Senate Calendar

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2026

SENATE CONVENES AT: 11:30 A.M.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEW BUSINESS

Third Reading

Second Reading

Favorable

Favorable with Proposal of Amendment

House Proposal of Amendment

NOTICE CALENDAR

Second Reading

Favorable

Favorable with Proposal of Amendment

House Proposal of Amendment

CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ACTION CALENDAR

UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2026

House Proposal of Amendment

S. 89.

An act relating to expanding survivor benefits.

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

Sec. 1. 20 V.S.A. § 3171 is amended to read:

§ 3171. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(3) "Emergency personnel" means:

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

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

(C) law enforcement officers who have been certified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council pursuant to section 2358 of this title;

(D) facility employees of the Department of Corrections and Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community;

(E) classified family services employees in the Family Services Division of the Department for Children and Families; and

(F) classified medical employees of State-operated therapeutic community residences or inpatient psychiatric hospital units.

(4) "Line of duty" means:

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

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

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

(B) with respect to law enforcement officers:

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

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

(C) with respect to covered employees of the Department of Corrections, discharging their duties as employees;

(D) with respect to classified family services employees in the Family Services Division of the Department for Children and Families, discharging their duties as employees; and

(E) with respect to classified medical employees of State-operated therapeutic community residences or inpatient psychiatric hospital units, discharging their duties as employees.

* * *

Sec. 2. 20 V.S.A. § 3172 is amended to read:

§ 3172. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL SURVIVORS BENEFIT REVIEW BOARD

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

(2) Survivors of emergency personnel, employed by or who volunteer for the State of Vermont, a county or municipality of the State, or a nonprofit entity that provides services in the State, who die in the line of duty or of an occupation-related illness may request the Board award a monetary benefit under section 3173 of this ~~title~~ chapter, except survivors of emergency personnel as defined in subdivisions 3171(3)(C)–(F) of this chapter may request the monetary benefit only for deaths that occur on or after July 1, 2026.

(3) The Board shall be responsible for determining whether to award monetary benefits under section 3173 of this chapter. To assist the Board with applications involving deaths from occupation-related illness, the Board may pay reasonable fees from the Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Special Fund for a medical expert and other services as necessary to review applications and make recommendations to the Board.

(4) A decision to award monetary benefits shall be made by unanimous vote of the Board and shall be made within 60 days after the receipt of all information necessary to enable the Board to determine eligibility.

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

* * *

Sec. 3. 20 V.S.A. § 3175 is amended to read:

§ 3175. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL SURVIVORS BENEFIT SPECIAL FUND

(a) The Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Special Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the purpose of the payment of claims distributed pursuant to this chapter. The Fund shall comprise ~~appropriations~~ transfers made by the General Assembly, amounts transferred by the Emergency Board when the General Assembly is not in session, and contributions or donations from any other source. Expenses incurred pursuant to subdivision 3172(a)(3) of this chapter shall be paid from the Fund. All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain in the Fund.

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

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026

Second Reading

Favorable

H. 534.

An act relating to community action agencies.

Reported favorably by Senator Cummings for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of January 16, 2026, pages 2810-2813)

Favorable with Proposal of Amendment

H. 648.

An act relating to banking, insurance, and securities.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Hardy for the Committee on Finance.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 8 V.S.A. § 2102, in subdivision (b)(9), by striking the first instance of "registration" and inserting in lieu thereof "~~registration~~ license"

Second: By striking out Sec. 22, 8 V.S.A. § 10301, community reinvestment reports, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following: Sec. 22. [Deleted]

Third: By adding a Sec. 14a to read as follows:

Sec. 14a. 8 V.S.A. § 2577(f) is amended to read:

(f) Moratorium. To protect the public safety and welfare and safeguard the rights of consumers, virtual-currency kiosks shall not be permitted to operate in Vermont prior to July 1, ~~2026~~ 2027. This moratorium shall not apply to a virtual-currency kiosk that was duly licensed and operational in Vermont on or before June 30, 2024.

Fourth: In Sec. 48, 9 V.S.A. § 5202, in subdivision (14)(B), by striking section "5302" and inserting in lieu thereof subsection "5302(c)"

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of January 29, 2026, pages 2899-2949, and January 30, 2026 page 2958)

Reported favorably by Senator Norris for the Committee on Appropriations.

The Committee recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Finance.

(Committee vote: 6-0-1)

House Proposal of Amendment

S. 157

An act relating to recovery residence certification

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

Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. § 4802 is amended to read:

§ 4802. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(5) "Designated substance abuse counselor" means a person approved by the Secretary to evaluate and treat ~~substance abusers~~ individuals with substance use disorder, pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

* * *

(12) "Recovery residence" means a shared living residence supporting residents recovering from a substance use disorder that provides residents with peer support, assistance accessing support services, and other community resources related to substance use disorder.

(13) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Human Services or designee.

~~(13)~~(14) "Substance abuse crisis team" means an organization approved by the Secretary to provide emergency treatment and transportation services to ~~substance abusers~~ individuals with substance use disorder pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

~~(14)~~(15) ~~"Substance abuser"~~ "Individual with substance use disorder" means anyone who drinks alcohol or consumes other drugs to an extent or with a frequency that impairs or endangers ~~his or her~~ the individual's health or the health and welfare of others.

~~(15)~~(16) "Treatment" means the broad range of medical, detoxification, residential, outpatient, aftercare, and follow-up services ~~which~~ that are needed by ~~substance abusers~~ individuals with substance use disorder and may include a variety of other medical, social, vocational, and educational services relevant to the rehabilitation of these persons.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 4806 is amended to read:

§ 4806. DIVISION OF SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAMS

(a) The Division of Substance Use Programs shall plan, operate, and evaluate a consistent, effective program of substance use programs. All duties, responsibilities, and authority of the Division shall be carried out and exercised by and within the Department of Health.

(b) The Division shall be responsible for the following services:

(1) prevention and intervention;

(2) [Repealed.]

(3) project CRASH schools; ~~and~~

(4) alcohol and drug treatment; and

(5) recovery residences.

* * *

Sec. 3. 9 V.S.A. § 4452 is amended to read:

§ 4452. EXCLUSIONS

(a) Unless created to avoid the application of this chapter, this chapter does not apply to any of the following:

* * *

(b)(1) Notwithstanding subsections 4463(b) and 4467(b) and section 4468 of this chapter only, a recovery residence may immediately exit or transfer a resident if all of the following conditions are met:

(A) the recovery residence has developed and adopted a residential agreement:

(i) containing a written exit and transfer policy approved by the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences or another certifying organization approved by the Department of Health that:

(I) addresses the length of time that a bed will be held in the event of a temporary removal;

(II) establishes the criteria by which a resident can return to the recovery residence in the event of a temporary removal; and

(III) ensures a resident's possessions will be held not less than 60 days in the event of permanent removal;

(ii) explaining the recovery residence's program rules and social standards;

(iii) designating alternative housing arrangements for the resident in the event of an exit or transfer, including contingency plans when alternative housing arrangements are not available;

~~(iii)~~(iv) describing the recovery residence's substance use policy, which shall exempt the use of a resident's valid prescription medication when used as prescribed; and

~~(iv)~~(v) indicating that by signing a residential agreement, a resident acknowledges that the recovery residence may cause the resident to be immediately exited or transferred to alternative housing ~~if~~ for behaving in a manner that impacts the health or safety of other individuals residing, working, or volunteering at the recovery residence, such as the resident ~~violates~~ violating the recovery residence's substance use policy, repeatedly refusing to engage in services or programming, being charged with a criminal offense, engaging in theft, materially interfering with the recovery of other residents, or ~~engages~~ engaging in acts of violence that threaten the health or safety of other residents, recovery residence staff, or volunteers;

(B) the recovery residence has obtained the resident's written consent to its residential agreement, reaffirmed after seven days;

(C) the resident ~~violated~~ behaved in a manner that impacted the health or safety of other individuals residing, working, or volunteering at the recovery residence, such as violating the recovery residence's substance use policy in the residential agreement, repeatedly refusing to engage in services or programming, being charged with a criminal offense, engaging in theft, materially interfering with the recovery of other residents, or ~~engaged~~ engaging in acts of violence that ~~threatened~~ threaten the health or safety of other residents, recovery residence staff, or volunteers; ~~and~~

(D) the recovery residence has provided or arranged for a ~~stabilization~~ re-engagement bed or other alternative temporary housing;

(E) the recovery residence has provided written or electronic notice to the resident containing the date and rationale for the temporary removal or transfer and options for returning to the recovery residence; and

(F) the recovery residence has established a grievance process approved by the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences or another certifying organization approved by the Department of Health.

(2) Relapse of a substance use disorder resulting in exiting a recovery residence shall not be deemed a cause of the resident's own homelessness for purposes of obtaining emergency housing.

(3) Notwithstanding section 4460 of this chapter, a recovery residence employee may enter the recovery residence at reasonable times as necessary to carry out functions related to the operation of the recovery residence.

(4) ~~As used in this subsection, "recovery residence" means a shared living residence supporting persons recovering from a substance use disorder~~ This subsection shall only apply to a recovery residence that:

(A) ~~provides tenants with peer support and assistance accessing support services and community resources available to persons recovering from substance use disorders~~ meets the definition of "recovery residence" in 18 V.S.A. § 4802; and

(B) is certified by an organization approved by the Department of Health and that is either a Vermont affiliate of the National Alliance for Recovery Residences or another approved organization.

Sec. 4. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 163, Sec. 5 is amended to read:

Sec. 5. SUNSET; RECOVERY RESIDENCES; RESIDENTIAL AGREEMENT; REPORTING

(a) ~~9 V.S.A. § 4452(b) is repealed on July 1, 2026.~~ [Repealed.]

(b) Sec. 4 (report; recovery residences' exit and transfer data) is repealed on July 1, 2026.

Sec. 5. RULEMAKING; RECOVERY RESIDENCE CERTIFICATION

(a) On or before September 1, 2027, the Department of Health shall file an initial proposed rule with the Secretary of State pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 836(a)(2) for the purposes of establishing a voluntary recovery residence certification program. At a minimum, the rule shall:

(1) require that a recovery residence seeking certification from the State comply with the certification standards of the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences or another organization approved by the Department; and

(2) set forth data collection standards and reporting requirements for certified recovery residences, including data elements and frequency, exit and

transfer data, and requirements for annual reporting from the Department to the General Assembly that measure the program's effectiveness.

(b) The Department shall complete the rulemaking process and adopt a permanent rule pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 on or before December 1, 2028.

(c) If the Department identifies the need for a fee to support the voluntary recovery residence certification program described in this section, the Department shall first propose the fee to the General Assembly and, if the General Assembly chooses to enact it into law, may incorporate the fee into the required rule.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

S. 239

An act relating to the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Working Group

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

Sec. 1. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING WORKING GROUP; REPORT

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) According to Child Trends, a research organization focused on improving the lives of children, youth, and families, data shows that from 2022 through 2024 Vermont had a rate of referrals to child welfare services that was over three times higher than the national level, with a rate of referral of 166 per 1,000 children in Vermont compared to 50 per 1,000 children nationally. Additionally, only 17 percent of such referrals in Vermont met the criteria for further action via an assessment or investigation compared to 54 percent nationally.

(2) While the General Assembly recently reviewed and revised child abuse and neglect substantiation procedures that occur after a referral has been accepted by the Department for Children and Families, there has not been a similar review of the training and requirements for mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect to ensure they employ best practices and provide sufficient guidance and resources for mandatory reporters.

(3) Data from Child Trends further shows that post-response services such as mental health services, substance misuse treatment, family therapy, child care, parenting education, and resources to assist families living in

poverty were provided to only 28 percent of victims in Vermont compared with the national average of 57 percent.

(4) The provision of services to children and families prior to, during, and after a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is an essential element in a comprehensive child protection system.

(b) There is created the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Working Group for the purpose of examining the existing statutes and the Department for Children and Families' rules and policies regarding mandatory reporting of abuse and neglect of a child and recommending changes to modernize them and reflect current best practices. During its examination of mandatory reporting, the Working Group shall consider what services and strategies may be employed prior to any report of suspected abuse or neglect for the purpose of providing assistance to families before a situation rises to the level of requiring a report.

(c) The Working Group shall be composed of the following members:

(1) a member with lived experience as an abused or neglected child, appointed by the Vermont Child, Youth, and Family Advisory Council;

(2) a member with lived experience as an individual who was reported for suspected child abuse or neglect and an investigation found the report to be unsubstantiated, appointed by the Vermont Parent Representation Center;

(3) the Vermont Child, Youth, and Family Advocate or Deputy Advocate;

(4) the Executive Director of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services or designee;

(5) a co-executive director of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence or designee;

(6) a member from the Department for Children and Families' Family Services Division, appointed by the Deputy Commissioner of the Division;

(7) the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Vermont or designee;

(8) the Director of the Vermont Parent Child Center Network or designee;

(9) a certified law enforcement officer who has served on a special investigative unit, appointed by the Vermont Law Enforcement Advisory Board;

(10) a physician co-chair of the Vermont Citizen's Advisory Board;

(11) a principal, appointed by the Vermont Principals' Association;

(12) a representative of a designated agency that works in children's mental health, appointed by Vermont Care Partners; and

(13) the Vermont Office of Racial Equity.

(d) In conducting its work, the Working Group shall consult with stakeholders, including:

(1) the Vermont Children's Alliance and representation from Child Advocacy Centers;

(2) the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs;

(3) the Juvenile Division of the Office of the Defender General;

(4) KidSafe Collaborative;

(5) Voices for Vermont's Children;

(6) the Vermont Parent Representation Center;

(7) Disability Rights Vermont;

(8) medical partners, such as the University of Vermont's Child Safe Program;

(9) the Office of the Attorney General; and

(10) a school counselor, appointed by the Vermont School Counselor Association.

(e) On or before April 1, 2027, the Working Group shall provide an interim presentation to the House Committee on Human Services, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary on its work to date. On or before October 1, 2027, the Working Group shall provide a final report detailing its findings and any recommended legislative proposals to the House Committee on Human Services, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary.

(f)(1) In developing its recommendations, the Working Group shall prioritize issues related to:

(A) providing clarity regarding statutory definitions applicable to mandatory reporters;

(B) establishing consistency between statutory requirements and Department for Children and Families rules, guidance, and training materials;

(C) identifying practical implementation challenges faced by mandatory reporters in complying with existing law;

(D) assessing the appropriateness and efficacy of provisions in 33 V.S.A. §§ 4912 and 4913 regarding the definitions applicable to mandatory reporters, who should be a mandatory reporter, the process for mandatory reporting, the penalties for failure to report, and any exemptions from the reporting requirement; and

(E) identifying alternatives to reporting suspected child abuse or neglect when such alternatives are in the best interests of the child.

(2) The Working Group shall avoid expanding its review into matters unrelated to mandatory reporting obligations, thresholds, or processes unless necessary to resolve an identified reporting issue.

(3) Any recommendations shall remain consistent with federal requirements under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which establishes minimum standards related to state definitions of abuse and neglect, including physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, and emotional maltreatment.

(4) To promote efficiency and avoid duplicative work, the Working Group shall leverage the work of the Children's Justice Act Task Force and the Vermont Citizen's Advisory Board (VCAB), which serves as Vermont's CAPTA citizen review panel.

(5) The Working Group shall consider best practices from other states in the development of its recommendations.

(g) The Working Group shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Department for Children and Families.

(1) The Working Group shall convene its first meeting on or before August 15, 2026.

(2) The Working Group shall elect a chair at its first meeting.

(3) Members of the Working Group who are not otherwise compensated for their attendance at meetings shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than 12 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Department for Children and Families.

(4) The Department for Children and Families shall post information about the Working Group's efforts on its website, including meeting notices, agendas, procedures for public comment, and minutes of meetings.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2026

Second Reading

Favorable with Proposal of Amendment

H. 559.

An act relating to the Parole Board.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Major for the Committee on Institutions.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 28 V.S.A. § 403 is amended to read:

§ 403. POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER REGARDING PAROLE

The Commissioner is charged with the following powers and responsibilities regarding the administration of parole:

* * *

(6) To provide regular training for the Parole Board, at least annually, in collaboration with the Parole Board Director and the Chair of the Parole Board, on topics related to criminogenic behavior, mental health disorders, substance use treatment, trauma-informed work with victims of crime, and serious crime rehabilitation.

Sec. 2. 28 V.S.A. § 451 is amended to read:

§ 451. CREATION OF BOARD

(a)(1) A Parole Board of ~~five~~ seven members is created. The Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ~~five regular~~ members ~~and two alternates~~ for terms of three years in such a manner that not more than three terms shall expire annually. Initial terms may be less than three years. Each member ~~and alternate~~ shall hold office until a successor is appointed and qualified. The Governor shall designate the Board's chair.

(2) Upon notification of a vacancy, the Governor shall consult with the Parole Board Director and the Chair of the Parole Board. As far as practicable, the Governor shall appoint as members persons who have knowledge of and experience in ~~correctional treatment, crime prevention, or human relations~~ criminogenic behavior, mental health treatment, substance use disorder, or serious crime rehabilitation, and shall give consideration, as far as practicable, to geographic representation of the State and a balance of different knowledge and experience.

(3) The Board shall select one of its members to serve as Vice Chair of the Board. If the Chair resigns or is otherwise permanently unable to serve on the Board, the Vice Chair shall serve as interim chair until the Governor designates a new chair pursuant to this section. ~~The Chair or the executive director may assign alternates to serve on the Board in the absence of a regular member and such alternates shall have all the powers and authority of a regular member when so assigned.~~

(b) Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of a meeting. Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 172, the concurrence of a majority of members present at a Parole Board meeting shall be necessary and sufficient for Board action.

(c) The Chair of the Parole Board shall be entitled to compensation in the amount of $20,500.00 annually, effective on the first pay period in fiscal year 2006, which shall be in lieu of any per diem otherwise authorized by law. If the Vice Chair assumes the duties of the Chair for a period in excess of 30 consecutive days, the compensation otherwise payable to the Chair during ~~his or her~~ the Chair's absence shall be paid to the Vice Chair.

(d) At least annually, each member of the Parole Board shall attend trainings designated by the Parole Board Director in collaboration with the Chair of the Parole Board.

Sec. 3. 28 V.S.A. § 455 is amended to read:

§ 455. DIRECTOR

(a) The position of Parole Board Director is created. The Director shall be appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Board.

(b) The Director shall serve for a term of four years commencing on March 1 and continuing until ~~his or her~~ a successor is appointed.

(c) The Director shall be exempt from classified State service.

