

# Journal of the House

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Thursday, March 27, 2025

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

## Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. Ashley Bartley of Fairfax.

## Senate Bills Referred

Senate bills of the following titles were severally taken up, read the first time, and referred to committee as follows:

### S. 12

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to sealing criminal history records

To the Committee on Judiciary.

### S. 36

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to the Medicaid payment model for residential substance use disorder treatment services

To the Committee on Human Services.

### S. 53

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services

To the Committee on Health Care.

### S. 56

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

**S. 63**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board

To the Committee on Health Care.

**S. 117**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation

To the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

**Ceremonial Reading****H.C.R. 62**

Offered by Representatives Greer of Bennington, Cooper of Pownal, Corcoran of Bennington, Durfee of Shaftsbury, Morrissey of Bennington, and Nigro of Bennington

Offered by Senators Bongartz and Plunkett

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Black Music Division at Bennington College

*Whereas*, the journey to establish Black music as a focus of academic examination and respect owes much to the pioneering initiative of the Black Music Division at Bennington College, which was established in 1974 under the auspices of Bill Dixon, a Renaissance figure in the Black cultural scene, as a composer, educator, performer, and ardent artistic advocate, and

*Whereas*, this avant-garde jazz luminary was ideally qualified to take on this pedagogical challenge, having studied music at the Hartnett Conservatory of Music, organized the “October Revolution in Jazz” conclave in New York City in 1964, and later co-founded the Jazz Composer’s Guild, and

*Whereas*, a primary rationale for the creation of the Black Music Division was “to legitimize Black Music within the academic sphere,” a mission today’s faculty continues to promote with “courses that explore the depth and cultural significance of Black music,” and

*Whereas*, for nearly four decades, another prominent faculty member in the Black Music Division was the eminent percussionist, New York Art Quartet member, Guggenheim Fellowship recipient, and Doris Duke Foundation Impact Award winner, Milford Graves, and

*Whereas*, to celebrate and reflect upon this half-century academic odyssey and its historic and “transformative impact on the field of music, education, improvisation and culture,” the Black Music Division, with the support of Bennington College Alumni Relations, is sponsoring a Black Music Symposium, an event reminiscent of Bill Dixon’s “October Revolution in Jazz,” and

*Whereas*, Bennington College faculty member Michael Wimberly is organizing this grand gathering of “alumni, musicians, faculty, students, and members of the public” for two glorious days of exciting “live performances, lectures, panels, and workshops” that will highlight the past, present, and future of Black music, *now therefore be it*

***Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:***

That the General Assembly commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Black Music Division at Bennington College, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Black Music Division at Bennington College.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, March 21, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**House Resolution Adopted**

**H.R. 7**

House resolution reaffirming the friendship between the State of Vermont and Taiwan and supporting enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan’s participation in international organizations

Was taken up and adopted.

**Second Reading; Question Divided; Bill Amended;  
Third Reading Ordered**

**H. 218**

**Rep. Maguire of Rutland City**, for the Committee on Human Services, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund

Reported in favor of its passage when amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

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Sec. 1. APPROPRIATIONS; OPIOID ABATEMENT SPECIAL FUND

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the following sums shall be appropriated from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund established in 18 V.S.A. § 4774:

(1)(A) \$1,976,000.00 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 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) \$76,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform to fund an outreach worker position.

(3)(A) \$1,400,000.00 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 at not less than fiscal year 2026 levels, unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(4)(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 at not less than fiscal year 2026 levels, unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(5) \$800,000.00 for distribution as follows:

(A) not more than \$35,000.00 to the Department of Corrections for distribution to Pathways Vermont to implement a contingency management pilot program in Chittenden County for individuals under the supervision of the Department of Corrections; and

(B) the remainder to the Department of Health for grants to providers for ongoing support for contingency management.

(6) \$32,157.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to the Brattleboro Fire Department to establish community training programs on the administration of opioid antagonists, CPR, first aid, and Stop the Bleed protocols.

(7) \$44,229.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to the Champlain Housing Trust to continue a pilot program providing access to

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wound care and preventative health care in three low-barrier shelters within Chittenden County.

(8) \$800,000.00 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 and clinical nursing programs.

(9) \$309,000.00 to the Department of Health for Health Care and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont's Project Connectionworks to reduce opioid use disorder morbidity and mortality in Windham County through prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

(10) \$50,000.00 to the Judicial Branch to train Vermont's judges on issues related to opioid use disorder and strategies for use in dockets statewide.

