

Journal of the House

Thursday, February 6, 2025

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

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. Brian Cina of Burlington.

Message from the Senate No. 13

A message was received from the Senate by Ms. Gradel, its Assistant Secretary, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has on its part passed Senate bill of the following title:

S. 7. An act relating to automobile insurance.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

The Senate has considered a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 78. An act relating to the use of the Australian ballot system in local elections.

And has passed the same in concurrence.

House Bills Introduced

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

H. 150

By Reps. Boutin of Barre City, Bosch of Clarendon, Burt of Cabot, Canfield of Fair Haven, Charlton of Chester, Coffin of Cavendish, Dobrovich of Williamstown, Donahue of Northfield, Galfetti of Barre Town, Goslant of Northfield, Higley of Lowell, Howland of Rutland Town, McFaun of Barre Town, Morgan, L. of Milton, Morgan, M. of Milton, Nelson of Derby, Nielsen of Brandon, North of Ferrisburgh, Oliver of Sheldon, Pinsonault of Dorset, Pritchard of Pawlet, Southworth of Walden, Steady of Milton, Tagliavia of Corinth, Walker of Swanton, and Winter of Ludlow,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to reinstating the waiting period exemption for firearms transfers at gun shows

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 151

By Reps. McGill of Bridport, Burrows of West Windsor, Cole of Hartford, Headrick of Burlington, McCann of Montpelier, Morrow of Weston, Pouech of Hinesburg, and Waszazak of Barre City,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to implementing the Restaurant Meals Program

To the Committee on Human Services.

H. 152

By Reps. Marcotte of Coventry, Bailey of Hyde Park, Bosch of Clarendon, Canfield of Fair Haven, Carris-Duncan of Whitingham, Graning of Jericho, Higley of Lowell, Keyser of Rutland City, Kimbell of Woodstock, Labor of Morgan, Lipsky of Stowe, Nelson of Derby, Olson of Starksboro, Page of Newport City, Priestley of Bradford, Wells of Brownington, and White of Bethel,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the permitting of pilot or demonstration projects to treat or destroy emerging contaminants

To the Committee on Environment.

H. 153

By Reps. Greer of Bennington, Austin of Colchester, Bishop of Colchester, Boutin of Barre City, Carris-Duncan of Whitingham, Charlton of Chester, Coffin of Cavendish, Cooper of Pownal, Corcoran of Bennington, Donahue of Northfield, Eastes of Guilford, Galfetti of Barre Town, Harrison of Chittenden, Harvey of Castleton, Holcombe of Norwich, Hooper of Burlington, Howland of Rutland Town, Lipsky of Stowe, Logan of Burlington, Malay of Pittsford, McGill of Bridport, Morrissey of Bennington, Morrow of Weston, Nelson of Derby, Nigro of Bennington, North of Ferrisburgh, Pinsonault of Dorset, Pouech of Hinesburg, Priestley of Bradford, Pritchard of Pawlet, Sweeney of Shelburne, Tagliavia of Corinth, and Winter of Ludlow,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to expanding family access to certified copies of birth and death certificates

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 154

By Reps. Mrowicki of Putney, Austin of Colchester, Bartholomew of Hartland, Birong of Vergennes, Bishop of Colchester, Bluemle of Burlington, Bosch of Clarendon, Branagan of Georgia, Burditt of West Rutland, Burke of Brattleboro, Burkhardt of South Burlington, Campbell of St. Johnsbury, Canfield of Fair Haven, Coffin of Cavendish, Conlon of Cornwall, Critchlow of Colchester, Demar of Enosburgh, Dickinson of St. Albans Town, Durfee of Shaftsbury, Eastes of Guilford, Galfetti of Barre Town, Goslant of Northfield, Graning of Jericho, Gregoire of Fairfield, Hango of Berkshire, Harple of Glover, Harrison of Chittenden, Headrick of Burlington, Higley of Lowell, Hooper of Randolph, Hooper of Burlington, Hunter of Manchester, Kascenska of Burke, Kleppner of Burlington, Kornheiser of Brattleboro, Lalley of Shelburne, Laroche of Franklin, Long of Newfane, Luneau of St. Albans City, Maguire of Rutland City, McCoy of Poultney, McGill of Bridport, Morgan, M. of Milton, Morrissey of Bennington, Morrow of Weston, Nigro of Bennington, North of Ferrisburgh, Olson of Starksboro, Page of Newport City, Pouech of Hinesburg, Rachelson of Burlington, Scheu of Middlebury, Squirrell of Underhill, Steady of Milton, Stevens of Waterbury, Sweeney of Shelburne, Taylor of Milton, Waszazak of Barre City, Waters Evans of Charlotte, White of Bethel, and Yacovone of Morristown,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to designating November as the Vermont Month of the Veteran