(d) The Secretary of Human Services, in consultation with the Parole Board and the Department of Human Resources, shall establish the minimum and preferred qualifications, duties, and compensation of the Director.

(e) The Director shall be responsible for the overall function of the Parole Board, ensuring legal compliance, developing and implementing all policies and procedures of the Board, and ensuring training is developed and provided to the Board, in collaboration with the Commissioner and the Chair of the Parole Board.

Sec. 4. PAROLE BOARD LEGAL COUNSEL PILOT PROJECT

(a) There is created the Parole Board Legal Counsel Pilot Project to provide external legal support for:

(1) annual training to the Board, including on topics related to due process and parole violations; and

(2) legal advice to the Board as needed related to Board hearings.

(b) The Board and the Agency of Human Services shall identify and contract with external legal support in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General.

(c) As part of the fiscal year 2028 budget development process, the Agency of Human Services and the Department of Corrections shall coordinate with the Parole Board Director to evaluate the pilot project and determine resources needed for Board external legal support for fiscal year 2028.

(d) On or before November 15, 2026, the Parole Board Director shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions detailing the operation of the pilot project. The report shall include a recommendation regarding legal support for the Board going forward and the resources needed.

Sec. 5. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2026 CARRYFORWARD

The $25,000.00 General Fund appropriated to the Department of Corrections for third-party legal services in 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 27, Sec. B.336 shall carry forward into fiscal year 2027 for the purpose of hiring external legal counsel pursuant to Sec. 4 of this act.

Sec. 6. APPROPRIATION

The sum of $50,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Corrections in fiscal year 2027 for the purpose of hiring external legal counsel pursuant to Sec. 4 of this act.

Sec. 7. PAROLE BOARD BUDGET SUBMISSION IN FISCAL YEAR 2028 AND FISCAL YEAR 2029

(a) As part of the fiscal year 2028 and fiscal year 2029 budget development processes, the Parole Board Director shall submit a proposed budget to the Commissioner of Corrections and Secretary of Human Services.

(b) On or before December 1, 2027, the Parole Board Director shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions detailing the budget development process. The report shall include a recommendation regarding the Parole Board submitting an annual budget to the Commissioner of Corrections.

Sec. 8. 13 V.S.A. § 5305 is amended to read:

§ 5305. INFORMATION CONCERNING RELEASE FROM CUSTODY

* * *

(c) ~~If requested by a victim of a listed crime, the~~ The Department of Corrections shall~~:~~

~~(1) at least 30 days before a parole board hearing concerning the defendant, inform the victim of the hearing and of the victim's right to testify before the parole board or to submit a written statement for the parole board to consider; and~~

~~(2) promptly inform the victim of the decision of the parole board, including providing to the victim any conditions attached to the defendant's release on parole~~ notify victims of a listed crime as to parole board hearings concerning defendants and parole board decisions as provided in 28 V.S.A. §§ 502a and 507.

Sec. 9. 28 V.S.A. § 502a is amended to read:

§ 502a. RELEASE ON PAROLE

* * *

(e)(1) The Department shall identify each inmate meeting the presumptive parole eligibility criteria in section 501a of this title and refer each eligible inmate who does not meet the risk criteria set forth in subdivision (2) of this

subsection to the Parole Board for an administrative review at least 60 days prior to the inmate's eligibility date.

(2) The Department shall screen each inmate it identifies as eligible for presumptive parole for the risk criteria set forth in this subdivision. If the Department determines that, based on clear and convincing evidence, there is a reasonable probability that the inmate's release would result in a detriment to the community, or that the inmate is not willing and capable of fulfilling the obligations of parole, the Department shall, at least 60 days prior to the inmate's eligibility date, refer the inmate to the Parole Board for a parole hearing.

(3)(A) Within 30 days in advance of the inmate's eligibility date, the Parole Board shall conduct an administrative review of each inmate the Department identifies as eligible for presumptive release who does not meet the risk criteria set forth in subdivision (2) of this subsection. The Board may deny presumptive release and set a hearing if it determines, through its administrative review, that a victim or victims should have the opportunity to participate in a parole hearing. If the Board determines there is a victim or victims who should be notified, the Department shall notify the victim or victims, and the Board shall provide them with the opportunity to participate in a parole hearing. A victim may waive any notification.

(B) The Parole Board shall conduct a parole hearing pursuant to section 502 of this title for each eligible inmate that the Department determines meets the risk criteria in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

Sec. 10. 28 V.S.A. § 507 is amended to read:

§ 507. NOTIFICATION TO VICTIM AND OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY

(a) The Department of Corrections shall, unless waived by the victim:

(1) ~~At~~ at least 30 days prior to a parole ~~eligibility~~ hearing concerning the defendant, notify the victim of a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7)~~, shall be notified~~ as to the time and location of the hearing and as to the victim's right to testify before the Parole Board or to submit a written statement for the Parole Board to consider; and

(2) promptly inform the victim of the decision of the Parole Board, including providing to the victim any conditions attached to the defendant's release on parole. ~~Such notification may be waived by the victim in writing.~~

* * *

Sec. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 17, 2026, pages 3310-3313)

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Westman for the Committee on Appropriations.

The Committee recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Institutions, with further recommendation of proposal of amendment thereto:

By striking Sec. 5, Department of Corrections fiscal year 2026 carryforward, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 5. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2026 CARRYFORWARD

Notwithstanding 2026 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. 89 or any other provision of law to the contrary, the $25,000.00 General Fund appropriated to the Department of Corrections for third-party legal services in 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 27, Sec. B.336 shall carry forward into fiscal year 2027 for the purpose of hiring external legal counsel pursuant to Sec. 4 of this act and shall not be subject to the approval of the Secretary of Administration or designated for any other purpose.

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

NEW BUSINESS

Third Reading

H. 933.

An act relating to miscellaneous administrative and policy changes to the tax laws.

Proposal of amendment to H. 933 to be offered by Senators Beck and Chittenden

Senators Beck and Chittenden move to amend the Senate proposal of amendment as follows:

First: By adding three new sections to be Secs. 61a, 61b, and 61c to read as follows:

Sec. 61a. 32 V.S.A. § 5930ll is amended to read:

§ 5930ll. MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT TAX CREDIT

(a) Definitions. As used in this subchapter:

(1) ~~"Full-time job" means a permanent position filled by an employee who works at least 35 hours per week~~ [Repealed.].

(2) "Investment period" means the period commencing January 1, 2010 and ending December 31, 2014. "Investment period" also means the period commencing January 1, 2027, and ending December 31, 2032.

(3) "Qualified capital expenditures" means expenditures properly chargeable to a capital account by a qualified taxpayer during the investment period, totaling at least $20 million for machinery and equipment to be located and used in Vermont for creating, producing, or processing tangible personal property for sale.

(4) "Qualified taxpayer" means a taxpayer that:

(A) is an existing business on January 1, 2010, and approved for the credit under this section prior to January 1, 2015, or is an existing business on January 1, 2027 ~~with an aggregate average annual employment, including all employees of its related business units with which it files a combined or consolidated return for Vermont income tax purposes, during the investment period of no fewer than 200 full-time jobs in Vermont~~;

(B) is a taxable corporation under Subchapter C of the Internal Revenue Code;

(C) is a business whose operations at the time of application to the ~~Vermont Economic Progress Council~~ Commissioner of Taxes are located in ~~a Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) zone designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Authority~~ Vermont, engaged primarily in the creation, production, or processing of tangible personal property for sale; and

(D) proposes to make qualified capital expenditures in ~~a Vermont REAP zone~~ this State and such expenditures will contribute substantially to ~~the REAP zone's~~ Vermont's economy.

(5) "Qualified taxpayer's Vermont income tax liability" means the corporate income tax otherwise due on the qualified taxpayer's Vermont net income after reduction for any Vermont net operating loss as provided for under section 5832 of this title. For a qualified taxpayer that is a member of an affiliated group and that is engaged in a unitary business with one or more other members of that affiliated group, its Vermont net income includes the allocable share of the combined net income of the group.

(b) Certification.

(1) A qualified taxpayer may apply to the ~~Vermont Economic Progress Council~~ Commissioner of Taxes for a machinery and equipment investment tax credit certification for all qualified capital expenditures in the investment period on a form prescribed by the ~~council~~ Commissioner for this purpose. The application shall include documentation and verification that the machinery and equipment are placed in service in Vermont.

(2) The ~~Council~~ Commissioner shall issue a certification upon determining that the applicant meets the requirements set forth in subsection (a) of this section.

(c)(1) Amount of credit. For investment periods commencing on or after January 1, 2010, ~~Except~~ except as limited by subsections (e) and (f) of this section, a qualified taxpayer shall be entitled to claim against its Vermont income tax a credit in an amount equal to ten percent of the total qualified capital expenditures.

(2) For investment periods commencing on or after January 1, 2027, except as limited by subsections (e) and (f) of this section, a qualified taxpayer shall be entitled to claim against its Vermont income tax a credit in an amount equal to five percent of the total qualified capital expenditures.

(d) Availability of credit.

(1) The credit earned under this section with respect to qualified capital expenditures shall be available to reduce the qualified taxpayer's Vermont income tax liability for its tax year beginning on or after January 1, 2012, or, if later, the first tax year within which the qualified taxpayer's aggregate qualified capital expenditures exceed $20,000,000.00. ~~A taxpayer claiming a credit under this subchapter shall submit with the first return on which a credit is claimed a copy of the qualified taxpayer's certification from the Vermont Economic Progress Council.~~

(2)(A) The credit may be used in the year earned or carried forward to reduce the qualified taxpayer's Vermont income tax liability in succeeding tax years ending on or before December 31, ~~2030~~ 2037.

(B) If the credit earned under this section reduces the qualified taxpayer's Vermont income tax liability in a tax year by more than 100 percent, the taxpayer may elect to have up to $500,000.00 of the excess credit amount refunded. If a refund election is made under this subdivision (B), any remaining credit amount after the refund shall be carried forward to reduce the qualified taxpayer's Vermont income tax liability in succeeding tax years ending on or before December 31, 2037.

(e) Limitations.

(1) ~~The credit earned under this section, either alone or in combination with any other credit allowed by this chapter, may not be applied to reduce the qualified taxpayer's Vermont income tax liability in any one year by more than 80 percent, and in no event shall the credit reduce the taxpayer's income tax liability below any minimum tax imposed by this chapter.~~ [Repealed.]

(2) The total amount of credit authorized under this section shall be $8,000,000.00 total, per year, for all taxpayers, and in no event shall the credit in any one tax year exceed $1,000,000.00 for a single taxpayer. The credit shall be available on a first-come, first-served basis by certification of the ~~Vermont Economic Progress Council~~ Commissioner pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(f) Recapture.

~~(1) A qualified taxpayer who has earned credit under this section with respect to its qualified capital expenditures shall notify the Vermont Economic Progress Council in writing within 60 days if the taxpayer's trade or business is substantially curtailed in any calendar year prior to December 31, 2023.~~

~~(2) A qualified taxpayer's business shall be considered to be substantially curtailed when the average number of the taxpayer's full-time jobs in Vermont for any calendar year prior to December 31, 2023 is less than 60 percent of the highest average number of its full-time jobs in Vermont for any calendar year in the investment period. For purposes of the preceding calculation, the qualified taxpayer's full-time jobs in Vermont shall include all full-time jobs in Vermont of its related business units with which it files a combined or consolidated return for Vermont income tax purposes. A business shall not be considered to be substantially curtailed when the assets of the business have been sold but the business continues to be located in Vermont, provided that the employment test of this subdivision is met.~~

~~(3) In the event that a qualified taxpayer has substantially curtailed its trade or business, then:~~

~~(A) the credit certification for such tax year and all succeeding tax years of the taxpayer shall be terminated;~~

~~(B) any credit previously earned and carried forward shall be disallowed; and~~

~~(C) any credit that has been previously used by the taxpayer to reduce its Vermont income tax liability shall be subject to recapture in accordance with the following table:~~

~~Years between the close of the tax year credit was earned and year business was substantially curtailed: Percent of credits to be when repaid (%):~~

~~2 or less 100~~

~~More than 2, up to 4 80~~

~~More than 4, up to 6 60~~

~~More than 6, up to 8 40~~

~~More than 8, up to 10 20~~

~~More than 10 0~~

~~(4) The recapture shall be reported on the income tax return of the taxpayer who claimed the credit for the tax year in which the taxpayer's trade or business was substantially curtailed, or the Commissioner may assess the recapture in accordance with the assessment and appeal provisions provided for in subchapter 8 of this chapter.~~

~~(5) Within 60 days of the close of the qualified taxpayer's tax year in which the taxpayer's trade or business was substantially curtailed, the taxpayer may petition the Commissioner for a reduction in the amount of the credit subject to recapture and the disallowance of credit previously earned and carried forward. The Commissioner shall hold a hearing within 45 days of the receipt of the taxpayer's petition. The Commissioner shall have the discretion to reduce the amount of the credit subject to recapture and disallowance upon a showing of circumstances that contributed to the substantial curtailment of the taxpayer's trade or business. The decision of the Commissioner shall be final and shall not be subject to judicial review~~ If during the 10-year period following the taxable year in which a credit was provided under this section a qualified taxpayer removes from this State machinery and equipment claimed as part of a qualified expenditure, the qualified taxpayer shall notify the Commissioner in writing within 60 days after the removal. In the event of such removal, the credit certification for such tax year and all succeeding tax years of the taxpayer shall be terminated, any credit previously earned and carried forward shall be disallowed, and any credit that has been previously used by the taxpayer to reduce its Vermont income tax liability shall be subject to recapture and reported on the income tax return of the taxpayer for the tax year in which the removal occurred.

(g) Reporting.

(1) Any qualified taxpayer who has been certified under subsection (b) of this section shall file a report with the ~~Vermont Economic Progress Council~~

~~on a form prescribed by the Council for this purpose and provide a copy of the report to the~~ Commissioner of Taxes.

(2) The report shall be filed for each year following the certification until the year following the last year the taxpayer claims the credit to reduce its Vermont income tax liability, or ~~2031~~ 2038, whichever occurs first.

(3) The report shall be filed by the due date of the taxpayer's tax return, including extensions, in each year for activity the previous calendar year and include, at a minimum:

(A) ~~the number of full-time jobs in each quarter and the average number of hours worked per week;~~ [Repealed.]

(B) the level of qualifying capital investments made if reporting on a year within an investment period; and

(C) the amount of tax credit earned and applied during the previous calendar year.

Sec. 61b. 2010 Acts and Resolves No. 156, Sec. H.2, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves, No. 144, Sec. 17, is further amended to read:

Sec. H.2 REPEAL

(a) Subchapter 11M of chapter 151 of Title 32 is repealed July 1, ~~2030~~ 2038, and no credit under that section shall be available for any taxable year beginning after June 30, ~~2030~~ 2038.

Sec. 61c. 32 V.S.A. § 5813(t) is amended to read:

(t) The statutory purpose of the Vermont machinery and equipment tax credit in section 5930ll of this title is to ~~provide an incentive to make a major, long-term capital investment in Vermont-based plants and property to ensure the continuation of in-state employment~~ attract and accelerate large-scale manufacturing investment in Vermont by providing a predictable, performance-based, and refundable tax credit tied directly to capital expenditures in machinery and equipment.

Second: In Sec. 64, effective dates, by adding a new subdivision to be subdivision (9) to read as follows:

(9) Secs. 61a, 61b, and 61c (machinery and equipment tax credit) shall take effect on January 1, 2027, and apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2027.

Proposal of amendment to H. 933 to be offered by Senator Vyhovsky

Senator Vyhovsky moves to amend the Senate proposal of amendment of the Committee on Finance as follows:

First: By striking out Secs. 50–51 (deleted) in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof two new sections to be Secs. 50–51 and a reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * Income Tax Surcharge and VIP Tax * * *

Sec. 50. 32 V.S.A. § 5822a is added to read:

§ 5822a. PERSONAL INCOME TAX SURCHARGE

(a) There shall be a surcharge applied to the federal adjusted gross income of individuals with federal adjusted gross income equal to or greater than $250,000.00. The surcharge shall be at a rate of two percent of the adjusted gross income exceeding $250,000.00. The surcharge shall be in addition to any tax assessed under this chapter and shall be paid, collected, and enforced in the same manner as the tax assessed under section 5822 of this title.

(b) There shall be an additional surcharge applied to the federal adjusted gross income of individuals with federal adjusted gross income equal to or greater than $500,000.00. The surcharge shall be at a rate of six percent of the adjusted gross income exceeding $500,000.00. The surcharge shall be in addition to any tax assessed under this chapter and shall be paid, collected, and enforced in the same manner as the tax assessed under section 5822 of this title.

(c) The surcharges imposed under this section shall be applied to individuals without regard for filing status.

(d) Annually, the Commissioner of Taxes shall use the process required under subdivision 5822(b)(2) of this title to adjust for inflation the minimum amount of federal adjusted gross income necessary for an individual to incur a surcharge under this section.

Sec. 51. 32 V.S.A. chapter 149 is added to read:

CHAPTER 149. VERMONT INVESTMENT PROCEEDS TAX

§ 5701. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Federal modified adjusted gross income" means modified adjusted gross income as defined in 26 U.S.C. § 1411(d).

(2) "Investment income" has the same meaning as net investment income in 26 U.S.C. § 1411(c) as adjusted by section 5703 of this chapter.

(3) "Threshold amount" has the same meaning as in 26 U.S.C. § 1411(b).

§ 5702. IMPOSITION OF VERMONT INVESTMENT PROCEEDS TAX

(a) A Vermont investment proceeds tax is imposed for each taxable year on individuals, estates, and trusts subject to the personal income tax under chapter 151 of this title as follows:

(1) individuals filing as single or head of household with federal modified adjusted gross income exceeding $200,000.00;

(2) married individuals filing jointly with federal modified adjusted gross income exceeding $250,000.00;

(3) individuals filing as married filing separately with federal modified adjusted gross income exceeding $125,000.00; and

(4) estates and trusts with adjusted gross income, as defined in 26 U.S.C. § 67(e), exceeding the dollar amount at which the highest tax bracket begins for the taxable year under 26 U.S.C. § 1(e).

(b)(1) For individuals, tax is imposed at the rate of 4 percent of the lesser of:

(A) investment income for the taxable year; or

(B) federal modified adjusted gross income for the taxable year, reduced by the threshold amount.

(2) For estates and trusts, tax is imposed at the rate of four percent of the lesser of:

(A) undistributed investment income for the taxable year; or

(B) the dollar amount at which the highest tax bracket begins for the taxable year under 26 U.S.C. § 1(e).

(c) The tax imposed under this section shall be in addition to any other tax imposed under this title.