(11) \$200,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Elevate Youth Services to establish Healthy Youth Program counselors at the Basement Teen Center at Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Washington County.

(12) \$100,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Friends for Change's Youth Center in Bellows Falls for the purpose of delivering intervention strategies and harm reduction supports to youth and young adults.

(13) \$170,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Spectrum Youth and Family Services for two new positions to expand opioid use disorder screening, treatment, and case management services to youth in Chittenden and Franklin Counties.

(14) \$80,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont for the purpose of teaching parenting skills and providing social and emotional parenting supports for individuals with opioid use disorder.

(15) \$850,000.00 to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living for distribution to HireAbility Vermont to provide specialized employment services for individuals with opioid use disorder in Burlington, Newport, Rutland, and Bennington.

(16) \$550,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Northeast Kingdom Community Action to hire four peer support specialists to assist individuals with opioid use disorder who are transitioning out of homelessness into safe, permanent housing.

(17) \$150,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Connecticut Valley Addiction Services, Inc. to expand opioid use treatment in rural Windsor County.

(18) \$300,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform and the Johnson Health Center to continue and improve the Managed Medical Response Partnership.

(19) \$30,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Treatment Associates of Washington County Mental Health to hire an embedded recovery coach.

(20) \$20,824.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Umbrella to provide integrated services between domestic and sexual violence providers and partners in recovery in northeastern Vermont.

(b) The Department of Health shall carry forward \$1,100,000.00 appropriated from the Opioid Settlement Special Fund in fiscal year 2025 for the purpose of awarding grants to the City of Burlington for establishing an overdose prevention center upon submission of a grant proposal that has been approved by the Burlington City Council and meets the requirements of 18 V.S.A. § 4256, including the guidelines developed by the Department of Health. Any unmet need in fiscal year 2026, up to \$550,000.00, shall be addressed in the Department's budget adjustment proposal.

(c) All grant agreements associated with funds appropriated pursuant to this section shall require outcome and measurements data to be collected and reported to the department issuing the grant and to the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. chapter 93 is amended to read:

#### CHAPTER 93. OPIOID USE DISORDER

##### Subchapter 1. Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

\* \* \*

#### § 4754. LIMITATION ON PRIOR AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS

(a) A health insurance plan shall not require prior authorization for prescription drugs for a patient who is receiving ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder if the dosage prescribed is within the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's dosing recommendations.

(b) A health insurance plan shall not require prior authorization for all counseling and behavioral therapies associated with ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder for a patient who is receiving medication-assisted treatment.

##### Subchapter 2. Opioid Settlement

\* \* \*

## § 4772. OPIOID SETTLEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

\* \* \*

## (b) Membership.

(1) The Advisory Committee shall be composed of the following members and shall reflect the diversity of Vermont in terms of gender, race, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, and socioeconomic status and ensure inclusion of individuals with lived experience of opioid use disorder and their family members whenever possible:

\* \* \*

(E) a primary care prescriber with experience providing ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder within the Blueprint for Health hub and spoke model, appointed by the Executive Director of the Blueprint for Health, to provide a statewide perspective on the provision of ~~providing medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder services;

\* \* \*

(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-assisted treatment~~ 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, 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. 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-assisted treatment~~ 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.

\* \* \*

(e) Presentation. Annually, the Advisory Committee shall vote on its recommendations. Recommendations shall be informed by outcomes and measurements reported by previous grantees. If the recommendations are supported by an affirmative vote of the majority, the Advisory Committee shall present its recommendations for expenditures from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund established pursuant to this subchapter to the Department of Health and concurrently submit its recommendations in writing to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare. The Advisory Committee's written recommendations shall address how each recommendation meets one or more of the criteria listed in subsections 4774(b) and (c) of this subchapter. The Advisory Committee shall give priority consideration to services requiring funding on an ongoing basis.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Commissioner of Health shall call the first meeting of the Advisory Committee to occur on or before June 30, 2022.

(2) Annually, the Advisory Committee shall elect a voting vice chair from among its nongovernmental members.

(3) The Advisory Committee shall meet at least quarterly but not more than 12 times per calendar year.

~~(3)~~(4) The Advisory Committee shall adopt procedures to govern its proceedings and organization, including voting procedures and how the staggered terms shall be apportioned among members.