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 155

By Reps. Torre of Moretown, Cordes of Bristol, Goldman of Rockingham, Hunter of Manchester, Lalley of Shelburne, Logan of Burlington, Masland of Thetford, Morrow of Weston, and Pouech of Hinesburg,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the Standard Offer Program

To the Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure.

H. 156

By Rep. Cordes of Bristol,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to prohibiting pharmacy benefit managers from owning or operating a pharmacy in Vermont

To the Committee on Health Care.

H. 157

By Reps. North of Ferrisburgh, Harrison of Chittenden, Higley of Lowell, Kascenska of Burke, and Sweeney of Shelburne,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to Act 250 exemptions and delegation of stormwater permitting

To the Committee on Environment.

H. 158

By Rep. Cordes of Bristol,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to prohibiting municipal regulation of the use of hygienic face masks

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 159

By Reps. North of Ferrisburgh, Bailey of Hyde Park, Bosch of Clarendon, Boutin of Barre City, Canfield of Fair Haven, Coffin of Cavendish, Demar of Enosburgh, Feltus of Lyndon, Harvey of Castleton, Higley of Lowell, Howland of Rutland Town, Keyser of Rutland City, Labor of Morgan, Luneau of St. Albans City, McFaun of Barre Town, Morgan, M. of Milton, Nelson of Derby, Nielsen of Brandon, Pinsonault of Dorset, Powers of Waterford, Pritchard of Pawlet, Steady of Milton, Tagliavia of Corinth, and Winter of Ludlow,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to repealing the Renewable Energy Standard

To the Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure.

Ceremonial Reading**H.C.R. 10**

Offered by Representative McGill of Bridport

House concurrent resolution designating February 6, 2025 as 3SquaresVT Awareness Day at the State House

Whereas, food shelves, food pantries, meal sites, senior meal programs, the Vermont Foodbank, emergency shelters, Area Agencies on Aging, community groups, businesses, health providers, statewide coalitions, faith-based organizations, and concerned and dedicated individuals are working to end hunger in Vermont, and

Whereas, a major support for this effort is 3SquaresVT, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Vermont that the Department for Children and Families' Economic Services Division administers, and

Whereas, 3SquaresVT is an extremely effective and efficient antihunger program providing nine meals for every one meal that the charitable food system offers, and

Whereas, more than 65,000 Vermonters, comprising nearly 40,000 households of all ages and demographics, are recipients of 3SquaresVT benefits, and

Whereas, a large segment of 3SquaresVT recipients are children, seniors, or people living with disabilities, and

Whereas, 3SquaresVT serves the food needs of friends, neighbors, and families with privacy and dignity and mitigates the impact of poverty on our most vulnerable residents, and

Whereas, this federal program strengthens the economic vitality of Vermont's local communities and businesses, such as grocers and farmers, and our State economy, by keeping redeemed benefits from each meal within our State, and

Whereas, the most recent data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture shows that the number of people at risk of hunger is only increasing, particularly households with children, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates February 6, 2025 as 3SquaresVT Awareness Day at the State House.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, January 31, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**Committee Relieved of Consideration and Bill Committed to
Other Committee**

H. 134

Rep. Kornheiser of Brattleboro moved that the Committee on Ways and Means be relieved of House bill, entitled

An act relating to calculating land use change tax and creating a new land use change tax exemption for developing affordable housing

And that the bill be committed to the Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry, which was agreed to.

