

Journal of the House

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Laurie Emmerson, Executive Director of National Alliance on Mental Illness–Vermont, Williston.

House Bills Introduced

House bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time, and referred to committee as follows:

H. 115

By Reps. Bos-Lun of Westminster, Bishop of Colchester, Cordes of Bristol, Goldman of Rockingham, Howard of Rutland City, Noyes of Wolcott, O'Brien of Tunbridge, Torre of Moretown, and Waszazak of Barre City,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to tax debt forgiveness for victims of fraud

To the Committee on Ways and Means.

H. 116

By Reps. Page of Newport City, Labor of Morgan, Coffin of Cavendish, Keyser of Rutland City, Krasnow of South Burlington, Morrissey of Bennington, Parsons of Newbury, Tagliavia of Corinth, and Wells of Brownington,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to limiting campaign contributions for State Representatives and State Senators

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 117

By Reps. Hooper of Burlington, Austin of Colchester, Bishop of Colchester, Branagan of Georgia, Brown of Richmond, Burt of Cabot, Canfield of Fair Haven, Critchlow of Colchester, Duke of Burlington, Greer of Bennington, Harrison of Chittenden, Howard of Rutland City, Morgan, M. of Milton, and Mrowicki of Putney,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to general election candidates

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 118

By Reps. Arsenault of Williston and LaLonde of South Burlington,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 119

By Rep. Branagan of Georgia,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the beverage container redemption system

To the Committee on Environment.

H. 120

By Reps. Noyes of Wolcott and Yacovone of Morristown,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the study and design of a long-term care trust fund

To the Committee on Human Services.

H. 121

By Rep. Morrow of Weston,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to affordable broadband service

To the Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure.

H. 122

By Reps. Birong of Vergennes and Graning of Jericho,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the sustainable realignment of Vermont's school districts

To the Committee on Education.

H. 123

By Rep. Arsenault of Williston,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to driving while ability impaired

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Joint House Resolution Referred to Committee**J.R.H. 1**

Offered by Representative Higley of Lowell

Joint resolution constituting an application for a convention of the States under Article V of the United States Constitution

Whereas, the founders of our Constitution empowered State Legislators to be guardians of liberty against future abuses of power by the federal government, and

Whereas, the federal government has created a crushing national debt through improper and imprudent spending, and

Whereas, the federal government has invaded the legitimate roles of the states through the manipulative process of federal mandates, most of which are unfunded to a great extent, and

Whereas, the federal government has ceased to live under a proper interpretation of the Constitution of the United States, and

Whereas, it is the solemn duty of the States to protect the liberty of our people—particularly for the generations to come—by proposing Amendments to the Constitution of the United States through a Convention of the States under Article V for the purpose of restraining these and related abuses of power, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly of the State of Vermont hereby applies to Congress under the provisions of Article V of the Constitution of the United States, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the General Assembly requests that the convention of the States be limited to proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for its officials and for members of Congress, *and be it further*

Resolved: That this application constitutes a continuing application in accordance with Article V of the Constitution of the United States until the legislatures of at least two-thirds of the several states have made applications on the same subject, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, to the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, to the members of the Vermont Congressional Delegation, and to the presiding officers of each of the legislative houses in the several States, requesting their cooperation.

Was read, treated as bill, and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs pursuant to House Rule 52.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted in Concurrence

J.R.S. 9

By Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 9. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 31, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 31, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 4, 2025.

Was taken up, read, and adopted in concurrence.

Ceremonial Reading

H.C.R. 8

Offered by Representatives Cina of Burlington, Berbeco of Winooski, Bos-Lun of Westminster, Campbell of St. Johnsbury, Carris-Duncan of Whitingham, Coffin of Cavendish, Cole of Hartford, Dodge of Essex, Donahue of Northfield, Graning of Jericho, Gregoire of Fairfield, Hango of Berkshire, Headrick of Burlington, Krasnow of South Burlington, McCann of Montpelier, Morris of Springfield, Pouech of Hinesburg, Priestley of Bradford, and Stevens of Waterbury

House concurrent resolution designating January 29, 2025 as Mental Health Advocacy Day at the State House

Whereas, without any discrimination, all Vermonters are entitled to receive the highest attainable quality of health care, including mental health care, and

Whereas, 1997 Acts and Resolves No. 25, Sec. 2, codified as 8 V.S.A. § 4089b, established that the treatment of an individual's mental health must be on par with that person's physical health care, and

Whereas, mental health care must be provided in a manner that does not result in any form of stigma, prejudice, violence, social exclusion, segregation, or unnecessary institutionalization, and

Whereas, all mental health treatment practices should respect an individual's autonomy, dignity, personal preferences, and will, and they must not constitute or lead to violations and abuses of human rights or fundamental freedoms, and

Whereas, mental health support and related community services should integrate a human rights perspective in order to avoid harm to any individuals availing themselves of these services, and

Whereas, today, January 29, 2025, individuals are visiting the State House seeking to remind the General Assembly of the fundamental importance of providing Vermonters with mental health care that equals in every respect the quality of care provided to individuals with any other health conditions,
now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates January 29, 2025 as Mental Health Advocacy Day at the State House, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the mental health advocacy organizations present today in the State House.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, January 24, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**Third Reading; Bill Passed; Rules Suspended, Messaged to Senate
Forthwith**

H. 78

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the use of the Australian ballot system in local elections

Was taken up, read the third time, and passed.

On motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the rules were suspended and the House's actions on the bill were ordered messaged to the Senate forthwith.

Second Reading; Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered**H. 27**

Rep. Rachelson of Burlington, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission

Reported in favor of its passage when amended in Sec. 1, 15 V.S.A. § 1140, in subsection (b), in the second sentence, by striking out “22” and inserting in lieu thereof “23”, and by striking out subdivisions (21) and (22) in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

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

(22) a State’s Attorney victim advocate, appointed by the Executive Director of the Department of State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs; and

(23) the Director of Victim Services for the Department of Corrections or designee.

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, report of the Committee on Judiciary agreed to, and third reading ordered.

Favorable Report; Second Reading; Third Reading Ordered**H. 35**

Rep. Demar of Enosburgh, for the Committee on Health Care, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to unmerging the individual and small group health insurance markets

Reported in favor of its passage. The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, and third reading ordered.

Adjournment

At three o'clock and thirty-nine minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at three o'clock in the afternoon.