~~(4)~~(5) All meetings of the Advisory Committee shall be consistent with Vermont's Open Meeting Law pursuant to 1 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 2.

\* \* \*

#### § 4774. OPIOID ABATEMENT SPECIAL FUND

\* \* \*

(c) Priority for expenditures from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund shall be aimed at reducing overdose deaths, including the following:

\* \* \*



(2) increasing access to ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder and other opioid-related treatment, specifically:

(A) increasing distribution of ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder to individuals who are uninsured or whose health insurance does not cover the needed goods and services;

(B) providing education to school-based and youth-focused programs that discourage or prevent misuse, including how to access opioid use disorder treatment;

(C) providing ~~medication-assisted~~ education and awareness training on medication for opioid use disorder to health care providers, emergency medical technicians, law enforcement, and other first responders; and

\* \* \*

(3) assisting pregnant and postpartum individuals, specifically:

(A) enhancing services for expanding screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) services to non-Medicaid eligible or uninsured pregnant individuals;

(B) expanding comprehensive evidence-based or evidence-informed treatment and recovery services, including ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder, for individuals with co-occurring opioid use disorder and other substance or mental health disorders for up to 12 months postpartum; and

\* \* \*

(5) expanding the availability of warm handoff programs and recovery services, specifically:

(A) expanding services such as navigators and on-call teams to begin ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder in hospital emergency departments;

\* \* \*

(6) treating incarcerated populations, specifically:

(A) providing evidence-based or evidence-informed treatment and recovery support, including ~~medication-assisted treatment~~ medication for opioid use disorder for individuals with opioid use disorder or co-occurring substance use or mental health disorders while transitioning out of the criminal justice system; and

\* \* \*

## Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

**Rep. Bluemle of Burlington**, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommended that the report of the Committee on Human Services be amended by striking out Sec. 1 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 1 to read as follows:

## Sec. 1. APPROPRIATIONS; OPIOID ABATEMENT SPECIAL FUND

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the following sums shall be appropriated from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund established in 18 V.S.A. § 4774:

(1)(A) \$1,976,000.00 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 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) \$76,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform to fund an outreach worker position.

(3)(A) \$1,400,000.00 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 at not less than fiscal year 2026 levels, unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(4)(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 at not less than fiscal year 2026 levels, unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(5)(A) \$1,100,000.00 to the Department of Health for the purpose of awarding grants to the City of Burlington for establishing an overdose prevention center upon submission of a grant proposal that has been approved by the Burlington City Council and meets the requirements of 18 V.S.A. § 4256, including the guidelines developed by the Department of Health.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly to continue to appropriate funds from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund through 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.

(6) \$800,000.00 for distribution as follows:

(A) not more than \$35,000.00 to the Department of Corrections for distribution to Pathways Vermont to implement a contingency management pilot program in Chittenden County for individuals under the supervision of the Department of Corrections; and

(B) the remainder to the Department of Health for grants to providers for ongoing support for contingency management.

(7) \$32,157.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to the Brattleboro Fire Department to establish community training programs on the administration of opioid antagonists, CPR, first aid, and Stop the Bleed protocols.

(8) \$44,229.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to the Champlain Housing Trust to continue a pilot program providing access to wound care and preventative health care in three low-barrier shelters within Chittenden County.

(9) \$800,000.00 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 and clinical nursing programs.

(10) \$309,000.00 to the Department of Health for Health Care and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont's Project Connectionworks to reduce opioid use disorder morbidity and mortality in Windham County through prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

(11) \$50,000.00 to the Judicial Branch to train Vermont's judges on issues related to opioid use disorder and strategies for use in dockets statewide.

(12) \$200,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Elevate Youth Services to establish Healthy Youth Program counselors at the Basement Teen Center at Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Washington County.

(13) \$100,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Friends for Change's Youth Center in Bellows Falls for the purpose of delivering intervention strategies and harm reduction supports to youth and young adults.

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(17) \$550,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Northeast Kingdom Community Action to hire four peer support specialists to assist individuals with opioid use disorder who are transitioning out of homelessness into safe, permanent housing.

(18) \$150,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Connecticut Valley Addiction Services, Inc. to expand opioid use treatment in rural Windsor County.

(19) \$300,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform and the Johnson Health Center to continue and improve the Managed Medical Response Partnership.

(20) \$30,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Treatment Associates of Washington County Mental Health to hire an embedded recovery coach.

(21) \$20,824.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Umbrella to provide integrated services between domestic and sexual violence providers and partners in recovery in northeastern Vermont.

