as soon as possible, so she can reserve that date in advance. You do not need to have the resolution drafted by then.

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 #3276:** Twelve (12) limited-service positions to the Agency of Human Services, various departments, to staff the Rural Health Transformation Initiative. The Rural Health Transformation grant, JFO #3272 was approved at the Joint Fiscal Committee meeting on February 6, 2026. All limited-service positions are expected to be funded through 9/30/2031. *[Received March 31, 2026]*
- JFO #3277:** \$36,000.00 to the Vermont Legislature, Sergeant at Arms office from the National Conference of State Legislatures. The grant will extend up to \$500.00 to each member of the General Assembly to secure their homes. Funds would be available once as a reimbursement during the lawmaker's service for expenses incurred after June 1, 2026. *[Received April 14, 2026]*