(d) For part-year and nonresident individuals, estates, and trusts, the tax imposed by this section shall be calculated by multiplying a taxpayer's total amount of investment income for the taxable year by the percentage of investment income allocable to Vermont under section 5823 of this title.

§ 5703. DETERMINATION OF VERMONT INVESMENT INCOME

The Vermont investment income of an individual, estate, or trust means net investment income, as defined in 26 U.S.C. § 1411(c), and decreased by the following to the extent they are included in net investment income:

(1) income from U.S. government obligations; and

(2) any amount exempted from state taxation under the laws of the United States.

§ 5704. ADMINISTRATION

The tax imposed under this chapter shall be administered and enforced under this chapter in the same manner as the income tax imposed under section 5822 of this title, including all provisions relating to deficiencies, assessments, refunds, appeals, enforcement, and collection under chapter 151, subchapters 8 and 9 of this title.

Second: By striking out Secs. 52–53 (deleted) in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof ten new sections to be Secs. 52, 53, 53a, 53b, 53c, 53d, 53e, 53f, 53g, and 53h and a reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * Tax Classifications and School Construction * * *

Sec. 52. 32 V.S.A. § 4152 is amended to read:

§ 4152. CONTENTS

(a) When completed, the grand list of a town shall be in such form as the Director prescribes and shall contain such information as the Director prescribes, including:

* * *

(10) A separate column listing the number of dwelling units, as defined pursuant to subdivision 4152a(c)(2) of this title.

* * *

Sec. 53. 32 V.S.A. § 4152a is added to read:

§ 4152a. PROPERTY TAX CLASSIFICATIONS

(a) Establishment. Each parcel of real estate shall be classified as one or more of the classifications listed under subsection (b) of this section and based on information and guidance provided by the Commissioner of Taxes under this section and rules adopted pursuant section 5410 of this title.

(b) Classifications. A parcel shall be assigned one or more of the following general classes:

(1) homestead;

(2) nonhomestead nonresidential; and

(3) nonhomestead residential.

(c) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Taxes.

(2) "Dwelling unit" means a building or part of a building, including a single-family home, a unit within a multifamily building, an apartment, a condominium, or other similar property or structure containing a separate means of ingress and egress that:

(A) is designed or intended to be used for occupancy by one or more persons in a household, including providing living facilities for sleeping, cooking, and sanitary needs; and

(B) is fit for year-round habitation as determined by the Commissioner.

(3) "Homestead" has the same meaning as in subdivision 5401(7) of this title and means a parcel, or portion of a parcel, declared as a homestead on or before October 15 in accordance with section 5410 of this title for the current year.

(4)(A) "Long-term rental" means:

(i) a dwelling unit for which rent is paid for the right of occupancy for periods of at least 30 days;

(ii) a dwelling unit with combined rental periods in the current calendar year that total at least six calendar months, which need not be consecutive; and

(iii) there is a bona fide landlord-tenant relationship between the parties.

(B) "Long-term rental" also means a dwelling unit used by an employer to house the employer's employees for at least six calendar months, which need not be consecutive, in the current calendar year. As used in this section, "employee" means an individual who is reported by an employer for purposes of complying with Vermont unemployment compensation law pursuant to 21 V.S.A. chapter 17 or a farm employee as defined by 9 V.S.A. § 4469a(a)(1), without regard for whether the farm employee is reported pursuant to 21 V.S.A. chapter 17.

(5) "Nonhomestead nonresidential" means a parcel, or portion of a parcel, that does not qualify as "homestead" or "nonhomestead residential" under this section.

(6) "Nonhomestead residential" means a parcel, or portion of a parcel, with a dwelling unit that is not:

(A) a homestead;

(B) rented out as a long-term rental; or

(C) a mobile home, as defined under 10 V.S.A. § 6201(1), but not including other types of manufactured homes.

(d) Mixed-use parcels. A parcel with two or more portions qualifying as different classifications shall be classified proportionally as follows:

(1) Buildings shall be classified proportionally based on the percentage of finished floor space used. Improvements and structures on a nonhomestead residential parcel shall be classified as nonhomestead residential unless used for a business purpose.

(2) Underlying land, including improvements or fixtures that lack floor space, shall be classified proportionally based on the same percentage as the finished floor space of the buildings.

(3) Notwithstanding any provision of this subsection to the contrary, the entire parcel of land surrounding a homestead shall be classified as homestead in accordance with subdivision 5401(7) of this title, including any improvements or structures considered part of a homestead under subdivision 5401(7)(F) of this title.

(4) If a portion of floor space is used for more than one purpose, the use for which the floor space is most often used shall be considered the primary use and the floor space shall be dedicated to that use for purposes of tax classification, except as provided for a homestead under subdivision 5401(7) of this title.

(e) Forms. The Commissioner shall amend existing forms, and publish new forms, as needed to gather the necessary attestations and declarations required under this section.

(f) Use value appraisal. Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the tax treatment or enrollment eligibility of property as it relates to use value appraisal under chapter 124 of this title.

(g) Appeals.

(1) Persons aggrieved by a decision of an assessing official relating to how a property is classified for taxation purposes under this section may appeal in the manner provided for property valuation appeals under this title. The Commissioner shall provide written guidance for municipalities to follow when hearing such appeals and technical assistance if requested by a municipal official responsible for such appeals.

(2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, appeals of a decision of the Commissioner to classify property shall be made to the Commissioner in the same manner as an appeal under chapter 151 of this title.

(3) A timely filed appeal made pursuant to this subsection that is erroneously made to the Commissioner instead of the municipality, or to a municipality instead of the Commissioner, shall be considered timely. The recipient of the erroneously filed appeal shall forward the appeal to the Commissioner or the correct municipality within 14 days.

Sec. 53a. 32 V.S.A. § 5410 is amended to read:

§ 5410. DECLARATION OF HOMESTEAD; DWELLING USE ATTESTATION

* * *

(g) If the property identified in a declaration under subsection (b) of this section is not the taxpayer's homestead ~~or if the owner of a homestead fails to declare a homestead as required under this section~~, the Commissioner shall notify the municipality, and the municipality shall issue a corrected tax bill that may, as determined by the governing body of the municipality, include a penalty of up to ~~three~~ five percent of the education tax on the property. ~~However, if the property incorrectly declared as a homestead is located in a municipality that has a lower homestead tax rate than the nonhomestead tax rate or if an undeclared homestead is located in a municipality that has a lower nonhomestead tax rate than the homestead tax rate, then the governing body of the municipality may include a penalty of up to eight percent of the education tax liability on the property.~~ If the Commissioner determines that the declaration or failure to declare was with fraudulent intent, then the ~~municipality~~ Commissioner shall assess the taxpayer a penalty in an amount equal to 100 percent of the education tax on the property, plus any interest and late-payment fee or commission that may be due. Any penalty imposed under this section by a municipality and any additional property tax interest and late-payment fee or commission shall be assessed and collected by the municipality in the same manner as a property tax under chapter 133 of this title. Notwithstanding section 4772 of this title, issuance of a corrected bill issued under this section does not extend the time for payment of the original bill nor

relieve the taxpayer of any interest or penalties associated with the original bill. If the owner of a homestead fails to declare a homestead as required under this section, the Commissioner shall notify the municipality, and the municipality shall issue a corrected tax bill. If the corrected bill is less than the original bill and there are also no unpaid current year taxes, interest, or penalties and no past year delinquent taxes or penalties and interest charges, any overpayment shall be reflected on the corrected tax bill and refunded to the taxpayer.

* * *

(i) An owner filing a new or corrected declaration or dwelling use attestation or rescinding an erroneous declaration or dwelling use attestation after October 15 shall not be entitled to a refund resulting from the correct property classification, and any additional property tax and interest that would result from the correct classification shall not be assessed as tax and interest, but shall instead constitute an additional penalty to be assessed and collected in the same manner as penalties under subsection (g) of this section. Any change in property classification under this subsection shall not be entered on the grand list.

(j) A taxpayer may appeal a determination of domicile for purposes of a homestead declaration or an assessment of fraud penalty under this section to the Commissioner in the same manner as an appeal under chapter 151 of this title. A taxpayer may appeal an assessment of any other penalty under this section to the listers within 14 days after the date of mailing of notice of the penalty, and from the listers to the board of civil authority, and thereafter to the courts, in the same manner as an appraisal appeal under chapter 131 of this title. The legislative body of a municipality shall have authority in cases of hardship to abate all or any portion of a penalty appealable to the listers under this section and any tax, penalty, and interest arising out of a corrected property classification under this section, and shall state in detail in writing the reasons for its grant or denial of the requested abatement. The legislative body may delegate this abatement authority to the board of civil authority or the board of abatement for the municipality. Requests for abatement shall be made to the municipal treasurer or other person designated to collect current taxes, and that person shall forward all requests, with that person's recommendation, to the body authorized to grant or deny abatement.

(k) A municipality may retain any penalties and interest assessed and collected in accord with this section.

(l) "Hardship" under this section means an owner's inability to pay as certified by the Commissioner of Taxes, in the Commissioner's discretion, or

means an owner filing an incorrect, or failing to file a correct, homestead declaration or dwelling use attestation due to one or more of the following:

(1) full-time active military duty of the declarant outside the State;

(2) serious illness or disability of the declarant;

(3) serious illness, disability, or death of an immediate family member of the declarant; and

(4) fire, flood, or other disaster.

(m)(1) Annually, on or before the due date for filing the Vermont income tax return, without extension, each owner of a property with a dwelling unit, as defined under subdivision 4152a(c)(2) of this title, that is not declared as a homestead pursuant to this section, may file a dwelling use attestation describing how the dwelling unit will be used in the current year for purposes of assigning a tax classification under section 4152a of this title. Properties with a dwelling unit for which no homestead declaration or dwelling use attestation have been filed shall be assigned the tax classification with the highest statewide education tax rate multiplier under section 5402(a) of this title. The Commissioner may collect any additional information through the attestation as required to administer the classification of properties pursuant to section 4152a of this title.

(2) If the Commissioner determines that a filed dwelling use attestation contains errors or omissions but does not find that the filing was made with fraudulent intent, the Commissioner shall notify the municipality, and the municipality shall issue a corrected tax bill that may, as determined by the governing body of the municipality, include a penalty of up to five percent of the education tax on the property. Any penalty imposed under this subdivision and any additional property tax interest and late-payment fee or commission shall be assessed and collected by the municipality in the same manner as a property tax under chapter 133 of this title. The municipality assessing and collecting any fee, interest, or commission under this subdivision shall retain it to pay for municipal services.

(3) If the Commissioner determines that a filed dwelling use attestation contains errors or omissions and further finds that the filing was made with fraudulent intent, then the Commissioner shall assess the taxpayer a penalty in an amount equal to 100 percent of the education tax on the property, plus any interest and late-payment fee that may be due. The Commissioner shall further notify the municipality, and the municipality shall issue a corrected tax bill. Any penalty imposed under this subdivision and any additional property tax

interest and late-payment fee shall be assessed and collected by the Commissioner.

Sec. 53b. PROPERTY TAX CLASSIFICATIONS; TRANSITION; DATA COLLECTION

For calendar year 2028, the Commissioner of Taxes shall amend and create forms so that taxpayers report information on the use of their property for such property to be classified as homestead, nonhomestead residential, nonhomestead nonresidential, or a proportional classification of those uses. The information collected, and classifications determined, shall align with the definitions and requirements of this act. The Commissioner shall use the information to determine and assign a tax classification for every grand list parcel, and on or before October 1, 2028, the Commissioner shall provide that information to the Joint Fiscal Office.

Sec. 53c. REPEALS

2025 Acts and Resolves No. 73, Secs. 60 (grand list contents), 61 (property tax classifications), 61a (transition; data collection), 61c (rate multipliers; intent), and 61d (prospective repeal) are repealed.

Sec. 53d. 32 V.S.A. § 5401 is amended to read:

§ 5401. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(7) "Homestead":

(A) "Homestead" means the principal dwelling and parcel of land surrounding the dwelling, owned and occupied by a resident individual as the individual's domicile or owned and fully leased on April 1, provided the property is not leased for more than 182 days out of the calendar year or, for purposes of the renter credit under subsection 6066(b) of this title, is rented and occupied by a resident individual as the individual's domicile.

(B) The parcel of land surrounding the dwelling shall be determined without regard to any road that intersects the land. If the parcel of land surrounding the dwelling is owned by a cooperative housing corporation incorporated under 11 V.S.A. chapter 14 or owned by a nonprofit land conservation corporation or community land trust with exempt status under 26 ~~U.S.C~~ U.S.C. § 501(c)(3), the homestead includes a pro rata part of the land upon which the dwelling is built, as determined by the cooperative corporation, nonprofit corporation, or land trust.

(C) A homestead may consist of a part of a multidwelling or multipurpose building, including cooperative property occupied as a permanent residence by a member of a cooperative housing corporation incorporated under 11 V.S.A. chapter 14. A mobile home may constitute a principal dwelling for purposes of this chapter.

(D) A dwelling owned by a trust may qualify as a homestead if it meets the requirements of subsection 6062(e) of this title.

(E)(i) A homestead also includes a dwelling on the homestead parcel owned by a farmer as defined under section 3752 of this title and occupied as the permanent residence by a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild of the farmer or by a shareholder, partner, or member of the farmer-owner, provided that the shareholder, partner, or member owns more than 50 percent of the farmer-owner, including attribution of stock ownership of a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild.

(ii) A homestead further includes the principal dwelling of a widow or widower, provided the dwelling is owned by the estate of the deceased spouse and it is reasonably likely that the dwelling will pass to the widow or widower by law or valid will when the estate is settled.

(F) A homestead also includes any other improvement or structure on the homestead parcel that is not used for business purposes, including a nonprincipal dwelling used exclusively by the owner for domestic purposes as part of the homestead on the same parcel. A homestead does not include that portion of a principal dwelling used for business purposes if the portion used for business purposes includes more than 25 percent of the floor space of the building.

(G) For purposes of homestead declaration and application of the homestead property tax rate, "homestead" also means a residence that was the homestead of the decedent at the date of death and, from the date of death through the next April 1, is held by the estate of the decedent and not rented.

(H) A homestead does not include any portion of a dwelling that is rented, and a dwelling is not a homestead for any portion of the year in which it is rented.

(I) A homestead also includes any dwelling that is used as a homestead without regard for whether it is fit for year-round habitation.

* * *

Sec. 53e. 32 V.S.A. § 5402 is amended to read:

§ 5402. EDUCATION PROPERTY TAX LIABILITY

(a) A statewide education tax is imposed on all nonhomestead and homestead property at the following rates:

(1) The tax rate for nonhomestead nonresidential and nonhomestead seasonal property shall be $1.59 per $100.00 divided by the statewide adjustment.

(2) The tax rate for homestead property shall be $1.00 multiplied by the education property tax spending adjustment for the municipality per $100.00 of equalized education property value as most recently determined under section 5405 of this title. The homestead property tax rate for each municipality that is a member of a union or unified union school district shall be calculated as required under subsection (e) of this section.

(3) The tax rate for nonhomestead residential property shall be $2.00 multiplied by the education property tax spending adjustment for the municipality per $100.00 of equalized education property value as most recently determined under section 5405 of this title. The Commissioner of Taxes shall determine a nonhomestead residential education tax rate for each municipality that is a member of a union or unified union school district using the same process as is used for homesteads under subsection (e) of this section. Nonhomestead residential property shall use the same property dollar equivalent yield as homesteads in the same municipality.

* * *

Sec. 53f. 32 V.S.A. § 5402b is amended to read:

§ 5402b. STATEWIDE EDUCATION TAX YIELDS; RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSIONER

(a) Annually, not later than December 1, the Commissioner of Taxes, after consultation with the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Administration, and the Joint Fiscal Office, shall calculate and recommend a property dollar equivalent yield, an income dollar equivalent yield, and a nonhomestead property tax rate for the following fiscal year. In making these calculations, the Commissioner shall assume:

* * *

(4) the percentage change in the average education tax bill applied to nonhomestead nonresidential property ~~and~~, the percentage change in the average education tax bill applied to nonhomestead seasonal property, the percentage change in the average education tax bill applied to nonhomestead residential property, the percentage change in the average education tax bill of homestead property, and the percentage change in the average education tax

bill for taxpayers who claim a credit under subsection 6066(a) of this title are equal;

* * *

Sec. 53g. 16 V.S.A. § 3444 is added to read:

§ 3444. SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AID SPECIAL FUND

(a) Creation. There is created the School Construction Aid Special Fund, to be administered by the Agency of Education. Monies in the Fund shall be used for the purposes of:

(1) awarding aid to school construction projects under section 3448 of this title, provided the construction contract requires the use of a project labor agreement for contractors and subcontractors engaged in the construction of the project;

(2) awarding grants through the Facilities Master Plan Grant Program established in section 3441 of this title;

(3) funding administrative costs of the State Aid for Capital Construction Costs program; and

(4) awarding emergency aid under section 3448 of this title.

(b) Funds. The Fund shall consist of:

(1) half of the revenue generated by education property tax imposed on nonhomestead residential properties;

(2) any amounts transferred or appropriated to it by the General Assembly; and

(3) any interest earned by the Fund.

Sec. 53h. 16 V.S.A. § 4025 is amended to read:

§ 4025. EDUCATION FUND

(a) The Education Fund is established to comprise the following:

(1) all revenue paid to the State from the statewide education tax on nonhomestead and homestead property under 32 V.S.A. chapter 135, except revenue deposited in the School Construction Aid Special Fund pursuant to subdivision 3444(b)(1) of this title;

* * *

Third: In Sec. 64, effective dates, by adding two new subdivisions to be subdivisions (9) and (10) to read as follows:

(9) Secs. 50 and 51 (income and investment taxes) shall take effect on January 1, 2027 and apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2027.

(10) Secs. 52, 53, 53a, 53d, 53e, 53f, 53g, and 53h (tax classifications and school construction fund) shall take effect on July 1, 2029.

Proposal of amendment to H. 933 to be offered by Senator White

Senator White moves that the Senate proposal of amendment be amended as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 50 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 50 to read as follows:

Sec. 50. 24 V.S.A. § 138 is amended to read:

§ 138. LOCAL OPTION TAXES

* * *

(d)(1) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section and subdivision (2) of this subsection with respect to taxes collected on the sale of aviation jet fuel, of the taxes collected under this section, 75 percent of the taxes shall be paid on a quarterly basis to the municipality in which they were collected, after reduction for the costs of administration and collection under subsection (c) of this section, provided that an additional five percent of the taxes collected shall be paid on a quarterly basis to the municipality in which they were collected in fiscal years that, at the close of the immediately preceding fiscal year, the Commissioner of Taxes determined that the balance of the PILOT Special Fund was in excess of $18,000,000.00 at that time. Revenues received by a municipality may be expended for municipal services only, and not for education expenditures. Any remaining revenue shall be deposited into the PILOT Special Fund established by 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

(2)(A) Of the taxes collected under this section on the sale of aviation jet fuel, on a quarterly basis, 70 percent of the taxes shall be paid to the municipality in which they were collected, and 30 percent shall be deposited in the Transportation Fund.