(b) All grant agreements associated with funds appropriated pursuant to this section shall require outcome and measurements data to be collected and reported to the department issuing the grant and to the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee.

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

Pending the question, Shall the report of the Committee on Human Services be amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations?, **Rep. Steady of Milton** asked that the question be divided to first consider Sec. 1(a)(5) of the report of the Committee on Appropriations – regarding the award of grants to the City of Burlington for an overdose prevention center – and to then consider the remainder of the report of the Committee on Appropriations, and the Speaker ruled the question was divisible in that manner.

Pending the question, Shall the report of the Human Services be amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations in Section 1(a)(5) of the Appropriations Report?, **Rep. Steady of Milton** 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 report of the Human Services be amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations in Section 1(a)(5) of the Appropriations Report?, was decided in the affirmative. Yeas, 87. Nays, 58.

Those who voted in the affirmative are:

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

Those who voted in the negative are:

Bailey of Hyde Park	Gregoire of Fairfield	Morrissey of Bennington
Bartley of Fairfax	Hango of Berkshire	Nelson of Derby
Bosch of Clarendon	Harrison of Chittenden	Nielsen of Brandon
Boutin of Barre City	Harvey of Castleton	North of Ferrisburgh
Burt of Cabot	Higley of Lowell	Oliver of Sheldon

Canfield of Fair Haven	Howland of Rutland Town	Page of Newport City
Casey of Hubbardton	Keyser of Rutland City	Parsons of Newbury
Charlton of Chester	Labor of Morgan	Pinsonault of Dorset
Coffin of Cavendish	Laroche of Franklin	Powers of Waterford
Corcoran of Bennington	Lipsky of Stowe	Pritchard of Pawlet
Demar of Enosburgh	Luneau of St. Albans City	Quimby of Lyndon
Dickinson of St. Albans Town	Maguire of Rutland City	Southworth of Walden
Dobrovich of Williamstown	Malay of Pittsford	Steady of Milton
Dolgin of St. Johnsbury	Marcotte of Coventry	Tagliavia of Corinth
Donahue of Northfield	McCoy of Poultney	Taylor of Milton
Feltus of Lyndon	McFaun of Barre Town	Toof of St. Albans Town
Galfetti of Barre Town	Micklus of Milton	Walker of Swanton
Goslant of Northfield	Morgan, L. of Milton	Wells of Brownington
Greer of Bennington	Morgan, M. of Milton	Winter of Ludlow
	Morris of Springfield	

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

Austin of Colchester	Christie of Hartford
Burditt of West Rutland	White of Bethel

**Rep. Rachelson of Burlington** provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

Too many Vermonters, our friends, neighbors, and relatives, have died tragically from injecting alone. Safe injection sites save lives. No one has died at a safe injection site, and for some, its been a catalyst to seek treatment.”

Thereupon, the remainder of the report of the Committee on Appropriations was agreed to, the report of the Committee on Human Services, as amended, agreed to, and third reading ordered.

### **Third Reading; Bills Passed**

House bills of the following titles were severally taken up, read the third time, and passed:

#### **H. 17**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morrystown

#### **H. 167**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

**H. 237**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to prescribing by doctoral-level psychologists

**Amended Offered and Withdrawn; Third Reading; Bill Passed**

**H. 244**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to State contracting standards for advertising

Was taken up and, pending third reading of the bill, **Rep. Galfetti of Barre Town** moved to amend the bill in Sec. 2, 29 V.S.A. § 910, by striking out subsections (a)–(b) in their entirety and inserting in lieu thereof new subsections (a)–(b) to read as follows:

(a) When contracting for print or digital advertising services for the State or its agencies, departments, instrumentalities, or institutions, the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall contract with local news organizations for not less than 70 percent of the total annual value of the print or digital advertising services, of which at least 40 percent of the total annual value of the print or digital advertising services shall be with local news organizations with annual revenue of less than \$3,000,000.00.

(b) When contracting for radio or television advertising services for the State or its agencies, departments, instrumentalities, or institutions, the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall contract with local broadcast organizations for not less than 70 percent of the total annual value of the radio or television advertising services, of which at least 40 percent of the total annual value of the radio or television advertising services shall be with local broadcast organizations with annual revenue of less than \$3,000,000.00.

Thereupon, **Rep. Galfetti of Barre Town** asked and was granted leave of the House to withdraw her amendment.

Thereafter, the bill was read the third time and passed.

**Amendment Offered and Withdrawn; Bill Amended;  
Third Reading; Bill Passed**

**H. 397**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the statutes governing emergency management and flood response

Was taken up and, pending third reading of the bill, **Rep. Parsons of Newbury** moved to amend the bill by striking out Sec. 13a, 24 V.S.A. § 138, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 13a to read as follows:

Sec. 13a. [Deleted.]

Thereupon, **Rep. Parsons of Newbury** asked and was granted leave of the House to withdraw his amendment.

Pending third reading of the bill, **Reps. Kornheiser of Brattleboro and Waszazak of Barre City** moved to amend the bill by striking out Sec. 14, [Deleted.], in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new reader assistance heading and Secs. 14 through 14c to read as follows:

\* \* \* Municipal Charters; Local Option Tax Revenue Share \* \* \*

Sec. 14. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 3, § 102d is amended to read:

§ 102d. LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX AUTHORITY

The Burlington City Council is authorized to impose a one percent sales tax upon sales within the City that are subject to the State of Vermont sales tax with the same exemptions as the State sales tax. The City sales tax shall be effective beginning on the next tax quarter following 30 days' notice in 2006 to the Department of Taxes, or shall be effective on the next tax quarter following 90 days' notice to the Department of Taxes if notice is given in 2007 or after. Any tax imposed under the authority of this section shall be collected and administered by the Vermont Department of Taxes in accordance with State law governing the State sales tax. ~~Seventy percent of the The taxes collected shall be paid to the City, and the remaining amount of the taxes collected shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the PILOT Special Fund first established in 1997 Acts and Resolves No. 60, Sec. 89. The cost of administration and collection of this tax shall be paid 70 percent by the City and 30 percent by the State from the PILOT Special Fund pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138. The tax to be paid to the City, less its obligation for 70 percent of the costs of administration and collection, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138 shall be paid to the City on a quarterly basis and may be expended by the City for municipal services only and not for education expenditures.~~

Sec. 14a. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 5, § 1214 is amended to read:

§ 1214. LOCAL OPTION TAXES

Local option taxes are authorized under this section for the purpose of affording the City an alternative method of raising municipal revenues. Accordingly:

\* \* \*



(3) ~~Of the taxes reported under this section, 70 percent shall be paid to the City for calendar years thereafter. Such revenues~~ The City's local option tax revenue may be expended by the City for municipal services only and not for educational expenditures. The remaining amount of the taxes reported shall be remitted monthly to the State Treasurer for deposit in the PILOT Special Fund set forth in 32 V.S.A. § 3709. Taxes due to the City under this section shall be paid by the State on a quarterly basis.

Sec. 14b. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 127, § 1308a is amended to read:

§ 1308a. SALES, ROOMS, MEALS, AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
TAX

\* \* \*

(d) ~~Of the taxes collected under this section, 70 percent~~ The share of taxes due to the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138 shall be paid to the Town on a quarterly basis ~~to the Town~~ after reduction for the costs of administration and collection under subsection (c) of this section. Revenues received by the Town may be expended for municipal services only and not for education expenditures. Any remaining revenues shall be deposited in the PILOT Special Fund established by 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. 14c. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 171, § 18 is amended to read:

§ 18. LOCAL OPTIONS TAX

The Selectboard is authorized to impose a one percent sales tax, a one percent meals and alcoholic beverages tax, and a one percent rooms tax upon sales within the Town that are subject to the State of Vermont tax on sales, meals, alcoholic beverages, and rooms. The Town tax shall be implemented in the event the State local options tax as provided for in 24 V.S.A. § 138 is repealed or the 70-percent allocation to the town is reduced. A tax imposed under the authority of this section shall be collected and administered by the Vermont Department of Taxes in accordance with State law governing the State tax on sales, meals, alcoholic beverages, and rooms. ~~The amount of 70 percent of the taxes collected shall be paid to the Town, and the remaining amount of the taxes collected shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the Pilot Special Fund first established in 1997 Acts and Resolves No. 60, § 89 pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138.~~ The cost of administration and collection of this tax shall be paid ~~70 percent by the Town and 30 percent by the State from the Pilot Special Fund pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138.~~ The tax to be paid to the Town, ~~less its obligation for the 70 percent of the costs of administration and collection, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138~~ shall be paid to the Town on a quarterly basis and may be expended by the Town for municipal

services only and not for education expenditures. The Town may repeal the local option taxes by Australian ballot vote.