Third Reading; Bill Passed

H. 34

House bill, entitled

An act relating to workforce leadership in Vermont

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

**Committee Bill; Favorable Report; Second Reading;
Third Reading Ordered**

H. 141

Rep. Scheu of Middlebury spoke for the Committee on Appropriations.

House bill, entitled

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments

Rep. Kornheiser of Brattleboro, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommended the bill ought to pass.

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, and read the second time.

Pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, **Rep. Toof of St. Albans Town** demanded the Yeas and Nays, which demand was sustained by the Constitutional number. The Clerk proceeded to call the roll and the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, was decided in the affirmative. Yeas, 87. Nays, 51.

Those who voted in the affirmative are:

Arsenault of Williston
Austin of Colchester

Durfee of Shaftsbury
Eastes of Guilford

McGill of Bridport *
Mihaly of Calais

Bartholomew of Hartland	Emmons of Springfield	Minier of South Burlington
Berbeco of Winooski	Garofano of Essex	Morrow of Weston
Birong of Vergennes	Goldman of Rockingham	Mrowicki of Putney *
Bishop of Colchester	Goodnow of Brattleboro	Nigro of Bennington
Black of Essex	Graning of Jericho	Noyes of Wolcott
Bluemle of Burlington	Greer of Bennington *	Nugent of South Burlington
Bos-Lun of Westminster	Harple of Glover	Ode of Burlington
Boyden of Cambridge	Headrick of Burlington	Olson of Starksboro
Brady of Williston	Holcombe of Norwich	Pezzo of Colchester
Brown of Richmond	Hooper of Randolph	Pouech of Hinesburg
Burke of Brattleboro	Houghton of Essex Junction	Rachelson of Burlington
Burkhardt of South Burlington	Howard of Rutland City	Satcowitz of Randolph
Burrows of West Windsor	Hunter of Manchester	Scheu of Middlebury
Campbell of St. Johnsbury	James of Manchester	Sheldon of Middlebury
Carris-Duncan of Whitingham	Kimbell of Woodstock	Squirrell of Underhill
Casey of Montpelier	Kleppner of Burlington	Stevens of Waterbury
Chapin of East Montpelier	Kornheiser of Brattleboro	Stone of Burlington
Cina of Burlington *	Krasnow of South Burlington	Surprenant of Barnard
Cole of Hartford	Lalley of Shelburne	Sweeney of Shelburne
Conlon of Cornwall	LaLonde of South Burlington *	Tomlinson of Winooski
Cooper of Pownal	LaMont of Morristown	Torre of Moretown
Corcoran of Bennington	Lipsky of Stowe	Waszazak of Barre City *
Cordes of Bristol	Logan of Burlington	Waters Evans of Charlotte
Critchlow of Colchester	Long of Newfane	White of Waitsfield
Dodge of Essex	Masland of Thetford	White of Bethel
Dolan of Essex Junction	McCann of Montpelier	Wood of Waterbury
Duke of Burlington	McFaun of Barre Town	Yacovone of Morristown

Those who voted in the negative are:

Bailey of Hyde Park	Gregoire of Fairfield	Nelson of Derby
Bartley of Fairfax	Hango of Berkshire	Nielsen of Brandon
Bosch of Clarendon	Harrison of Chittenden	North of Ferrisburgh *
Boutin of Barre City	Harvey of Castleton	Oliver of Sheldon
Burditt of West Rutland	Higley of Lowell	Page of Newport City
Burt of Cabot	Howland of Rutland Town	Parsons of Newbury
Canfield of Fair Haven	Kascenska of Burke	Powers of Waterford
Casey of Hubbardton	Keyser of Rutland City	Pritchard of Pawlet
Charlton of Chester	Labor of Morgan	Quimby of Lyndon
Coffin of Cavendish	Laroche of Franklin	Southworth of Walden
Demar of Enosburgh	Luneau of St. Albans City	Steady of Milton
Dickinson of St. Albans Town	Maguire of Rutland City	Tagliavia of Corinth
Dobrovich of Williamstown	Malay of Pittsford	Toof of St. Albans Town
Donahue of Northfield *	Marcotte of Coventry	Walker of Swanton
Feltus of Lyndon	Micklus of Milton	Wells of Brownington
Galfetti of Barre Town *	Morgan, L. of Milton	Winter of Ludlow
Goslant of Northfield	Morgan, M. of Milton	
	Morrissey of Bennington	