(B) All revenues referenced in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2) shall be used exclusively for aviation purposes consistent with 49 U.S.C. § 47133 and Federal Aviation Administration regulations and policies.

* * *

Second: In Sec. 64, effective dates, by adding a new subdivision to be subdivision (9) to read as follows:

(9) Sec. 50 (local option tax revenue) shall take effect on October 1, 2026.

Second Reading

Favorable

H. 674.

An act relating to the creation of the Vermont Sister State Program.

Reported favorably by Senator Brock for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 13, 2026, pages 3234-3243)

Reported favorably by Senator Perchlik for the Committee on Appropriations.

(Committee vote: 6-0-1)

Favorable with Proposal of Amendment

H. 512.

An act relating to the regulation of the event ticketing market.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Clarkson for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 2B is added to read:

Subchapter 2B. Event Tickets

§ 2479f. RESALE OF EVENT TICKETS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Independent venue" means an event space that derives a majority of its revenue from ticket events, is not majority owned by a publicly traded company, and does not operate venues in more than 10 states.

(2) "Price" means the total amount paid or to be paid for a ticket, including all taxes, fees, and charges. Price does not include actual shipping costs.

(3) "Resale" means the second or subsequent sale of a ticket by any method, including in-person transactions, telephone, mail, email, facsimile, or electronic means through websites or mobile phone applications.

(4) "Reseller" means a business entity engaged in the sale or resale of tickets. A "reseller" does not include an individual reselling a ticket purchased for personal use.

(5) "Secondary ticket exchange" means an electronic marketplace enabling the sale, purchase, and resale of tickets.

(6) "Speculative ticket" means a ticket not in the actual or constructive possession at the time a person lists, advertises, or offers the ticket for sale or resale. This includes tickets not owned or under contract to be transferred at the time of sale.

(7) "Ticket" means any form of physical, electronic, or other evidence that grants the possessor of the evidence license to enter a place of entertainment within the State for one or more events at a specified date and time.

(8) "Ticket issuer" means a person or entity that issues tickets for initial sale, including musicians, venues, promoters, theater companies, marketplaces for initial purchases, or their agents.

(b) Ticket disclosure requirements.

(1) A ticket issuer shall include on the face of a ticket in a clear and conspicuous manner the total price of the original ticket.

(2) A person operating a secondary ticket exchange shall provide a statement in a clear and conspicuous manner informing any customer:

(A) whether the customer is purchasing the ticket from a ticket issuer or a reseller as the case may be; and

(B) that the resale price of the ticket is limited by subsection (c) of this section.

(3) If a secondary ticket exchange provides information about the number or percentage of available tickets for a given event, the information shall not mislead customers about the availability of tickets on that platform or on other platforms.

(c) Price cap on the resale of event tickets.

(1) A ticket reseller shall not sell or offer for sale a ticket at a price greater than 110 percent of the price of an original ticket.

(2) A secondary ticket exchange shall not authorize for resale on the exchange a ticket for a price at greater than 110 percent of the price of an original ticket.

(3) This subsection shall apply to the resale of tickets where the event is held at an independent venue and where:

(A) the seating capacity of the venue is 3,000 individuals or fewer; or

(B) the event is to be held at a nonprofit venue that hosts agricultural fairs, exhibitions, or multiday community events in addition to live performances.

(4) This subsection shall not apply to the resale of a ticket under a written contract with the ticket issuer for the resale of tickets at a price greater than 110 percent of the price of the original ticket.

(d) Ban on deceptive URLs and improper use of intellectual property. It shall be unlawful for a secondary ticket exchange, reseller, or the operator of any website purporting to sell or offer for sale event tickets that links or redirects to a secondary ticket exchange or reseller to:

(1) use deceptive website addresses or imply endorsement or ownership of any intellectual property of the venue or artist without explicit written authorization of the venue or artist; or

(2) state or imply that the secondary ticket exchange, reseller, or website is affiliated with or endorsed by a venue, team, or artist, including by using words such as "official" in promotional materials, social media promotions, search engine optimization, paid advertising, URLs, or search engine monetization, unless the secondary ticket exchange, reseller, or website has the express written consent of the venue, team, or artist.

(e) Prohibition on speculative ticket sales. A person shall not sell or offer for sale speculative tickets.

(f) Violations. A person that violates a provision of this section commits an unfair and deceptive act in commerce in violation of section 2453 of this title.

Sec. 2. REPEAL

9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 2B is repealed on July 1, 2028.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of February 27, 2026, pages 3143-3145)

H. 941.

An act relating to municipal regulation of agriculture.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Ingalls for the Committee on Agriculture.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS AND INTENT; MUNICIPAL REGULATION OF AGRICULTURE

(a) For purposes of Sec. 2 of this act, the General Assembly finds that:

(1) Since at least the enactment of 2004 Acts and Resolves No. 115, it has been both the intent of the General Assembly and the controlling law that a municipality shall not regulate farming, including the construction of farm structures.

(2) The Vermont Supreme Court's decision in *In re 8 Taft Street DRB & NOV Appeals*, 2025 VT 27, reversed application of at least the past 20 years of law to hold that municipalities may regulate farming by municipal bylaw.

(3) To avoid the unintended consequences of the decision in *In re 8 Taft Street DRB & NOV Appeals*, 2025 VT 27, it is necessary for the General Assembly to clarify and restate that municipalities under ordinance or bylaw shall not regulate farming or the construction of farm structures as set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4413(d).

(4) In addition, municipalities shall not regulate by bylaw the growing of plants and the raising of a small backyard poultry flock, excluding roosters, and may reasonably regulate swine waste in designated downtowns or village centers.

(5) Farming livestock requires an adequate land base and that raising livestock on small parcels in densely populated areas may create unique concerns. As a result, municipalities may regulate livestock on farms that do not have at least 1.0 contiguous acre of land. Other farming activities subject

to regulation by the Required Agricultural Practices Rule on farms with less than 1.0 contiguous acre remain exempt from municipal zoning.

(b) For purposes of Sec. 2 of this act, it is the intent of the General Assembly to overturn the holding in *In re 8 Taft Street DRB & NOV Appeals*, 2025 VT 27, and to clarify that municipalities lack authority to regulate farming or the construction of farm structures as set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4413(d).

Sec. 2. 24 V.S.A. § 4413(d) is amended to read:

(d)(1) A bylaw under this chapter shall not regulate:

(A) ~~required agricultural practices, including the construction of farm structures, as those practices are defined by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets;~~ Farming that meets the minimum threshold criteria in the Required Agricultural Practices Rule (RAPs Rule) and is therefore required to comply with the RAPs Rule, except:

(i) notwithstanding subdivision (C) of this subdivision (1), that the raising, feeding, or managing of livestock on a farm with less than 1.0 contiguous acre is subject to applicable municipal zoning bylaws, including when a person is engaged in other farming activities that are subject to the RAPs Rule;

(ii) notwithstanding subdivision (C) of this subdivision (1), that the raising, feeding, or managing of livestock on a farm with at least 1.0 contiguous acre and less than 4.0 contiguous acres shall have a sufficient land base for appropriate nutrient and waste management as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food, and Markets to be exempt from regulation by municipal zoning bylaws; and

(iii) for swine waste in downtowns or village centers as follows:

(I) Municipalities shall not prohibit swine or swine waste, or regulate swine waste–related farm structures on a farm subject to the RAPs Rule.

(II) Municipalities may set a performance standard related to swine waste pursuant to section 4414 of this title to reasonably regulate swine waste in downtowns or village centers if the waste is causing a significant adverse impact to the community, and the municipality has determined that the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets is unable to provide redress through application of the RAPs Rule. A performance standard shall not have the effect of prohibiting swine or swine waste in a municipality.

(III) Municipalities shall provide at least 30 days' notice with opportunity to cure to the Secretary and the farm prior to enforcing a performance standard related to swine waste.

(IV) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, for purposes of this section, swine waste includes animal manure and absorbent bedding of the animal.

(B) The cultivation or other use of land for growing plants, including for food, fiber, Christmas trees, maple sap, or horticultural, viticultural, and orchard crops. Cannabis is separately regulated and is excluded from this exception.

(C) The raising, feeding, or managing of a small backyard poultry flock, excluding roosters.

(D) The construction of farm structures, including as defined in the RAPs Rule.

~~(B)~~(E) ~~accepted~~ Accepted silvicultural practices, as defined by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation, including practices that are in compliance with the Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont, as adopted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation~~; or~~.

~~(C)~~(F) ~~forestry~~ Forestry operations.

(2) As used in this section:

(A) "Downtown" means an area designated pursuant to chapter 76A or chapter 139 of this title.

(B) "Farm structure" means a building, enclosure, or fence for housing livestock, raising horticultural or agronomic plants, or carrying out other practices associated with ~~accepted~~ agricultural or farming practices, including a silo, ~~as "farming" is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22),~~ but excludes a dwelling for human habitation.

(C) "Farming" has the same meaning as in 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22) or the Required Agricultural Practices Rule.

~~(B)~~(D) "Forestry operations" has the same meaning as in 10 V.S.A. § 2602.

(E) "Poultry" has the same meaning as in 6 V.S.A. § 1459(4).

(F) "Village center" means an area designated pursuant to chapter 76A or chapter 139 of this title.

* * *

Sec. 3. Section 3 of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, Vermont Required Agricultural Practices Rule for the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program is amended to read:

Section 3. Required Agricultural Practices Activities and Applicability

3.1

(a) Persons engaged in farming and the agricultural practices as defined in Section 3.2 of this rule and who meet the minimum threshold criteria for applicability of this rule as found in Section 3.1~~(a) (g)~~(c)(1) ~~(8)~~ must meet all applicable Required Agricultural Practices conditions, restrictions, and operating standards.

(b) Persons engaged in farming and agricultural practices subject to this rule are not subject to municipal zoning bylaws except that the raising, feeding, or managing livestock on a farm with:

(1) at least 1.0 acre and less than 4.0 contiguous acres shall meet the requirements of subdivision (c)(5) of this section to be exempt from regulation by municipal zoning bylaws; or

(2) less than 1.0 contiguous acre is subject to applicable municipal zoning bylaws even when a person is engaged in other farming activities that are subject to this rule.

(c) Persons engaged in farming who are in compliance with these conditions, restrictions, and operating standards, as applicable, shall be presumed to not have a discharge of agricultural wastes to waters of the State. ~~Compliance~~ Unless otherwise stated, compliance with the Required Agricultural Practices Rule is required if a person meets one of the following requirements:

~~(a)~~(1) ~~is~~ Is required to be permitted or certified by the Secretary, consistent with the requirements of 6 V.S.A. Chapter 215 and this rule~~; or~~.

~~(b)~~(2) ~~has~~ Has produced an annual gross income from the sale of agricultural products of $2,000.00 or more in an average year~~; or~~.

~~(c)~~(3) ~~is~~ Is preparing, tilling, fertilizing, planting, protecting, irrigating, and harvesting crops for sale or for charitable contributions of farm crops that are allowable under 26 U.S.C. § 170(c) and that are made to an organization that is unrelated to the owner of the land on a farm that is no less than 4.0 contiguous acres in size~~; or~~.

~~(d)~~(4) ~~is~~ Is raising, feeding, or managing at least the following number of adult livestock on a farm that is no less than 4.0 contiguous acres in size:

~~(1)~~(A) four equines;

~~(2)~~(B) five cattle, cows, or American bison;

~~(3)~~(C) 15 swine;

~~(4)~~(D) 15 goats;

~~(5)~~(E) 15 sheep;

~~(6)~~(F) 15 cervids;

~~(7)~~(G) 50 turkeys;

~~(8)~~(H) 50 geese;

~~(9)~~(I) 100 laying hens;

~~(10)~~(J) 250 broilers, pheasant, Chukar partridge, or Coturnix quail;

~~(11)~~(K) three camelids;

~~(12)~~(L) four ratites;

~~(13)~~(M) 30 rabbits;

~~(14)~~(N) 100 ducks;

~~(15)~~(O) 1,000 pounds of cultured trout; or

~~(16)~~(P) other livestock types, combinations, or numbers as designated by the Secretary based upon or resulting from the impacts upon water quality consistent with this rule~~; or~~.

~~(e)~~(5) ~~is~~ Is raising, feeding, or managing ~~other~~ livestock ~~types, combinations, and numbers, or managing crops or engaging in other agricultural practices~~ on a farm that is at least 1.0 contiguous acre and less than 4.0 contiguous acres ~~in size that the Secretary has determined, after the opportunity for a hearing, to be causing adverse water quality impacts and in a municipality where no ordinances are in place to manage the activities causing the water quality impacts; or~~ and has sufficient land base for appropriate nutrient and waste management. The Secretary has the discretion to determine, after consultation with the appropriate municipal authority, if the land base is adequate to properly manage the number and type of livestock while evaluating whether compliance with the Required Agricultural Practices is reasonable or impractical.

~~(f)~~(6) Is raising, feeding, or managing livestock on less than 1.0 contiguous acre or on between 1.0 and 4.0 contiguous acres in a municipality that lacks ordinances or bylaws to regulate livestock, and the Secretary determines, after an opportunity for a hearing, that the livestock are causing significant adverse

water quality impacts and the Required Agricultural Practices should apply to protect water quality.

~~(g)~~(7) ~~is~~ Is managed by a farmer filing with the Internal Revenue Service a 1040(F) income tax statement in at least one of the past two years~~; or~~.

~~(g)~~(8) ~~has~~ Has a prospective business or farm management plan, approved by the Secretary, describing how the farm will meet the threshold requirements of this section.

3.2 The agricultural practices on farms ~~meeting~~ that meet the minimum threshold criteria set forth in Section 3.1 that are governed by this rule and are not subject to municipal zoning bylaws include:

(a) the confinement, feeding, fencing, and watering of livestock;

(b) the storage and handling of agricultural wastes principally produced on the farm;

(c) the collection of maple sap principally produced from trees on the farm and/or production of maple syrup from sap principally produced on the farm;

(d) the preparation, tilling, fertilization, planting, protection, irrigation, and harvesting of crops;

(e) the ditching and subsurface drainage of farm fields and the construction of farm ponds;

(f) the stabilization of farm fields adjacent to banks of surface water, and the establishment and maintenance of vegetated buffer zones and riparian buffer zones;

(g) the construction and maintenance of farm structures, farm roads, and associated infrastructure;

(h) the on-site storage, preparation, production, and sale of fuel or power from agricultural products or wastes principally produced on the farm;

(i) the on-site storage, preparation, and sale of agricultural products principally produced on the farm from raw agricultural commodities principally produced on the farm;

(j) the on-site storage of agricultural inputs for use on the farm including, but not limited to, lime, fertilizer, pesticides, compost and other soil amendments, and the equipment necessary for operation of the farm; and

(k) the management of livestock mortalities produced on the farm.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 31, 2026, pages 3715-3718)

House Proposal of Amendment

S. 255.

An act relating to establishing a pilot Law Enforcement Governance Council in Windham County.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill in Sec. 7, reporting and evaluation, by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) On or before September 30, 2030, and again on or before December 31, 2033, the Council, in consultation with the Windham County Sheriff and Windham County Assistant Judges, shall submit a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot program to the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations, including:

(1) an assessment of cost-effectiveness compared to alternative service delivery models;

(2) an analysis of service quality improvements;

(3) an evaluation of the governance model's effectiveness;

(4) recommendations regarding continuation, modification, or expansion of the program; and

(5) a proposed framework for statewide replication, if warranted.

NOTICE CALENDAR

Second Reading
Favorable
H. 635.

An act relating to eliminating Department of Corrections supervisory fees.

Reported favorably by Senator Plunkett for the Committee on Institutions.

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 10, 2026, pages 3150)

H. 814.

An act relating to neurological rights and the use of artificial intelligence technology in health and human services.

Reported favorably by Senator Gulick for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 17, 2026, pages 3313-3316)

Reported favorably by Senator Lyons for the Committee on Appropriations.

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

Favorable with Proposal of Amendment

H. 536.

An act relating to toxic heavy metals in baby food products.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Gulick for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. chapter 82 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 82. LABELING OF FOODS, DRUGS, COSMETICS, AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Subchapter 1. ~~Labeling for Marketing and Sale~~ General Provisions

* * *

Subchapter 3. Testing and Labeling of Certain Products

§ 4091. BABY FOOD PRODUCTS

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Baby food product" means any food manufactured, packaged, and labeled in a jar, pouch, tub, or box sold specifically for babies and children younger than two years of age. "Baby food product" does not include infant formula.

(2) "Final baby food product" means the finished baby food product and not the constituent ingredients.

(3) "Infant formula" means a commercially available milk-based or soy-based powder, concentrated liquid, or ready-to-feed substitute for human breast milk that is intended for infant consumption.

(4) "Production aggregate" means a quantity of product that is intended to have a uniform composition, character, and quality and is produced according to a master manufacturing order.

(5) "Proficient laboratory" means a laboratory that:

(A) is accredited under the standards of the International Organization for Standardization or the International Electrotechnical Commission pursuant to standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017;

(B) uses an analytical method as sensitive as the analytical method described in the U.S. FDA's Elemental Analysis Manual for Food and Related Products; and

(C) demonstrates proficiency in quantifying each toxic element to at least six micrograms of the toxic element to kilogram of food through an independent proficiency test by achieving a z-score that is less than or equal to plus or minus two.

(6) "QR code" means a two-dimensional matrix barcode consisting of blocks arranged in a grid that can be read by an imaging device.

(7) "Representative sample" means a sample that consists of a number of units that are drawn based on rational criteria, including random sampling, and intended to ensure that the sample accurately portrays the material being sampled.

(8) "Toxic heavy metal" means arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury.

(9) "URL" means a uniform resource locator.

(10) "U.S. FDA" means the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

(b) A person shall not sell, distribute, or offer for sale any baby food product in the State that contains a toxic heavy metal that exceeds the regulatory limits established by the U.S. FDA. The provisions of this subsection shall not restrict the continued sale of inventory in stock before January 1, 2027.

(c) A manufacturer of a baby food sold or distributed in the State shall test a representative sample of each production aggregate of the manufacturer's final baby food product for toxic heavy metals. Testing of a baby food product shall be conducted by a proficient laboratory at least once a month. A manufacturer of baby food may test the final baby food product before

packaging individual units for sale or distribution. Upon request of the Office of the Attorney General, a manufacturer shall provide the results of the test conducted pursuant to this subsection.

(d)(1) Without requiring the provision of a universal product code or proof of purchase, for each baby food product sold, manufactured, delivered, held, or offered for sale in the State, a manufacturer of baby food shall make publicly available on its website for the duration of the product shelf life of a final baby food product, plus one month:

(A) the name and level of each toxic heavy metal in the final baby food product as determined by the testing conducted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section;

(B) sufficient information, including the product name, universal product code, or lot or batch number, to enable consumers to identify the final baby food product; and

(C) a link to the U.S. FDA's website that provides the most recent U.S. FDA guidance and information about the health effects of toxic heavy metals on children.

(2) A baby food product that is sold online to a consumer in Vermont by either a retailer or directly by the manufacturer shall contain on the product's web page a clearly labeled link to an information page containing the information required pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(e) If a baby food product sold or distributed in the State is tested for a toxic heavy metal subject to an action level, regulatory limit, or tolerance established by the U.S. FDA under 21 C.F.R. § 109, the manufacturer shall display on the baby food product:

(1) a label stating in a clear, legible, and conspicuous manner that more information about toxic element testing on the product is available by scanning the QR code; and

(2) a QR code or other machine-readable code that directs the consumers to the manufacturer's website or the baby food product information page providing:

(A) the test results for the toxic heavy metal; and

(B) a URL to the web page on the U.S. FDA's website that includes the most recent guidance and information about the health effects of toxic heavy metals on children.

(f) If a consumer reasonably believes, based on the information provided on the baby food product, that the baby food product is being sold in the State

in violation of this section, the consumer may report the baby food product to the Office of the Attorney General.

(g) A violation of this section shall be deemed a violation of the Consumer Protection Act, 9 V.S.A. chapter 63. The Attorney General has the same authority, and private parties have the same rights and remedies, as provided under 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 1.

(h) Nothing in this section shall be construed to conflict with federal law or regulation.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 4091 is amended to read:

§ 4091. BABY FOOD PRODUCTS

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Baby food product" means any infant formula or food manufactured, packaged, and labeled in a jar, pouch, tub, or box sold specifically for babies and children younger than two years of age. ~~"Baby food product" does not include infant formula.~~

* * *

(g) The Attorney General, in consultation with the Commissioner of Health, shall suspend the application of this section to infant formula if the Attorney General verifies that there is insufficient infant formula in the State to meet the need or evidence of a declining supply. If the Attorney General suspends application, the Attorney General shall post notice on the Office of the Attorney General's website containing specific dates that the suspension is in effect.

(h) A violation of this section shall be deemed a violation of the Consumer Protection Act, 9 V.S.A. chapter 63. The Attorney General has the same authority, and private parties have the same rights and remedies, as provided under 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 1.

~~(h)~~(i) Nothing in this section shall be construed to conflict with federal law or regulation.

Sec. 3. INFANT FORMULA; STOCK SUPPLY

The provisions of Sec. 2 (18 V.S.A. § 4091) of this act shall not restrict the continued sale of infant formula inventory in stock in Vermont prior to the effective date of Sec. 2 of this act pursuant to Sec. 4(b) of this act.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section, Sec. 1 (18 V.S.A. chapter 82), and Sec. 3 (infant formula; stock supply) shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

(b) Sec. 2 (18 V.S.A. § 4091) shall take effect upon the Attorney General's written confirmation to the Speaker of the House and to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, which shall be posted on the General Assembly's website, that a law has taken effect in California or two other states with requirements substantially comparable to the requirements of this act regarding all of the following:

(1) the prohibition on the sale and distribution of infant formula that contains a toxic heavy metal exceeding U.S. Food and Drug Administration limits;

(2) the required testing of infant formula sold or distributed in the state for toxic heavy metals; and

(3) the labeling of infant formula and the provision of information about toxic heavy metals in infant formula.

(Committee vote: 3-2-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 18, 2026, pages 3381-3385)

H. 639.

An act relating to genetic data privacy.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Clarkson for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 9 V.S.A. chapter 61A, in section 2421b, in subsection (d), by striking out subdivisions (2) and (3) in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (2) to read as follows:

(2) Genetic data and biological samples of consumers shall:

(A) not be stored within the territorial boundaries of any country currently sanctioned in any way by the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control or designated as a foreign adversary under 15 C.F.R. § 7.4(a); and

(B) only be transferred or stored outside the United States with the express consent of the consumer.

Second: In Sec. 1, 9 V.S.A. chapter 61A, in section 2421c, by adding a new subsection to be subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c)(1) A consumer pursuing a civil action pursuant to subsection 2461(b) of this title against a direct-to-consumer genetic testing company or service provider for an alleged violation of this subchapter shall, before initiating the civil action, send a written notice to the company or service provider that includes as many details as possible of the alleged violation.

(2) If the company or service provider does not cure the alleged violation within 60 days after the notice is received by the company or service provider or if there is a disagreement as to whether the alleged violation has been cured, the consumer shall have the right to initiate a civil action against the company or service provider pursuant to subsection 2461(b) of this title.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of February 24, 2026, pages 3108-3118)

H. 657.

An act relating to various programming and requirements within the Department for Children and Families.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Morley for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Removing Reach Up Asset Limit * * *

Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 1103 is amended to read:

§ 1103. ELIGIBILITY AND BENEFIT LEVELS

* * *

(c) The Commissioner shall adopt rules for the determination of eligibility for the Reach Up program and benefit levels for all participating families that include the following provisions:

* * *

(5)~~(A) The asset limitation shall be $9,000.00 for families for the purposes of determining initial and continuing eligibility for the Reach Up program, and the following savings accounts shall not be considered in the calculation for determining the asset limitation:~~

~~(i) a retirement account, such as an individual retirement arrangement (IRA), a defined contribution plan qualified under 26 U.S.C. § 401(k), or any similar account as defined in 26 U.S.C. § 408; and~~

~~(ii) a qualified child education savings account, such as the Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan, established in 16 V.S.A. § 2877, or any similar plan qualified under 26 U.S.C. § 529.~~

~~(B) The value of assets accumulated from the earnings of adults and children in participating families and from any federal or Vermont earned income tax credit shall be excluded for purposes of determining continuing eligibility for the Reach Up program.~~ The Department shall not impose an asset limit for the purpose of initial and continuing eligibility for the Reach Up program.

* * *

* * * Social Security Benefits for Youth in Foster Care * * *

Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 4902 is amended to read:

§ 4902. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Child" means a person under 18 years of age committed by the Family Division of the Superior Court to the Department for Children and Families.

(2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner for Children and Families.

(3) "Department" means the Department for Children and Families.

(4) "Foster care" means care of a child, for a valuable consideration, in a child care institution or in a family other than that of the child's parent, guardian, or relative.

(5) "Qualified ABLE account" means an ABLE account, as that term is defined in section 8002 of this title, or an account established pursuant to any qualified state ABLE program created pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 529A (section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

(6) "Representative payee" means the person appointed by the Social Security Administration to manage Social Security benefits for a child.

(7) "RSDI benefits" means a child's retirement, survivors, or disability insurance benefits under 42 U.S.C. chapter 7, subchapter II (Title II of the Social Security Act).

(8) "Social Security Act" means the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. chapter 7, as may be amended.

(9) "Social Security benefits" means a child's RSDI benefits, SSI benefits, or both, as applicable.

(10) "SSI benefits" means a child's Supplemental Security Income benefits under 42 U.S.C. chapter 7, subchapter XVI (Title XVI of the Social Security Act).

Sec. 3. 33 V.S.A. § 4907 is added to read:

§ 4907. FOSTER CARE; SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

(a) The Department shall not use any portion of a child's Social Security benefits to offset the State's costs for the child's maintenance except to maintain the child's eligibility for SSI benefits and to avoid a violation of federal asset or resource limits.

(b) Upon the request of the child or the child's foster care provider, the Department, in its capacity as representative payee for a child, may use the child's Social Security benefits for the child's unmet needs beyond the amount that the State is obligated, required, or agrees to pay for the care of the child.

(c) In its capacity as representative payee for a child and with the assistance of the State Treasurer, the Department shall:

(1) establish a trust account for the child, which shall be a qualified ABLE account for any child receiving SSI benefits;

(2) monitor any federal asset or resource limits for the child's SSI benefits;

(3) ensure that the child's best interests are served by using the child's Social Security benefits for the child's unmet needs or conserving the child's Social Security benefits in a way that avoids violating any federal asset or resource limits that would affect the child's ability to receive SSI benefits;

(4) appeal any denied application for SSI benefits submitted on behalf of a child; and

(5) provide an annual accounting of the use, application, or conservation of the child's Social Security benefits, including any payments made under subsection (b) of this section, to the child; the child's parent, legal guardian, or counsel; the Family Division of the Superior Court; and the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate.

* * * Enabling Unaccompanied Youth to Obtain Certain Services Without Parental Consent * * *

Sec. 4. 33 V.S.A. § 4908 is added to read:

§ 4908. UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH

(a) Legislative intent. In instances in which severe family dysfunction such as abuse, neglect, child abandonment, or lack of financial support has left a youth who is 16 or 17 years of age homeless, and other supports such as foster care are deemed inappropriate, it is the intent of the General Assembly to provide an unaccompanied youth with the resources necessary to obtain services and benefits that the unaccompanied youth's peers can obtain with the consent of a parent or guardian.

(b) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Homeless child or youth" means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

(A) a child or youth sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;

(B) a child or youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;

(C) a child or youth living in emergency or transitional shelters;

(D) a child or youth abandoned in hospitals;

(E) a child or youth living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

(F) a child or youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or

(G) a migratory child who qualifies as homeless because the child is living in the circumstances described in this subdivision (1).

(2) "School district homeless liaison" means an employee designated by a school district to act as a liaison for homeless children and youths.

(3) "Unaccompanied youth" means a homeless child or youth 16 or 17 years of age who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

(c) Certification. An unaccompanied youth may become certified if the youth is:

(1) found by a school district homeless liaison or other appropriate staff person to be an unaccompanied youth; or

(2) believed to qualify as an unaccompanied youth, by:

(A) the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the State;

(B) the director of a runaway or homeless youth program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or designee;

(C) a continuum of care lead agency or designee;

(D) the Chief Juvenile Defender or designee; or

(E) the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence or designee.

(d) Proof of certification.

(1)(A) The Department shall contract with a community organization that serves homeless and runaway youth in Vermont to develop a standardized form that shall be used by the entities specified in subsection (c) of this section to certify qualifying unaccompanied youths. The front of the form shall include the circumstances that qualify the youth; the date the youth was certified; the name, title, and signature of the certifying individual; and confirmation from the certifying individual that the individual has completed a human trafficking training in the past two years. This section shall be reproduced in its entirety on the back of the form.

(B) The Department shall post the certification form and information about this section on its website, including who is eligible for certification and which individuals and entities can complete the certification form pursuant to this section.

(2) Without the consent of a parent or guardian, a certified unaccompanied youth may use the completed form to:

(A) apply at no charge for a nondriver identification card pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 115, a learner's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 617, or an operator's license or operator's privilege card pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 608;

(B) obtain a vital event certificate at no charge pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 5017;

(C) consent to care by health care professionals licensed or certified in Vermont, including medical care; dental care; mental health care services, including psychological counseling and treatment, psychiatric treatment, and substance use prevention and treatment services; and surgical diagnosis and

treatment, including medical diagnosis and treatment, such as preventive care and care provided in a health care facility, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9432, for:

(i) the youth; or

(ii) the youth's child, if the certified unaccompanied youth is unmarried, is the parent of the child, and has actual custody of the child;

(D) enter into a contract for housing or obtain admission to a shelter or transitional housing;

(E) obtain employment, pursuant to 21 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 4;

(F) purchase an automobile and obtain an automobile liability policy that meets the requirements of 23 V.S.A. chapter 11;

(G) apply for a student loan;

(H) obtain admission to high school or postsecondary school and participate in school activities, including extracurricular activities and field trips;

(I) open an account at a State- or federally chartered bank or credit union;

(J) receive services for victims of domestic or sexual violence, as appropriate; and

(K) participate in a court diversion program pursuant to 3 V.S.A. §§ 163 and 164 or the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 656.

(e) Use of certification form. A health care professional shall accept the completed form as proof of the youth's status as a certified unaccompanied youth. Entities that provide housing, services, or benefits authorized under this section may keep a copy of the form or card in the youth's medical file.

(f) Consent of a parent or guardian.

(1) A certification issued pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall authorize an unaccompanied youth to obtain benefits and services listed in subsection (d) of this section. A person, provider, or health care professional shall not require the consent of a parent or guardian as a condition of providing a benefit or service authorized under subsection (d) of this section.

(2) For the purposes of implementing subdivision (d)(2)(I) of this section, the Commissioner of Financial Regulation shall ensure that minimum youth certification requirements are met for the purpose of making it legally

permissible for a bank, credit union, or insurance company to contract with an unaccompanied youth without the consent of a parent or guardian and with the understanding that the unaccompanied youth may not have a permanent physical address.

(g) Immunity for liability. Any entity, provider, or health care professional who relies in good faith on a certification form presented by a person who claims to be a certified unaccompanied youth pursuant to this section shall be immune from liability for such reliance, unless the entity, provider, or health care professional acted with gross negligence.

(h) Applicability of Compact. Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.

Sec. 4a. 13 V.S.A. § 1311 is amended to read:

§ 1311. UNLAWFUL SHELTERING; AIDING A RUNAWAY CHILD

* * *

(b) A person commits the crime of unlawfully sheltering or aiding a runaway child if the person:

(1) knowingly shelters a runaway child;

(2) intentionally aids, helps, or assists a child to become a runaway child; or

(3) knowingly takes, entices, or harbors a runaway child, with the intent of committing a criminal act involving the child or with the intent of enticing or forcing the child to commit a criminal act.

(c) Exempt from the prohibitions of subdivisions (b)(1) and (2) of this section are:

(1) a shelter, or the directors, agents, or employees of a shelter, designated by the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 5304, provided that the requirements of 33 V.S.A. § 5303(b) are satisfied; ~~and~~

(2) a person who has taken the child into custody pursuant to 33 V.S.A § 5251 or 5301; and

(3) a person providing assistance pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908.

* * *

* * * Unaccompanied Youth; Vital Event Certificates * * *

Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 5017 is amended to read:

§ 5017. FEES FOR COPIES

(a) For a certified copy of a vital event certificate, the fee shall be $10.00.

(b) The State Registrar shall waive the fee for certified copies of vital event certificates issued to:

(1) an individual attesting to a lack of fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; ~~and~~

(2) an individual between 18 and 24 years of age who resided in a foster home or residential child care facility between 16 and 18 years of age pursuant to placement by a child-placing agency; and

(3) an unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908.

* * * Unaccompanied Youth; Nondriver Identification Cards * * *

Sec. 6. 23 V.S.A. § 115 is amended to read:

§ 115. NONDRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARDS

(a)(1) Any Vermont resident may make application to the Commissioner and be issued an identification card that is attested by the Commissioner as to true name, correct age, residential address unless the listing of another address is requested by the applicant or is otherwise authorized by law, and any other identifying data as the Commissioner may require that shall include, in the case of minor applicants, the written consent of the applicant's parent, guardian, or other person standing in loco parentis.

* * *

(3) The Commissioner shall require payment of a fee of $29.00 at the time application for an identification card is made, except that an initial nondriver identification card shall be issued at no charge to:

(A) an individual who surrenders the individual's license in connection with a suspension or revocation under subsection 636(b) of this title due to a physical or mental condition; or

(B) an individual under 23 years of age who was in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age; and

(C) an unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908.

* * *

* * * Unaccompanied Youth; License and Privilege Cards * * *

Sec. 7. 23 V.S.A. § 608 is amended to read:

§ 608. FEES

* * *

(c)(1) Individuals under 23 years of age who were in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age shall be provided with operator's licenses or operator privilege cards at no charge.

(2) No additional fee shall be due for a motorcycle endorsement for an individual under 23 years of age who was in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age.

(d) Individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Income and individuals with a disability as defined in 9 V.S.A. § 4501 shall be provided with operator's licenses or operator privilege cards for the following fees:

(1) Original issuance: $20.00.

(2) Renewal every four years: $20.00.

(3) Replacement of lost, destroyed, or mutilated card or a new name is required: $10.00.

(e)(1) An unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908 shall be provided with operator's licenses or operator privilege cards at no charge.

(2) No additional fee shall be due for a motorcycle endorsement for an unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908.

* * * Unaccompanied Youth; Learner's Permit * * *

Sec. 8. 23 V.S.A. § 617 is amended to read:

§ 617. LEARNER'S PERMIT

* * *

(b)(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, any licensed person may apply to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for a learner's permit for the operation of a motorcycle in the form prescribed by the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall offer both a motorcycle learner's permit that authorizes the operation of three-wheeled motorcycles only and a

motorcycle learner's permit that authorizes the operation of any motorcycle. The Commissioner shall require payment of a fee of $24.00 at the time application is made, except that no fee shall be charged for an unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908 or for an individual under 23 years of age who was in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age.

(2) After the applicant has successfully passed all parts of the applicable motorcycle endorsement examination, other than a skill test, the Commissioner may issue to the applicant a learner's permit that entitles the applicant, subject to subsection 615(a) of this title, to operate a three-wheeled motorcycle only, or to operate any motorcycle, upon the public highways for a period of 120 days from the date of issuance. The fee for the examination shall be $11.00, except that no fee shall be charged for an unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908 or for an individual under 23 years of age who was in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age.

(3) A motorcycle learner's permit may be renewed only twice upon payment of a $24.00 fee. An unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908 and an individual under 23 years of age who was in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age shall not be charged a fee for the renewal of a motorcycle learner's permit.

* * *

(d)(1) An applicant shall pay $24.00 to the Commissioner for each learner's permit or a duplicate or renewal thereof.

(2) An unaccompanied youth who has obtained a certification pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4908 and an applicant under 23 years of age who was in the care and custody of the Commissioner for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 4903(4) in Vermont after attaining 14 years of age shall not be charged a fee for a learner's permit or a duplicate or renewal thereof.

* * *

* * * Transportation of Children * * *

Sec. 9. 33 V.S.A. § 5123 is amended to read:

§ 5123. TRANSPORTATION OF A CHILD

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Least restrictive" has the same meaning as in section 5130 of this chapter.

(2) "Mechanical restraint" has the same meaning as in section 5130 of this chapter.

(3) "Physical restraint" has the same meaning as in section 5130 of this chapter.

(4) "Secure transport" means transport in a vehicle with disabled internal controls for rear door handles and window switches, requiring the driver to open them from the outside, or with a safety partition installed to separate the driver from the passenger compartment. "Secure transport" includes any vehicle being driven by a law enforcement officer.

(5) "Soft restraint" has the same meaning as in section 5130 of this chapter.

(6) "Waist shackles" means a mechanical restraint device, typically a chain, used around the waist and to which the child's wrists may be chained or cuffed.

(b) The Commissioner for Children and Families shall ensure that all reasonable and appropriate measures consistent with public safety are made to transport or escort a child subject to this chapter in a manner that:

(1) ~~reasonably avoids~~ prevents physical and psychological trauma;

(2) respects the privacy of the child; and

(3) represents the least restrictive means necessary for the safety of the child.

~~(b)~~(c) The Commissioner for Children and Families shall have the authority to ~~select the person or persons who may transport a child under the Commissioner~~'s ~~care and custody~~ designate the professional or law enforcement officers transporting children and shall authorize the method of transport. A contract for transportation services shall include the requirements in this section. Transportation services with noncontracted law enforcement officers shall only be authorized in emergency situations or by court order.

~~(c)~~(d) The Commissioner shall ~~ensure supervisory review of every decision to transport a child using mechanical restraints. When transportation with restraints for a particular child is approved, the reasons for the approval shall be documented in writing~~ provide education materials complying with this section that outline the legal requirements for the secure transportation of

children to individuals designated pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and shall obtain verification that all designated individuals have reviewed the education materials.

~~(d)~~(e) Secure transport shall only be used when the Department determines and documents why it is necessary to prevent the risk of serious physical harm to the child or others, based upon an individualized risk assessment.

~~(e)~~(f) It is the policy of the State of Vermont that mechanical restraints are not routinely used on children subject to this chapter unless circumstances dictate that such methods are necessary. Soft restraints shall be the first option for restraint, and other mechanical restraints shall not be utilized as a substitute for soft restraints if the soft restraints are deemed adequate for safety.

(g) An entity contracted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall provide documentation to the Department for the use of restraints when:

(1) the entity believes that the risk of serious physical harm to the child or others requires the use of soft restraints before or during the transport, including a description as to why less restrictive interventions could not reasonably be attempted or why the attempted use of less restrictive interventions was unsuccessful;

(2) the entity believes that the risk of serious physical harm to the child or others was such that soft restraints were not adequate for safety and shall include a description as to which restraint was used and why soft restraints were deemed inadequate for preventing the risk of serious physical harm to the child or others; or

(3) the use of waist shackles was determined to be the sole means of preventing serious physical harm to the child or others and shall include a description as to why waist shackles were the sole means of preventing the risk of serious physical harm to the child or others.

(h) Documentation for the use of restraints shall be completed prior to transport unless the circumstances that required their use occurred during the course of the transport, in which case the documentation shall occur after completion of the transport.

(i) The use of waist shackles shall be prohibited on children 12 years of age or younger. The use of waist shackles on children 13 years of age or older shall be assessed and determined to be the sole means of preventing serious physical harm to the child or others and documented accordingly. Only designated law enforcement agencies shall use waist shackles on a child transported pursuant to this section.

(j) The Commissioner shall ensure supervisory review by the Department of all documentation required by this section.

(k)(1) Annually, on or before January 15, the Department for Children and Families shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Human Services; the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare; and the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate addressing the number of secure transports of children during the previous year, including, for those transported with restraints:

(A) the age, gender, and racial background of the children transported;

(B) the number of children transported using mechanical restraints;

(C) whether the transport was conducted by law enforcement or a private agency;

(D) when applicable, the type of mechanical restraint;

(E) the type of custody children were in when transport occurred; and

(F) the purpose of the transport.

(2) Once the Department has upgraded its technological capacity in a manner that enables it to collect responsive data, information specific to subdivisions (1)(B), (C), (E), and (F) of this subsection shall be collected and included in the annual report with regard to all secure transports.

(l) Annually, on or before January 15, the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Human Services; the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare; the Department for Children and Families; and the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate addressing the number of court-ordered transports of minors conducted by the State transport deputies pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 290(b) during the previous year, including:

(1) the date of birth of transported minors;

(2) whether restraint was used during transport;

(3) if restraint was used, the type of restraint;

(4) whether the minor's case was a delinquency, youthful offender, or criminal proceeding; and

(5) the purpose of the transport.

Sec. 10. REPORT; RESTRAINT IN TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

(a) On or before December 15, 2027, the Department for Children and Families shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare addressing how the Department is effectuating the policies set forth in 33 V.S.A. § 5123(d) and 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. E.314, including:

(1) contracting with law enforcement or private agencies for the transport of children;

(2) Departmental oversight and supervisory review of the secure transport of children, including transport provided by private agencies or law enforcement officers;

(3) the mechanism used by the Department to collect and review data on the application of mechanical restraints during the transport of children in compliance with 33 V.S.A. § 5123(c);

(4) materials and requirements for designated contractors;

(5) written policies used to effectuate the law; and

(6) other information the Department deems relevant.

(b) As used in this section, "restraint" has the same meaning as in 33 V.S.A. §5130.

Sec. 11. USE OF FORCE POLICY

The Vermont Criminal Justice Council, in consultation with the Department of Vermont State's Attorneys and Sheriffs; the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate; Disability Rights Vermont; and the Departments for Children and Families and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living shall conduct a formal review to determine whether its use of force policy should include an appendix to adequately address the transportation by law enforcement of children under 18 years of age that is in alignment with the public policy considerations for the transport of children in the custody of the Department for Children and Families pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 5123.

* * * Restraint and Seclusion * * *

Sec. 12. 33 V.S.A. § 5130 is added to read:

§ 5130. NON-TRANSPORT RELATED RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Chemical restraint" means any medication used to manage behavior or restrict freedom of movement that is not a standard treatment or dosage for the individual's condition.

(2) "Child" or "children" means a child or children in the Department's custody or receiving care or services in a program regulated or licensed by the Department.

(3) "Mechanical restraint" means a type of restraint using a mechanical device, material, or equipment, or garment attached to the child's body, that restricts freedom of movement or immobilizes or reduces the ability of a child to move the child's arms, legs, body, or head freely.

(4) "Physical restraint" means a type of restraint using a manual or physical hold that restricts freedom of movement or immobilizes or reduces the ability of a child to move the child's arms, legs, body, or head freely. A physical restraint shall not include a light touch to encourage a response or to provide direction or guidance, provided the child is able to move away freely.

(5) "Prone restraint" means a physical intervention technique where an individual is held face down on the individual's stomach. "Prone restraint" does not include a physical restraint that involves a momentary initial hold in a prone position while transitioning to an evidence-based, safer form of restraint that is not considered to be a prohibited form of physical restraint.

(6) "Seclusion" means involuntary confinement of a child in a segregated room or area from which the child is prevented or from which the child reasonably believes that the child is prevented from leaving, whether the door is locked or not. "Seclusion" does not include a voluntary time out under staff supervision for a short period of time in an unlocked room at the child's request.

(7) "Strip search" means a search that requires a child to remove or arrange some clothing so as to permit a visual inspection of the child's breasts, buttocks, or genitalia. "Strip search" does not include a pat down through the child's clothing to determine whether contraband is present.

(8) "Least restrictive" means the minimum intervention necessary to prevent harm to the child or to another, maximizing a child's autonomy, ensuring that restrictions are proportionate to the risk of harm, and ensuring involuntary measures are only permitted as a last resort when less intrusive methods have failed.

(9) "Soft restraint" means a mechanical restraint device that uses soft material or fabric that is padded and designed to safely fit around the limbs of an individual to limit mobility in order to prevent self-harm or harm to others.

(10) "Secure residential program" means a secure residential treatment program that employs locked or inoperable doors and windows to prevent a child from leaving the building.

(b) The Department shall not use or authorize the use of prone restraints, mechanical restraints, chemical restraints, or strip searches on a child.

(c) Seclusion or physical restraint shall not be used for punishment, disciplinary purposes, the protection of property, or any other reason other than as a safety measure of last resort to prevent a serious and immediate risk of harm to the child or others.

(d) A staff member shall use other less restrictive interventions, unless less restrictive interventions have failed or would be ineffective in stopping imminent danger of physical injury or property damage.

(e) After attempting to use less restrictive interventions, a staff member trained in accordance with rule may physically restrain a child or place a child in seclusion if the staff member:

(1) determines that the child's behavior poses a serious and immediate risk of physical harm to the child or others;

(2) conducts the physical restraint or seclusion in a manner that respects the child's privacy and limits physical and psychological trauma; and

(3) after initiation of the intervention, explains to the child the reasons for the physical restraint or seclusion and informs the child of the circumstances that allow release from the physical restraint or seclusion.

(f) If a child is placed in physical restraint or seclusion pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, the child shall be released immediately when there is no longer a serious and immediate risk of physical harm to the child or others.

(g)(1) Restraint or seclusion lasting more than 10 minutes shall require supervisory approval and oversight. Restraint or seclusion lasting more than 30 minutes shall require clinical and administrative consultation, approval, and oversight. A child shall not be held for more than one hour in restraint or seclusion without an in-person assessment by a clinician and authorization by the administrator on duty.

(2) A child in seclusion shall be provided constant uninterrupted supervision by a qualified staff member employed by the program who is familiar to the child.

(h) Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

(1) include a locked bedroom during regular sleeping hours in a secure residence as seclusion; or

(2) conflict with any law providing greater or additional protections to minors.

(i) Notice of the use of restraint or seclusion on a child in the Department's custody shall be provided to the Department; the child's parent or guardian; the child's guardian ad litem; and the child's attorney, if applicable, within 24 hours.

(j) The program or staff member using seclusion or restraint shall document its use and provide a copy of each recorded use of seclusion or restraint, including a copy of any audio or visual recording, to the Commissioner. Upon request, the audio or video shall be provided through secure means of transmission and shall include blurring to protect the identity of any other children in the program who are not in custody of the Department. The documentation shall include a description of the child's specific behaviors justifying the use of the intervention. The Department shall forward complete documentation of each use of restraint or seclusion to the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate within two business days.

(k) The Department shall collect the following data on the use of seclusion and physical restraint, by placement type; program name; and the age, gender, and racial background of the child:

(1) the specific types of the seclusion or physical restraint used; and

(2) the length of time a child was secluded or physically restrained, as applicable.

(l)(1) Prior to contracting with any program for the care of a child in the Department's custody, the Department shall conduct a review of any records, from the prior five years regarding the safety of children in the program's care, including any violations of the program's licensing status and any resulting remediation.

(2) The Department shall remove any Vermont child from risk of harm and shall initiate a search for alternative providers if an out-of-state residential provider is determined to be in violation of the standards in the contract regarding restraint and seclusion or in violation of its state's licensing entity.

(m) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, a child detained in a secure residential program may be restrained with mechanical restraints for a momentary initial hold to enable relocation of the child to a less restrictive method of intervention if necessitated to prevent serious and immediate harm to the child or others, except that under no circumstances shall a garment

adjacent to the child's body that restricts freedom of movement or immobilizes or reduces the ability of a child to move the child's arms, legs, body, or head freely be utilized. The procedures and standards established under this section, including notice and reporting requirements, shall apply.

(n) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, a child detained in a secure residential program may be subjected to a strip search if a pat search has led to probable cause to believe that the child has possession of contraband that poses a threat of serious bodily harm to the child or others and the child has refused to voluntarily turn over the contraband. The child shall be given the opportunity before and at any time after the commencement of a search to voluntarily relinquish the suspected contraband, whereupon the search will be discontinued. Notice and reporting requirements shall be the same as for use of restraint or seclusion under this section. Body cavity searches shall not be permitted under any circumstances.

(o) The Department shall post on the Family Division's scorecard or another prominent location on its website the rates of restraint and seclusion used on children in licensed programs and the number of uses of secure transport and of restraint used during transport. The Department shall update this information at least annually.

(p) The Department shall develop and adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, in collaboration with the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate and in consultation with stakeholders implementing this section, including requirements for staff training; standards for supervisory oversight, recordkeeping, and reporting by residential programs; oversight responsibilities of the Department; and any other necessary standards.

Sec. 13. 33 V.S.A. § 5130(l) is amended to read:

(l)(1) Prior to contracting with any program for the care of a child in the Department's custody, the Department shall conduct a review of any records, from the prior five years regarding the safety of children in the program's care, including any violations of the program's licensing status and any resulting remediation.

(2) When contracting with an out-of-state program, the Department shall include a requirement that the program adhere to the provisions of this section.

(3) The Department shall remove any Vermont child from risk of harm and shall initiate a search for alternative providers if an out-of-state residential provider is determined to be in violation of the standards in the contract regarding restraint and seclusion or in violation of its state's licensing entity.

Sec. 14. REPORT; CHILDREN IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

(a) On or before January 1, 2027, the Departments for Children and Families and of Corrections shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Human Services and on Corrections and Institutions and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Institutions regarding the use of restraint and seclusion on minors detained in Department of Corrections' facilities and potential means for reducing physical and psychological trauma from restraint and seclusion. In preparing the required report, the Departments shall consult with a work group composed of the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate; the Office of the Defender General, Juvenile Division; Voices for Vermont's Children; the Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health; Disability Rights Vermont; and a young adult with lived experience of being detained in a Department of Corrections facility, appointed by the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate.

(b) Members of the work group who are not participating in their professional capacity shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than five meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate.

* * * Judicial Review of Placements for Children Previously Under the Custody of the Department for Children and Families * * *

Sec. 15. PROPOSAL TO EXTEND SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN OVER 17 YEARS OF AGE

On or before November 1, 2026, the Department for Children and Families shall submit a written report, in consultation with the Judicial Branch, to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare with recommendations for court oversight processes that meet federal requirements to allow access to federal funds for programs that may support youth up to 21 years of age and that ensures sustainable use of judicial resources. The report shall include any recommendations for legislative action.

* * * Prenatal Engagement and Family Support Working Group * * *

Sec. 16. PRENATAL ENGAGEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT WORKING GROUP

(a) Creation. There is created the Prenatal Engagement and Family Support Working Group to examine the Department for Children and Families' current practice of using a pregnancy calendar to monitor and track certain

pregnant individuals in Vermont and provide recommendations on alternatives to a pregnancy calendar and ways to support pregnant individuals in need of services.

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

(1) the Deputy Commissioner of the Family Services Division of the Department for Children and Families;

(2) the Vermont Child, Youth, and Family Advocate or designee;

(3) the Executive Director of Vermont Family Network or designee;

(4) the Executive Director of Vermont Legal Aid or designee;

(5) the President of Planned Parenthood of Northern New England or designee;

(6) the Executive Director of the Vermont Parent Representation Center or designee;

(7) the Executive Director of Recovery Partners Vermont or designee;

(8) the Executive Director of Voices for Vermont's Children or designee;

(9) the Director of the Department of Health's Maternal and Child Health Division or designee;

(10) a representative, appointed by Children of Recovering Mothers' Team at the Kidsafe Collaborative;

(11) the Director of the Office of the Defender General's Juvenile Division or designee;

(12) an individual with lived experience of being monitored by the Department while pregnant, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

(13) an individual with lived experience of being monitored by the Department while pregnant, appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees.

(c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall study the Department for Children and Families' current practice of using a pregnancy calendar to monitor and track certain pregnant individuals in Vermont and provide recommendations on alternatives to a pregnancy calendar and ways to support pregnant individuals in need of services.

(d) Assistance. For the purposes of scheduling meetings and providing administrative assistance, the Working Group shall have the assistance of the Department for Children and Families.

(e) Report. On or before November 15, 2026, the Working Group shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Human Services, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Vermont Child, Youth, and Family Advocate or designee shall call the first meeting of the Working Group to occur on or before August 1, 2026.

(2) The Working Group shall select a chair from among its members at the first meeting.

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

(4) The Working Group shall cease to exist on February 1, 2027.

(g)(1) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Working Group who are not otherwise compensated for attendance at meetings shall be entitled to per diem compensation and expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than five meetings.

(2) Members of the Working Group who are not participating in their professional capacity shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than five meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Department for Children and Families.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 17. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Sec. 10 (report; restraint in transportation), Sec. 11 (use of force policy), Sec. 14 (report; children in correctional facilities), and Sec. 15 (proposal to extend supports for children over 17 years of age) shall take effect on passage.

(b) Sec. 9 (transportation of a child) and Sec. 12 (restraint and seclusion) shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

(c) Sec. 2 (33 V.S.A. § 4902) and Sec. 3 (33 V.S.A. § 4907) shall take effect on July 1, 2027.

(d) Sec. 13 (33 V.S.A. § 5130(l)) shall take effect on July 1, 2028.

(e) All remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 27, 2026, pages 3635-3660 and April 1, 2026, pages 3727-3728)

H. 660.

An act relating to fiscal year 2027 Opioid Abatement Special Fund appropriations.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Lyons for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Opioid Abatement Special Fund * * *

Sec. 1. APPROPRIATIONS; OPIOID ABATEMENT SPECIAL FUND

(a) In fiscal year 2027, the following sums shall be appropriated from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund established in 18 V.S.A. § 4774:

(1)(A) $455,000.00 to the Department of Health to fund 26 outreach or case management staff positions within the preferred provider network for the provision of services that increase the motivation of and engagement with individuals with substance use disorder in settings such as police barracks, shelters, social service organizations, and elsewhere in the community.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly that these positions shall be funded annually by the Opioid Abatement Special Fund unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(2)(A) $1,600,000.00 to the Department of Health for recovery residences certified by the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly that recovery residences be funded annually by the Opioid Abatement Special Fund unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(3)(A) $850,000.00 to the Department of Health for syringe services.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly that syringe services be funded annually by the Opioid Abatement Special Fund unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(4) $1,100,000.00 to the Department of Corrections to provide peer recovery center coaches in Vermont correctional facilities and in probation and parole offices to provide group and individual coaching and reentry support, which shall not be used to cover administrative expenses.

(5) $250,000.00 to the Department for Children and Families' Office of Economic Opportunity to support long-term programs at shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness, including harm-reduction supports, transportation to recovery meetings and appointments, and clinical nursing programs.

(6)(A) $600,000.00 to the Department of Health for the creation of new recovery residence beds at National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) certification level III or above.

(B) $600,000.00 to the Department of Health for opioid use disorder residential treatment beds at American Society of Addiction Medicine level 3.1.

(7) $248,000.00 to the Department of Health for the Prehospital Vermont EMS Buprenorphine Treatment (PREVENT) Program to expand training for emergency service providers on carrying buprenorphine and administering buprenorphine after administering naloxone.

(8) $35,000.00 to the Department of Health to subsidize room and board for individuals in Rutland Mental Health Services' transitional housing program.

(9) $237,646.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Springfield Project ACTION to support public safety enhancement team coordinator positions in Bennington, Springfield, Brattleboro, St. Johnsbury, and central Vermont for the purposes of providing administrative support, meeting facilitation, data tracking, outreach event coordination, and sustainability planning.

(10) $800,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to recovery centers.

(11) $287,000.00 to the Department of Public Safety to provide funding for expanding the Public Safety Enhancement Team's harm reduction and strategic community intervention efforts.

(12)(A) $1,100,000.00 to the Department of Health for the purpose of awarding grants to the City of Burlington to establish an overdose prevention center, provided, however, that the Department shall not distribute funding until a location for the overdose prevention center has been procured by lease or purchase, the overdose prevention center is being fit up for its intended use,

and the overdose prevention center is currently or will imminently become operational.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly to continue to appropriate funds annually from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund through at least fiscal year 2028 for the purpose of awarding grants to the City of Burlington for the operation of the overdose prevention center, unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(b) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 703, unless reverted by a future act of the General Assembly, the appropriations made in accordance with this section shall carry forward until fully expended.

Sec. 2. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 22, Sec. 14, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. C.112, is further amended to read:

Sec. 14. APPROPRIATION; OPIOID ABATEMENT SPECIAL FUND

In fiscal year 2023, the following monies shall be appropriated from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 4774:

(1)(A) $1,500,000 ~~divided equally between four opioid treatment programs~~ to cover costs associated with partnering with other health care providers to expand satellite locations for the dosing of medications, including costs associated with the satellite locations' physical facilities, staff time at the satellite locations, and staff time at opioid treatment programs to prepare medications and coordinate with satellite locations;

(B) the satellite locations established pursuant to this subdivision (1) shall be located in Addison County~~,~~ and eastern or southern Vermont~~, and in a facility operated by the Department of Corrections~~;

(2) $500,000 to establish a ~~second Chittenden Clinic Addiction Treatment Center~~ satellite location in northwestern Vermont;

* * *

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 4772 is amended to read:

§ 4772. OPIOID SETTLEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

* * *

(c) Powers and duties. The Advisory Committee shall demonstrate broad ongoing consultation with individuals living with opioid use disorder about their direct experience with related systems, including medication for opioid use disorder, residential treatment, recovery services, harm reduction services, overdose, supervision by the Department of Corrections, and involvement with the Department for Children and Families' Family Services Division. To that

end, the Advisory Committee shall demonstrate consultation with individuals with direct lived experience of opioid use disorder, frontline support professionals, the Substance Misuse Oversight Prevention and Advisory Council, the Health Equity Advisory Commission, and other stakeholders to identify spending priorities as related to opioid use disorder prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services and harm reduction strategies for the purpose of providing recommendations to the Governor, the Department of Health, and the General Assembly on prioritizing spending from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund. Each ongoing funding proposal considered by the Advisory Committee shall include a sustainability plan from the applicant to ensure consideration of future expenses and available resources apart from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund. The Advisory Committee shall consider:

(1) the impact of the opioid crisis on communities throughout Vermont, including communities' abatement needs and proposals for abatement strategies and responses;

(2) the perspectives of and proposals from opioid use disorder prevention coalitions, recovery centers, and medication for opioid use disorder providers; and

(3) the ongoing challenges of the opioid crisis on marginalized populations, including individuals who have a lived experience of opioid use disorder.

* * *

Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION REVIEW; FISCAL YEAR 2028 PROPOSAL SUSPENSION

The Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee shall not accept funding proposals from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund for fiscal year 2028, unless a proposal was previously identified in statute as intended for annual funding. It instead shall review the outcomes of programs and initiatives previously funded through the Opioid Abatement Special Fund to assess effectiveness, long-term sustainability, and the appropriateness of the Opioid Abatement Special Fund as a funding source, where applicable. If funds are available after making fiscal year 2028 appropriations recommendations for previously funded programs and initiatives, the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee shall identify specific areas of focus and shall make funding recommendations within those areas based on needs assessments and statewide data rather than requesting new proposals.

Sec. 5. QUARTERLY REPORTING; EXPENDITURE OF OPIOID ABATEMENT SPECIAL FUND MONIES

The Department of Health shall submit to the General Assembly quarterly reports regarding expenditures from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund. Specifically, the reports shall identify funds appropriated from the Special Fund that remain unobligated or unspent, or both, and shall include an explanation as to why the funds have not been fully distributed. Reports due on October 1, 2026, and July 1, 2027, shall be submitted to the Joint Fiscal Committee. Reports due on January 1, 2027, and April 1, 2027, shall be submitted to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare. The Department shall post reports required pursuant to this section on its website.

Sec. 6. REVERSIONS

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2027, the following amounts shall revert to the Opioid Abatement Special Fund from the accounts indicated:

3420892313	VDH-Opioid Sp. Fund Prov Satellites	$444,000.00
3420892313	VDH-Opioid Sp. Fund Wound Care	$8,287.34
3420892501	VDH-Opioid Sp. Fund Stabilization Beds	$1,000,000.00

* * * Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund * * *

Sec. 7. APPROPRIATIONS; SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION SPECIAL FUND

In fiscal year 2027, the following monies shall be appropriated from the Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund established pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 4812:

(1) $288,935.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Elevate Youth Services to support the creation of a low-barrier, drop-in teen center in Barre to provide food, activities, positive adults role models, peer counselors, prevention and recovery programming, and direct connection to treatments;

(2) $124,999.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to the Greater Falls Connections to enhance youth engagement and education and to expand prevention-focused staffing and youth programming space in response to increasing community need;

(3) $200,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Interaction: Friends for Change to increase access to community-based

therapy, housing, crisis, medical, recovery, and employment supports for youth in Windham County; and

(4) $26,697.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Winooski Partnership for Prevention to provide funding for staff time and stipends for partners to deliver medicine safety education to elementary-aged youth during school with family engagement.

Sec. 8. 18 V.S.A. § 4812 is amended to read:

§ 4812. SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION SPECIAL FUND

* * *

(e) As part of its annual budget presentation, the Department shall report to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare on its specific spending proposal from the Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for the coming fiscal year. The report shall include an estimate of the monies in the Special Fund anticipated to remain unallocated at the end of the fiscal year.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to fiscal year 2027 Opioid Abatement Special Fund and Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund appropriations"

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 19, 2026, pages 3409-3418)

H. 739.

An act relating to prohibiting the use and sale of the herbicide paraquat.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Major for the Committee on Agriculture.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. § 1105d is added to read:

§ 1105d. USE AND SALE OF PARAQUAT; REPORT

(a) Definition. As used in this section, "paraquat" means an herbicide:

(1) known as paraquat, with the chemical name 1,1′-Dimethyl-4,4′-bipyridinium ion and the Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) registry number 4685-14-7;

(2) known as paraquat dichloride, with the chemical name 1,1′-Dimethyl-4,4′-bipyridinium dichloride and the CAS registry number 1910-42-5;

(3) known as paraquat dimethyl sulfate, with the chemical name 1,1′-Dimethyl-4,4′-bipyridinium dimethyl sulfate and the CAS registry number 2074-50-2; or

(4) known as paraquat, with the chemical name 1,1′-Dimethyl-4,4′-bipyridinium ion and all salts thereof.

(b) Prohibition. No person shall sell, use, or apply paraquat except when authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets under subsection (c) of this section.

(c) Authorized use. The Secretary may issue a written permit for the sale, use, or application of paraquat within fruit-producing tree orchards or for growing any crop listed in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Crop Group 13-07: Berry and Small Fruit Crop Group on or before December 31, 2030. The Secretary shall ensure that any authorized certified applicator of paraquat has received all training required by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets not more than one year prior to receiving a permit for authorized use of paraquat. A written exemption order under this subsection shall:

(1) be valid for not more than three years or until December 31, 2030, whichever comes first;

(2) specify the name on the label of the paraquat, uses, and crops or plants to which the permit applies; the date the permit takes effect; the permit's duration; and the permit's geographic scope, which may include specific farms, fields, or properties; and

(3) include permit conditions that minimize drift based on drift mitigation measures identified by the Environmental Protection Agency, require adherence to label directions to minimize applicator exposure, and exclusively limit applications to tree rows or vine rows for necessary weed control.

(d) Reporting. The Secretary shall report annually on all data regarding any use of paraquat in the State. The report shall include the amount of

paraquat used and the date and location where the paraquat was used. The Secretary shall submit the report to the House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and the Senate Committee on Agriculture on or before December 15 of each year.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on November 1, 2026.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 19, 2026, pages 3418-3421)

Reported favorably by Senator Norris for the Committee on Appropriations.

The Committee recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Agriculture.

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

H. 816.

An act relating to regulating the use of artificial intelligence in the provision of mental health services.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Benson for the Committee on Health and Welfare.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this act to safeguard individuals seeking mental health services in Vermont from psychological harm, including death by suicide, by ensuring that these services are delivered by mental health professionals and not independently by artificial intelligence systems.

Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 129a is amended to read:

§ 129a. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) In addition to any other provision of law, the following conduct by a licensee constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of a license or other disciplinary action. Any one of the following items or any combination of items, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, shall constitute unprofessional conduct:

* * *

(30) For any mental health professional, engaging in the prohibited use of artificial intelligence pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 7115.

* * *

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 7115 is added to read:

§ 7115. PROHIBITED USES OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Artificial intelligence" means an engineered or machine-based system that varies in its level of autonomy and that can, for explicit or implicit objectives, infer from the input it receives how to generate outputs that can influence physical or virtual environments.

(2) "Mental health professional" means an individual licensed, certified, or rostered, respectively, to provide mental health services as a physician pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 23 or 33; an advanced practice registered nurse specializing in psychiatric mental health pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 28; a psychologist pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 55; a peer support provider or peer recovery support specialist pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 60; a social worker pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 61; an alcohol and drug abuse counselor pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 62; a clinical mental health counselor pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 65; a marriage and family therapist pursuant to 26 V.S.A chapter 76; a psychoanalyst pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 77; an applied behavior analyst pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 95; a nonlicensed or noncertified psychotherapist or a noncertified psychoanalyst; or any other professional who provides mental health services.

(3) "Mental health services" means counseling, therapy, or psychotherapy services used to diagnose or treat an individual's mental or behavioral health or provide ongoing recovery support, including providing therapeutic decisions, issuing direct therapeutic communications, generating treatment plans or recommendations, or detecting or interpreting emotion or mental states.

(4) "Therapeutic communication" means a written, verbal, or nonverbal interaction intended to diagnose or treat any type of mental or behavioral health concern, provide ongoing recovery support, or provide any advice related to diagnosis, treatment, or recovery, such as:

(A) engaging in direct interactions with clients or patients for the purpose of understanding or reflecting the client's or patient's thoughts;

(B) providing guidance, therapeutic strategies, or interventions designed to achieve mental health outcomes;

(C) offering emotional support, reassurance, or empathy in response to emotional or psychological distress;

(D) collaborating with a patient or client to develop or modify treatment plans or therapeutic goals; and

(E) delivering feedback intended to promote growth or address mental health outcomes.

(5) "Therapeutic decision" means the final clinical determination regarding diagnosis or the selection, modification, or termination of treatment or care.

(b) An individual, corporation, or other entity shall not offer or provide mental health services through artificial intelligence without the review and approval of a mental health professional.

(c)(1) A violation of this section by a corporation; an entity; or an individual who is not licensed, certified, or rostered as a mental health professional shall be deemed a violation of the Consumer Protection Act, 9 V.S.A. chapter 63. The Attorney General has the same authority, and private parties have the same rights and remedies, as provided under 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 1. Each violation of this section shall carry a civil penalty of $10,000.00 as set forth in 9 V.S.A. § 2461.

(2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude or supplant any other statutory or common law remedies.

(d) Nothing in this section shall preclude a mental health professional who is operating within the professional's scope of practice from utilizing artificial intelligence tools that are compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191, provided that the mental health professional reviews and approves any mental health services.

Sec. 4. 26 V.S.A. § 1354 is amended to read:

§ 1354. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) Prohibited conduct. The Board shall find that any one of the following, or any combination of the following, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, constitutes unprofessional conduct:

* * *

(3) engaging in the prohibited use of artificial intelligence pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 7115;

* * *

Sec. 5. REPORT; USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN REGULATED PROFESSIONS

On or before January 15, 2027, the Office of Professional Regulation and the Board of Medical Practice shall jointly submit a written report to the House Committees on Government Operations and Military Affairs, on Health Care, and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Government Operations and on Health and Welfare containing recommendations for the regulation of the use of artificial intelligence by regulated professionals, including recommendations for legislative action.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(For House amendments, see House Journal of March 17, 2026, pages 3316-3321)

H. 952.

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding budget adjustment.

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Harrison for the Committee on Institutions.

The Committee recommends that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 1, 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 1, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 1 to read as follows:

Sec. 1. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 1 is amended to read:

Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that of the ~~$111,965,288.44~~ $123,564,624.67 authorized in Secs. 2–16 this act, not more than ~~$61,969,761.44~~ $61,569,761.44 shall be appropriated in the first year of the biennium, and the remainder shall be appropriated in the second year.

* * *

Second: By striking out Sec. 2, 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 2, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

Sec. 2. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 2 is amended to read:

Sec. 2. STATE BUILDINGS

* * *

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026:

* * *

(2) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance: ~~$1,500,000.00~~ $1,100,000.00

* * *

(c) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027:

(1) Statewide, major maintenance: ~~$8,500,000.00~~ $8,538,413.18

* * *

(4) ~~Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance: $1,100,000.00~~ [Repealed.]

* * *

(7) Montpelier, State House replacement of ~~historic~~ interior finishes: $50,000.00

(8) Montpelier, 120 State Street HVAC – steam lines interior renovation: ~~$2,000,000.00~~ $1,000,000.00

* * *

(12) Montpelier, State House entryway upgrades, design documents, including comprehensive parking plan and delivery truck access, and second-floor egress design: $1,325,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026	~~$13,726,680.44~~ $13,326,680.44
Appropriation – FY 2027	~~$15,925,000.00~~ $15,188,413.18
Total Appropriation – Section 2	~~$28,951,680.44~~ $28,515,093.62

Third: By striking out Sec. 3, 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 3, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 3 to read as follows:

Sec. 3. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 3 is amended to read:

Sec. 3. HUMAN SERVICES

* * *

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the following projects:

(1) Statewide, planning, design, and construction for HVAC system upgrades at correctional facilities: ~~$1,000,000.00~~ $9,426,254.21

* * *

(5) ~~Newport, Northern State Correctional Facility (NSCF) sprinkler system upgrades:~~ ~~$500,000.00~~ [Repealed.]

(6) Newport, Northern State Correctional Facility (NSCF) boiler replacement: $700,000.00

(7) Recovery House, Inc., residential treatment center, renovations: $220,000.00

(8) Maintenance, replacement, and renovations at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility or other facilities serving the incarcerated women's population: $598,850.00

* * *

Appropriation – FY 2027 ~~$4,800,000.00~~ $14,245,104.21

Total Appropriation – Section 3 ~~$13,025,000.00~~ $22,470,104.21

Fourth: By adding a new section to be Sec. 4a to read as follows:

Sec. 4a. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 5 is amended to read:

Sec. 5. GRANT PROGRAMS

* * *

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 for the Building Communities Grants established in 24 V.S.A. chapter 137:

(1) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Preservation Grant Program: ~~$300,000.00~~ $400,000.00

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: ~~$300,000.00~~ $400,000.00

* * *

Appropriation – FY 2027 ~~$2,100,000.00~~ $2,300,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 5 ~~$4,200,000.00~~ $4,400,000.00

Fifth: By adding a new section to be Sec. 5a to read as follows:

Sec. 5a. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 9 is amended to read:

Sec. 9. NATURAL RESOURCES

* * *

(g) The sum of $100,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Natural Resources for technical support to municipalities to design and implement stormwater utilities.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$5,805,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	~~$5,319,360.00~~ $5,419,360.00
Total Appropriation – Section 9	~~$11,124,360.00~~ $11,224,360.00

Sixth: By striking out Sec. 8, 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 17, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 8 to read as follows:

Sec. 8. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 17 is amended to read:

Sec. 17. REALLOCATION AND REVERSION OF FUNDS; TRANSFER OF FUNDS

(a) The following sums ~~are reallocated~~ appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services from prior capital appropriations are reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act:

* * *

(12) of the amount appropriated in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 13(b)(2), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 10 (CJTC East Cottage): $43,190.08

(13) of the amounts appropriated in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 2(c) (various projects): $1,624,241.12

(14) of the amounts appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 2(b) (various projects): $393,854.32

(15) of the amount appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 3(a)(2) (women's correctional facilities): $97,890.12

(16) of the amounts appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 2(c) (various projects): $618,000.00

(17) of the amounts appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 2(b) (various projects): $350,420.67

(18) of the amounts appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 2(c) (various projects): $150,000.00

(19) of the amounts appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 3(b)(1) (women's correctional facilities, replacement): $868,850.00

(b) The following sums appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development from prior capital appropriations are reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act:

* * *

(3) of the amount appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 4(a)(4) (Unmarked Burial Fund): $31,320.70

* * *

(h) Of the amount appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Vermont Veterans' Home in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1103(a)(7) and authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(d)(7) (design for the renovation of the Brandon and Cardinal units), $1,500,000.00 is ~~reallocated~~ reverted to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 19 of this act.

(i) Of the amount appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Department of Buildings and General Services in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1103(a)(9) and authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(d)(10) (111 State Street; renovation of the stack area), $200,000.00 is ~~reallocated~~ reverted to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 19 of this act.

* * *

(n) Of the amount appropriated to the Vermont Veterans' Home in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15(b)(2) (elevator upgrade), $500,000.00 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 6 of this act.

(o) Of the amount appropriated to the Enhanced 911 Board in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 6(b)(9), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 5 (Enhanced 911 Compliance Grants Program), $63,413.15 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act.

(p) Of the amount appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 11(j), as added by 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 139, Sec. 7 (State-owned forest and recreational access points), $0.03 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act.

(q) The following sums appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Department of Buildings and General Services in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1105(a) are reverted to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 19 of this act:

(1) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(1) (planning, reuse, and contingency): $119,114.60

(2) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(6) (120 State Street renovation): $1,000,000.00

(3) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(8) (CJTC administration building and West Cottage): $450,000.00

(4) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(10) (DCF short-term stabilization facility): $372,557.10

(5) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(11) (Washington County Superior Courthouse in Barre): $750,000.00

(6) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(13) (planning and design of the Rutland Field Station): $250,000.00

(7) of the amount authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(c)(15) (EV charging stations): $995,040.00

(r) Of the amount appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Department of Buildings and General Services in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1103(a)(3) and authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(d)(3), as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, Sec. 11 (120 State Street renovation), $1,500,000.00 is reverted to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 19 of this act.

Bonded Dollars	~~$5,074,938.48~~	$9,816,118.67
Cash	~~$1,700,000.00~~	$7,136,711.70
Total Reallocations, Reversions, and Transfers – Section 17	~~$6,774,938.48~~	$16,083,980.37

Seventh: By striking out Sec. 9, 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 19, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 9 to read as follows:

Sec. 9. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 33, Sec. 19 is amended to read:

Sec. 19. FY 2026 AND 2027; CAPITAL PROJECTS; FY 2026 AND FY 2027 APPROPRIATIONS ~~ACT~~ ACTS; INTENT; AUTHORIZATIONS

* * *

(b) Intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly to authorize certain capital projects eligible for funding by 32 V.S.A. § 1001b in this act but appropriate the funds for these projects in the FY 2026 and FY 2027 Appropriations ~~Act~~ Acts. It is also the intent of the General Assembly that the FY 2026 and FY 2027 Appropriations ~~Act appropriate~~ Acts transfer funds to the Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 1001b for projects in FY 2026 and FY 2027.

(c) Authorizations; Capital Infrastructure subaccount. In FY 2026, spending authority for the following capital projects from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments are authorized as follows:

* * *

(7) to the Vermont Veterans' Home for the design and construction of the American unit and sprinkler system installation: $1,500,000.00

* * *

(f) Authorizations; Capital Infrastructure subaccount. In FY 2027, spending authority for the following capital projects from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments are authorized as follows:

(1) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide major maintenance: $1,281,173.60

(2) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide physical security enhancements: $225,000.00

(3) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide three-acre parcel stormwater compliance: $1,000,000.00

(4) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for Asa Bloomer roof replacement: $3,600,000.00

(5) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for Rutland multimodal garage renovation: $900,000.00

(6) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs: $3,000,000.00

(7) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for HVAC upgrades at correctional facilities: $1,050,000.00

(8) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for statewide correctional facilities security upgrades: $225,000.00

(9) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for door control upgrades at correctional facilities: $2,700,000.00

(10) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the Northern State Correctional Facility boiler replacement: $1,000,000.00

(11) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for Newport, Northern State Correctional Facility sprinkler system upgrades: $500,000.00

(12) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for maintenance and renovations at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility: $500,000.00

(13) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the Department for Children and Families' youth short-term stabilization facility: $772,557.10

(14) to the Department of Environmental Conservation for the State match for federal Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: $2,498,000.00

(15) to the Department of Environmental Conservation for Waterbury Dam Penstock project cost overruns: $150,000.00

(16) to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for park infrastructure and rehabilitation, improvement, and three-acre rule compliance: $400,000.00

(17) to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for dam maintenance and safety planning: $200,000.00

(18) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Department of Public Safety for an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) facility: $500,000.00

(19) to the Judiciary for the Essex County Courthouse connector project: $500,000.00

(20) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the White River Junction courthouse: $1,600,000.00

(21) to the Vermont Historical Society for the replacement of a climate control unit: $566,724.00

(22) to the Department of Corrections to work with the Agency of Digital Services to install a Wi-Fi system in State correctional facilities that is appropriately designed to address the safety, security, and confidentiality risks of the correctional environment: $250,000.00

Eighth: In Sec. 13, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; Little River State Park lease, following "Notwithstanding 29 V.S.A. § 166, in fiscal year 2027, the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is authorized to" by striking out the words "enter into" and inserting in lieu thereof the word "negotiate"

Ninth: By adding a new section to be Sec. 14a to read as follows:

Sec. 14a. REPEAL OF AUTHORITY TO SELL 110 STATE STREET

2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 22(a) (authority for BGS to sell 110 State Street, Montpelier) is repealed.

Tenth: By striking out Sec. 18, effective date, and its reader assistance heading in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof two new reader assistance headings and three new sections to be Secs. 18–20 to read as follows:

* * * Stormwater Utilities * * *

Sec. 18. 24 V.S.A. § 4414(9) is amended to read:

(9) Stormwater management and control. Any municipality may adopt bylaws to implement stormwater management and control consistent with the program developed by the Secretary of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1264. The creation of a regional stormwater utility under statute or rules of the Agency of Natural Resources shall not prevent a municipality from regulating stormwater under this subdivision, including adoption by the municipality of a bylaw establishing a municipal stormwater utility. Municipalities shall not charge an impervious surface fee or other stormwater fee under this subdivision or under other provisions of this title on property regulated under the Required Agricultural Practices for discharges of agricultural waste or agricultural nonpoint source pollution.

Sec. 19. 24 V.S.A. § 3626 is added to read:

§ 3626. MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY TO AUTHORIZE AND OPERATE STORMWATER UTILITY

The creation of a regional stormwater utility under statute or rules of the Agency of Natural Resources shall not prevent a municipality from regulating stormwater under this chapter, including adoption by the municipality of a bylaw authorizing the operation of a municipal stormwater utility that establishes an assessment on an equivalent residential unit or impervious surface.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 20. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

(Committee vote: 5-0-0)

(No House Amendments)

Reported favorably by Senator Mattos for the Committee on Finance.

The Committee recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Institutions.

(Committee vote: 6-0-1)

Reported favorably with recommendation of proposal of amendment by Senator Perchlik for the Committee on Appropriations.

The Committee recommends that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposals of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Institutions, with further recommendation of proposal of amendment thereto:

* * * General Assembly * * *

Sec. 19a. STATE HOUSE; ENTRYWAY DESIGN; SPECIAL COMMITTEE

(a) A special committee consisting of the Joint Legislative Management Committee and the Chairs of the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions (special committee) is hereby established. The special committee is authorized to meet to review, approve, or recommend alterations to the State House entryway design at a regularly scheduled Joint Legislative Management Committee meeting.

(b) The special committee shall be entitled to per diem and expenses as provided in 2 V.S.A. § 23.

(Committee vote: 7-0-0)

House Proposal of Amendment

S. 173.

An act relating to vocational rehabilitation.

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

Sec. 1. 21 V.S.A. § 641 is amended to read:

§ 641. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

(a) When as a result of an injury covered by this chapter, an employee is unable to perform work for which the employee has previous training or experience, the employee shall be entitled to vocational rehabilitation services, including retraining and job placement, as may be reasonably necessary to restore the employee to suitable employment. Vocational rehabilitation services shall be provided as follows:

* * *

(2) The Department shall provide an injured worker with a form that includes information and employee rights. The form shall clearly and simply explain the worker's rights, including the choice of provider, the right to challenge a determination, the right to request vocational rehabilitation services in the future if the work injury affects the worker's ability to earn the worker's preinjury wage, and reimbursement for related expenses. The worker shall sign the form and return it to the Department.

* * *

Sec. 2. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION WORKING GROUP; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created the Vocational Rehabilitation Working Group to provide recommendations to the General Assembly on how to improve the current vocational rehabilitation system to ensure that it meets the needs of eligible injured workers in a timely and cost-effective manner.

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

(1) one current member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of House, who shall be a member of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development;

(2) one current member of the Senate, appointed by the Committee on Committees, who shall be a member of the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs;

(3) the Commissioner of Labor or designee;

(4) the Commissioner of Financial Regulation or designee;

(5) two representatives on behalf of workers' compensation claimants, 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 representatives on behalf of employers and workers' compensation insurance carriers, one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees; and

(7) two vocational rehabilitation counselors currently certified in Vermont, one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees.

(c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall meet over the summer and fall to discuss and develop recommendations on how to improve the current vocational rehabilitation system and prepare recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly. The Working Group shall consider the following topics:

(1) Initial screening.

(A) Is the current initial screening requirement relevant and helpful or a hindrance to accessing vocational rehabilitation services?

(B) Do other states require an initial screening before a claimant receives a vocational rehabilitation assessment? What are other possible approaches that Vermont may wish to consider?

(C) Should the three questions currently asked as part of the initial screening be modified? Are there additional or different questions that should be asked?

(D) What improvements could be made to ensure that those conducting the initial screenings and vocational rehabilitation providers who provide services to workers' compensation claimants are familiar with Vermont's workers' compensation system?

(E) Who has current oversight over the initial screening process to ensure that the system is working as intended?

(2) Vocational rehabilitation generally.

(A) What mechanisms could better and earlier identify which claimants are likely to require vocational rehabilitation services?

(B) Are claimants being adequately and timely informed of their right to request a vocational rehabilitation assessment? Is information about the workers' compensation system and benefits as a whole being clearly conveyed in plain, easily understood language?

(C) Are some of the current requirements for providing vocational rehabilitation services too onerous and administratively unnecessary?

(D) How could vocational rehabilitation services be provided in a way that is more cost-effective for the workers' compensation system?

(E) How could the Department of Labor's oversight of vocational rehabilitation be improved?

(3) Wage replacement benefits.

(A) Could utilization of vocational services be improved by enabling claimants to access vocational rehabilitation benefits while receiving wage replacement benefits?

(B) Could the workers' compensation system take into account the diminished earning capacity of those claimants who are unable to earn a preinjury wage but are not eligible to receive permanent total disability benefits?

(C) Should the average weekly wage be indexed to the cost of living for vocational rehabilitation purposes?

(d) Meetings. The Commissioner of Labor or designee shall serve as the chair of the Working Group and shall call the first meeting of the Working Group to occur on or before August 14, 2026.

(e) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Labor.

(f) Report. On or before December 15, 2026, the Working Group 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 any recommendations for legislative action. The Working Group shall cease to exist upon submission of the report.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) Except for those members regularly employed by the State, members of the Working Group shall be entitled to reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than five meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Department of Labor.

(2) A legislative member of the Working 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 five meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

Sec. 3. 21 V.S.A. chapter 13 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 13. APPRENTICESHIP

§ 1111. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(22) "Nontraditional ~~apprenticeship~~ population" means a group of individuals who have historically been excluded from various occupations, such as individuals from the same gender, race, or ethnicity, the members of which comprise fewer than 25 percent of the program participants in an apprenticeable occupation.

(23) "Nontraditional apprenticeship industry or occupation" refers to an industry sector or occupation that represents fewer than 10 percent of apprenticeable occupations or the programs under the national apprenticeship system, using the calendar year 2023 as the benchmark.

* * *

(33) "Underserved communities" means the populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, who have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. This term includes individuals who ~~belong to communities of color, such as Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, Native American, Alaskan Native and Indigenous, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and North African persons. It also includes individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, gender non-conforming, and non-binary (LGBTQ+ persons); persons who face discrimination based on pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions; parents; and caregivers. It also includes individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on their religion and disability; first-generation professionals or first-generation college students; individuals with limited English proficiency; immigrants; individuals who belong to communities that may face employment barriers based on older age or former incarceration; persons who~~

~~live in rural areas; veterans and military spouses; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty, discrimination, or inequality~~:

(A) face employment barriers based on age or former incarceration;

(B) live in rural areas;

(C) lack access to transportation options or high-speed internet;

(D) are veterans or spouses of veterans; and

(E) are otherwise adversely affected by poverty, discrimination, or inequality. ~~Individuals may belong to more than one underserved community and face intersecting barriers.~~

* * *

§ 1113. VERMONT REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

* * *

(e) Strategic planning and reporting. The Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program shall:

(1) develop and disseminate a strategic plan once every five years, beginning on July 1, ~~2024~~ 2026, which shall include information on how the Program will implement the requirements of this chapter;

(2) prepare and submit to the Vermont General Assembly an annual report on the status of the Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program on or before December 1 of each year that includes:

(A) general ~~program~~ Program statistics, including a list of programs by county;

(B) an analysis of apprentices in the ~~program~~ Program disaggregated by age, race, sex, gender identity, ~~New American status~~ language access needs, Veteran status, disability, industry, and education status, including participation in career ~~and~~ technical education;

(C) nontraditional occupations by gender and race;

(D) new occupations approved;

(E) an analysis of the average starting and ending wage by occupation;

(F) new sponsors, employers, or industries involved with programs over the previous period;

(G) a summary of how allocated funds were used and analysis of the impact of those funds, including uses of any federal funds awarded during the year; and

(H) a summary of significant activities of the ~~program~~ Program.

§ 1114. VERMONT APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY BOARD

* * *

(c) Duties. The Board shall:

* * *

(6) Create and convene working groups that are tasked with specific activities related to improving the quality, safety, diversity, and alignment of apprenticeship programs. Working group membership is not limited to appointed members of the Board and shall be selected and serve at the discretion of the Chair.

(7) Ensure that the registered apprenticeship program addresses barriers to participation and completion of the program, including underserved populations.

(8) Strengthen relationships with community partners that serve:

(A) underserved populations and historically marginalized communities that have not previously accessed apprenticeship programs; and

(B) individuals who face systemic barriers to participation in the program as evidenced by a disproportionate lack of participation in apprenticeship programs.

* * *

§ 1119. APPRENTICES REGISTERED; AGREEMENT

* * *

(c) An apprenticeship agreement shall contain:

(1) the names and signatures of the apprentice, of the program sponsor or employer, and of a parent or guardian of the apprentice if the apprentice is a minor;

(2) the date of birth ~~and Social Security number~~ of the apprentice;

(3) the contact information of the program sponsor and the Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program;

(4) a statement of the occupation in which the apprentice is to be trained and the beginning date and duration of apprenticeship;

* * *

(12) to conform to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, 42 U.S.C. chapter 21, subchapter VI and for affirmative action compliance in apprenticeship programs, and for compliance with reporting and analysis of the Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program, the voluntary disclosure of the apprentice's race, color, national origin, place of birth, sex, gender, gender identity, primary language spoken, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, ~~ethnicity,~~ and disability status; ~~and~~

(13) if the apprentice completed secondary school in Vermont and is between 18 and 25 years of age, the name of the secondary school from which the apprentice is a graduate, and if the apprentice attended a regional CTE center, the name of the center where the apprentice received technical education while in secondary school;

(14) a statement that the apprentice will be accorded equal opportunity in all phases of apprenticeship employment and training, without discrimination because of race, color, national origin, place of birth, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, primary language spoken, genetic information, veteran status, and disability status; and

(15) optional fields for:

(A) the Social Security number of the apprentice; and

(B) the demographic characteristics of the apprentice.

(d) An apprenticeship agreement shall not be modified unless it is in writing and signed by the parties.

* * *

§ 1123. PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

* * *

(b) A pre-apprenticeship program may be ~~registered~~ certified by the Department after successfully demonstrating:

* * *

§ 1124. YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

(a) A youth apprenticeship program is one that prepares a youth apprentice for acceptance into an apprenticeship program and is designed for youth apprentices who ~~start the program while still enrolled in high school~~:

(1) have not completed secondary education;

(2) are in an educational program approved by the Agency of Education; and

(3) are enrolled in a career technical education program.

(b) A youth apprenticeship program may be registered by the Department after ~~submitting~~ a regional CTE center submits the following information to the Department:

(1) a written plan that articulates the work processes and how a youth apprentice will receive supervised work experience and on-the-job training or training in an experiential setting;

(2) how time spent by a youth apprentice in each major work process will be spent or that specifies how competencies or proficiencies are aligned between ~~their~~ the youth's high school education and the youth apprenticeship program, and that states which graduation requirements will be met;

(3) a description of the mentoring that will be provided to the youth apprentice;

(4) a description or timeline explaining the periodic reviews and evaluations of the youth ~~apprentices~~ apprentice's performance on the job and in related technical instruction;

(5) a process for maintaining appropriate progress records, including the reviews and evaluations;

(6) a description of related classroom-based instruction, which may be fulfilled through dual or concurrent enrollment ~~in secondary or post-secondary~~ courses;

(7) whether and how the program is aligned with high school diploma requirements ~~and career clusters~~;

(8) whether the program meets the related technical instruction requirements for an apprenticeship program;

(9) if a program includes paid work during or outside the school year and outside the school day, a progressively increasing, clearly defined schedule of wages to be paid to the youth apprentice as skills are mastered;

(10) how the program prepares the youth apprentice for placement in further education, employment, or ~~an~~ a registered apprenticeship program; ~~and~~

(11) ~~the terms by which the program grants advanced standing or credit to individuals applying for the youth apprenticeship with demonstrated competency or acquired experience, training, or skills~~ the procedure for advanced standing that grants credit for demonstrated competency, acquired

experience, training, or skills to youths who are interested in transferring to full apprenticeship registration upon completion of the youth apprenticeship program;

(12) an accounting of costs for the program covered by the participating partners, grants, or other sources of funds; and

(13) an assurance that school staff, employer partners, and others involved in the program are aware of youth legal protections regarding child labor, wage payment, and youth apprenticeship and other applicable laws and regulations.

(c) An apprenticeship plan submitted in conformity with subsection (b) of this section shall be developed in partnership with apprenticeship sponsors for specific occupational areas and sending high schools.

* * *

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to vocational rehabilitation and apprenticeships"

CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION

Concurrent Resolutions For Action Under Joint Rule 16

The following joint concurrent resolutions have been introduced for approval by the Senate and House. They will be adopted by the Senate unless a Senator requests floor consideration before the end of the session. Requests for floor consideration should be communicated to the Secretary's Office.

H.C.R. 271-283 (For text of Resolutions, see Addendum to House Calendar for April 30, 2026)

CONFIRMATIONS

The following appointments will be considered by the Senate, as a group, under suspension of the Rules, as moved by the President *pro tempore,* for confirmation together and without debate, by consent thereby given by the Senate. However, upon request of any senator, any appointment may be singled out and acted upon separately by the Senate, with consideration given to the report of the Committee to which the appointment was referred, and with full debate; and further, all appointments for the positions of Secretaries of Agencies, Commissioners of Departments, Judges, Magistrates, and members of the Public Utility Commission and the Cannabis Control Board, underlined below, shall be fully and separately acted upon.

Dani Delaini of Brattleboro, VT – Public Member of the State Infrastructure Bank Board – By Senator Hardy for the Committee on Finance (April 28, 2026)

JFO NOTICE

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

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]

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

CROSSOVER DATES

The Joint Rules Committee established the following crossover deadlines:

(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.

Note: The Senate will not act on bills that do not meet these crossover deadlines, without the consent of the Senate Rules Committee.

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).