Which was agreed to.

Pending third reading of the bill, **Rep. Birong of Vergennes** moved to amend the bill in Sec. 7, Division of Emergency Management; all-hazard and weather alert systems for municipal corporations, by striking out the section heading in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 7. 20 V.S.A. § 52 is added to read:

§ 52. DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT; ALL-HAZARD  
AND WEATHER ALERT SYSTEMS FOR MUNICIPAL  
CORPORATIONS

Which was agreed to.

Pending third reading of the bill, **Rep. Wood of Waterbury** moved to amend the bill in Sec. 2, 20 V.S.A. § 41, in subdivision (4)(B), by striking out the subdivision in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (4)(B) to read as follows:

(B) municipal plans and systems, developed in collaboration with the Agency of Human Services, to ensure that vulnerable populations, including older Vermonters and individuals with disabilities, within the municipality are contacted and visited to ensure their safety and wellness during an all-hazard event;

Which was agreed to. Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

### **Third Reading; Bills Passed**

House bills of the following titles were severally taken up, read the third time, and passed:

#### **H. 472**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to professions and occupations regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation

#### **H. 479**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to housing

**H. 488**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation

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

**H. 491**

**Rep. Kimbell of Woodstock** spoke for the Committee on Ways and Means.

House bill, entitled

An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate

Having appeared on the Notice Calendar and appearing on the Action Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, and third reading ordered.

**Second Reading; Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered**

**H. 106**

**Rep. Dolgin of St. Johnsbury**, for the Committee on General and Housing, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to selling real property within a FEMA mapped flood hazard area

Reported in favor of its passage when amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 27 V.S.A. § 380 is amended to read:

§ 380. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION; CONVEYANCE OF REAL  
ESTATE

(a) Prior to or as part of a contract for the conveyance of real property, the seller shall provide the buyer with the following information:

(1) whether the real property is located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency mapped special flood hazard area;

(2) whether the real property is located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency mapped moderate flood hazard area;

(3) whether the real property was subject to flooding or flood damage while the seller possessed the property, including flood damage from inundation or from flood-related erosion or landslide damage; and

(4) whether the seller maintains flood insurance on the real property.

(b) The failure of the seller to provide the buyer with the information required under subsection (a) of this section is grounds for the buyer to terminate the contract prior to transfer of title or occupancy, whichever occurs earlier.

(c) ~~A buyer~~ If a seller of real estate who fails to receive provide the information required to be disclosed by a seller under subsection (a) of this section, ~~a buyer~~ may bring an action to recover from the seller the amount of the buyer's damages and reasonable attorney's fees. The buyer may also seek punitive damages when the seller knowingly failed to provide the required information.

(d) A seller shall not be liable for damages under this section for any error, inaccuracy, or omission of any information required to be disclosed to the buyer under subsection (a) of this section:

(1) when the error, inaccuracy, or omission was based on information provided by a public body or by another person with a professional license or special knowledge who provided a written report that the seller reasonably believed to be correct and that was provided by the seller to the buyer; or

(2) if the seller, after reasonable attempt to identify whether the location of the real property is within a Federal Emergency Management Agency mapped special or moderate flood hazard area, notifies the buyer that the seller cannot reasonably determine if the real property is located within a special or moderate flood hazard area and the seller notifies the buyer of the requirements of subsection (a) of this section.

(e) Noncompliance with the requirements of this section shall not affect the marketability of title of a real property.

## Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage.

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

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

### H. 493

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

House bill, entitled

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government

**Rep. Houghton of Essex Junction** presiding.

**Speaker** presiding.

**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. Scheu of Middlebury** moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. B.713, by striking out “Natural resources” and inserting in lieu thereof “Land use review”

Second: In Sec. B.1100, miscellaneous fiscal year one-time appropriations, in subdivision (e)(1), by striking out “Access’s” and inserting in lieu thereof “Access”

Third: In Sec. B.1100, miscellaneous fiscal year one-time appropriations, in subdivision (n)(4), by striking out “Middle Income” and inserting in lieu thereof “Middle-Income”

Fourth: In Sec. B.1100, miscellaneous fiscal year one-time appropriations, in subdivision (n)(5), by inserting “2.0” following “Vermont Housing Improvement Program”

Fifth: In Sec. B.1100, miscellaneous fiscal year one-time appropriations, in subdivision (n)(7), by striking out “a Universal Design study” and inserting in lieu thereof “the Residential Universal Design Study Committee”

Sixth: In Sec. B.1100, miscellaneous fiscal year one-time appropriations, in subdivision (q)(1), by striking out “Vermont” and inserting in lieu thereof “Volunteer”

Seventh: In Sec. E.100, positions, following subsection (b), by inserting a new subdivision (c) to read as follows:

(c) The extension of nine limited services positions is authorized until June 30, 2026:

(1) Department of State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(A) six Deputy State’s Attorneys;

(B) two Legal Assistants; and

(C) one Victim Advocate.

Eighth: In Sec. E.321, general assistance emergency housing, in subdivision (b)(1), in the third sentence, by striking out “September 15” and inserting in lieu thereof “July 1”

Ninth: In Sec. E.333, developmental disability services payment reform, in subsection (a), by striking out “,” following “Aging”

Tenth: In Sec. E.500, education finance and administration, in subsection (a), in the first sentence, by striking out “funds appropriated in this section will” and inserting in lieu thereof “appropriation in Sec. B.500 of this act shall”

Eleventh: In Sec. E.514, state teachers’ retirement system, in subsection (a), by striking out “State Teachers’ Retirement System (STRS)” and inserting in lieu thereof “Vermont State Teachers’ Retirement System”

Twelfth: In Sec. E.603, Vermont state colleges allied health, in subsection (a), following “Global Commitment” by striking out “fund” and inserting in lieu thereof “Fund” and in subsection (b), following “Global Commitment” by striking out “funds appropriated” and inserting in lieu thereof “appropriation”

Which was agreed to.

Pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, **Rep. Nelson of Derby** 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, 104. Nays, 38.

Those who voted in the affirmative are:

Arsenault of Williston	Durfee of Shaftsbury	Mihaly of Calais
Bartholomew of Hartland	Eastes of Guilford	Minier of South Burlington
Bartley of Fairfax	Emmons of Springfield	Morris of Springfield
Berbeco of Winooski	Feltus of Lyndon	Morrissey of Bennington
Birong of Vergennes	Garofano of Essex	Morrow of Weston
Bishop of Colchester	Goldman of Rockingham *	Mrowicki of Putney
Black of Essex	Goodnow of Brattleboro	Nigro of Bennington
Bluemle of Burlington	Graning of Jericho	North of Ferrisburgh *
Bos-Lun of Westminster	Greer of Bennington	Noyes of Wolcott
Boyden of Cambridge	Gregoire of Fairfield	Nugent of South Burlington
Brady of Williston	Hango of Berkshire	O'Brien of Tunbridge
Branagan of Georgia	Harple of Glover	Ode of Burlington
Brown of Richmond	Harrison of Chittenden	Olson of Starksboro
Burke of Brattleboro	Headrick of Burlington	Pezzo of Colchester
Burkhardt of South Burlington	Holcombe of Norwich	Pouech of Hinesburg
Burrows of West Windsor	Hooper of Burlington	Priestley of Bradford
Burt of Cabot	Houghton of Essex Junction	Quimby of Lyndon
Campbell of St. Johnsbury	Howard of Rutland City	Rachelson of Burlington
	Hunter of Manchester	Satcowitz of Randolph

Carris-Duncan of Whitingham	James of Manchester	Scheu of Middlebury
Casey of Montpelier	Kascenska of Burke	Sheldon of Middlebury
Chapin of East Montpelier	Kimbell of Woodstock	Sibilia of Dover
Cina of Burlington	Kleppner of Burlington	Squirrell of Underhill
Cole of Hartford	Kornheiser of Brattleboro	Stevens of Waterbury
Conlon of Cornwall *	Krasnow of South Burlington	Stone of Burlington
Cooper of Pownal *	Lalley of Shelburne	Surprenant of Barnard
Corcoran of Bennington	LaLonde of South Burlington	Sweeney of Shelburne
Cordes of Bristol	LaMont of Morristown	Tomlinson of Winooski
Critchlow of Colchester	Laroche of Franklin	Torre of Moretown
Dickinson of St. Albans Town	Lipsky of Stowe	Walker of Swanton
Dobrovich of Williamstown	Long of Newfane	Waszazak of Barre City
Dodge of Essex *	Marcotte of Coventry	Waters Evans of Charlotte
Dolan of Essex Junction	Masland of Thetford	White of Waitsfield
Donahue of Northfield	McCann of Montpelier	Wood of Waterbury
Duke of Burlington	McFaun of Barre Town	Yacovone of Morristown

Those who voted in the negative are:

Bosch of Clarendon	Keyser of Rutland City	Page of Newport City
Boutin of Barre City	Labor of Morgan	Parsons of Newbury
Canfield of Fair Haven	Logan of Burlington	Pinsonault of Dorset
Casey of Hubbardton	Luneau of St. Albans City	Powers of Waterford
Charlton of Chester *	Maguire of Rutland City	Pritchard of Pawlet
Coffin of Cavendish	Malay of Pittsford	Southworth of Walden
Demar of Enosburgh	McCoy of Poultney	Steady of Milton
Dolgin of St. Johnsbury	Micklus of Milton	Tagliavia of Corinth
Galfetti of Barre Town	Morgan, L. of Milton	Taylor of Milton
Goslant of Northfield	Morgan, M. of Milton	Toof of St. Albans Town
Harvey of Castleton	Nelson of Derby *	Wells of Brownington
Higley of Lowell	Nielsen of Brandon	Winter of Ludlow
Howland of Rutland Town	Oliver of Sheldon	

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

Austin of Colchester	Christie of Hartford	White of Bethel
Bailey of Hyde Park	Hooper of Randolph	
Burditt of West Rutland	McGill of Bridport	

**Rep. Charlton of Chester** provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I am in admiration and have respect for the Committee that put the work into this budget, and I have a great sense of relief that I am on a different committee. My no vote reflects my conviction and hope that we will reconsider our allocations to housing. If we do not aggressively address this crisis, we will not solve homelessness, we will not attract a workforce, and we

will not retain the one we have – and they shoulder our income tax and most of our sales tax, and we will not grow the grand list of our communities. Our Education Fund depends on that tax and our municipalities depend on that tax. We will have a committee looking at a budget in a few years whose task will be heartbreaking because we will not be able to sustain this kind of budget if we do not deal with this issue more assertively.”

**Rep. Conlon of Cornwall** provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I join in the appreciation of the difficult work of the House Appropriations Committee and voted yes. The Committee cut funding for PCB remediation because it did not receive the information it needed to make an informed decision. I call on the Administration to make this right in the Senate, and I look forward to the State meeting its obligation to affected schools.”

**Rep. Cooper of Pownal** provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I am voting yes for two reasons. First, in this budget, I see an awareness of the health care concerns shared by many Vermonters in the rural district I represent, and second, in the 11-0 vote of your Committee on Appropriations, I see the commitment to oversight, accountability, and compromise that brings out our best work.”

**Rep. Dodge of Essex** provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I vote yes because I support this balanced and thoughtfully negotiated budget because it addresses our housing crisis through a mix of innovative programs and time-tested investments. Vermonters want and need us to move forward.”

**Rep. Goldman of Burlington** provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

Our health care system is extremely fragile at this moment. Primary care practices are closing, our major insurer is on the verge of collapse, DAs and SSAs are severely underfunded, and many of our hospitals are operating in the red. I voted yes on this budget as it begins the path toward sustainability by addressing the Institute of Healthcare Improvement’s triple aim of health care improvement of improving access and quality and reducing cost.”



**Rep. Nelson of Derby** provided the following explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

Although the budget contains some of the asks that I championed, the reduction by 40% in the amount of \$4 million to the Environmental Contingency Fund for PCB testing/remediation in schools concerns me and my constituents. My school, of which I am a school board member, used \$8.5 million last year and I fear we are far from finished. We are culpable now that we know our levels of contamination.”

**Rep. North of Ferrisburg** provided the following explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

I voted yes in recognition of the hard work of the Committee to reach a compromise, voting out 11-0, and in gratitude for the members of the various parties who arrived at a common ground solution, and I encourage all other committees to do the same.”

### **Action on Bill Postponed**

#### **H. 342**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to protecting the personal information of certain public servants

Was taken up and, pending third reading, on motion of **Rep. Marcotte of Coventry**, action on the bill was postponed until March 28, 2025.

### **Message from the Senate No. 32**

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 bills of the following titles:

**S. 18.** An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

**S. 122.** An act relating to economic and workforce development.

**S. 123.** An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

**S. 125.** An act relating to workers' compensation and collective bargaining rights.

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

**Adjournment**

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