Those members absent with leave of the House and not voting are:

Branagan of Georgia	McCoy of Poultney	Priestley of Bradford
Christie of Hartford	Morris of Springfield	Sibilia of Dover
Dolgin of St. Johnsbury	O'Brien of Tunbridge	Taylor of Milton
Hooper of Burlington	Pinsonault of Dorset	

Rep. Cina of Burlington provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I vote yes in honor of Windsong Young, and all our unhoused neighbors who have died due to complications of unsheltered homelessness. I vote yes with hope that our unhoused neighbors not only survive, but also thrive.”

Rep. Donahue of Northfield provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

Extending the length of stay for some people, resulting in cutting off access to shelter for others, is not the right way to support those most in need. It actually turns our backs on them.”

Rep. Galfetti of Barre Town provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

The policy that was nefariously slid through in this Budget Adjustment could and should have been considered in the light of day, as there was plenty of time to do it the right way.”

Rep. Greer of Bennington provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

The State cannot continue to allocate the money, or resources, to the continuation of the program, authorized under Section 88 of H.141, that offers no systemic change and only enables the perpetrators of the drug and opioid crisis to destroy lives by using this program as a means of mass drug distribution, and centers of criminal activity, which jeopardizes the safety and well-being of children and families. Simultaneously, by amending this prior agreement, we continue to erode the principles of personal responsibility over one’s own choices. We cannot continue to help people that will not help themselves. In the interest of my constituents and for the other needed and valuable programs, I will support H.141.”

Rep. LaLonde of South Burlington provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

The BAA provides funding for the technology that’s now critical for basic court operations. It also provides a cost-of-living increase that was left out of last years budget for sheriffs who provide security at courthouses. The technology the courts use, and the security that sheriffs provide, are critical to ensuring our courts are functioning, and are able to tackle the backlog of cases, and speed up case processing, so that there are swift and certain consequences for criminal behavior.”

Rep. McGill of Bridport provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I voted yes because every child we fail today is a lost opportunity for Vermont’s future. Not just numbers, not just policy – human lives, children’s futures, and the strength of our State.”

Rep. Mrowicki of Putney provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

If we look outside, we see weather no one should be unhoused in. With climate chaos, harsh weather is possible anytime of year. As we’ve waited years for a plan from the Administration, my vote is to see that no one is left out in this weather. Our thorough process came to agreement on 99% of the BAA from the Governor. Your Appropriations Committee worked hard to take in many points of view and came up with this bill that I am proud to vote for, in support of most especially of vulnerable Vermonters.”

Rep. North of Ferrisburgh provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I vote No on H.141 on principle. First, the BAA is not for policy alteration, which is what the 80-day extension of the 80-day limit was. Second, for affordability when we have the opportunity to pay down debt, we should do so. Thirdly, for the lack of compromise, which we said we would, compromise was offered and rejected.”

Rep. Waszazak of Barre City provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

There are many issues involving homelessness that this body must solve, in the long term. Kicking people into the cold solves none of them and would cost lives, in the short term.”

Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee Appointments

Pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 614, the Speaker appointed the following members to the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee:

Rep. Campbell of St. Johnsbury

Rep. Priestley of Bradford

Rep. Sibia of Dover

Adjournment

At four o'clock and twenty minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. Toof of St. Albans Town**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon.