

Journal of the House

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

At ten o'clock in the forenoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Isaiah Gonzales, student leader at Vermont Law and Graduate School, South Royalton.

Pledge of Allegiance

Page Braeden Schuren Burns of Montpelier led the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Ms. Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the House of Representatives that on the 5th day of May, 2025, he signed bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 17 An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown

H. 21 An act relating to service of writs of possession

Bills Referred to Committee on Ways and Means

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Notice Calendar, affecting the revenue of the State, pursuant to House Rule 35(a), were referred to the Committee on Ways and Means:

S. 63

Senate bill, entitled

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

S. 109

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to miscellaneous judiciary procedures

S. 127

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to housing and housing development

Bills Referred to Committee on Appropriations

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Notice Calendar, carrying appropriations, under House Rule 35(a), were referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

H. 46

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the Rare Disease Advisory Council

H. 230

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the management of fish and wildlife

Message from the Senate No. 52

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 considered bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 41. An act relating to abuse of the dead body of a person.

H. 137. An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

H. 494. An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposals of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the House is requested.

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

H. 219. An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

And has passed the same in concurrence.

The Senate has on its part adopted joint resolution of the following title:

J.R.S. 25. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 9, 2025.

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

Ceremonial Readings

H.C.R. 81

Offered by Representatives Krowinski of Burlington, Arsenault of Williston, Berbeco of Winooski, Bishop of Colchester, Black of Essex, Bluemle of Burlington, Bos-Lun of Westminster, Boyden of Cambridge, Burke of Brattleboro, Burrows of West Windsor, Campbell of St. Johnsbury, Casey of Montpelier, Christie of Hartford, Cina of Burlington, Coffin of Cavendish, Cole of Hartford, Corcoran of Bennington, Cordes of Bristol, Dodge of Essex, Dolan of Essex Junction, Garofano of Essex, Goslant of Northfield, Graning of Jericho, Gregoire of Fairfield, Harrison of Chittenden, Headrick of Burlington, Holcombe of Norwich, Houghton of Essex Junction, Howard of Rutland City, Hunter of Manchester, Kleppner of Burlington, Kornheiser of Brattleboro, Krasnow of South Burlington, Labor of Morgan, Lalley of Shelburne, LaLonde of South Burlington, Lipsky of Stowe, Logan of Burlington, Long of Newfane, Luneau of St. Albans City, Masland of Thetford, McCann of Montpelier, McCoy of Poultney, McGill of Bridport, Minier of South Burlington, Morris of Springfield, Nugent of South Burlington, Ode of Burlington, Page of Newport City, Pouech of Hinesburg, Priestley of Bradford, Rachelson of Burlington, Scheu of Middlebury, Sibia of Dover, Stevens of Waterbury, Stone of Burlington, Surprenant of Barnard, Sweeney of Shelburne, Tomlinson of Winooski, Waszazak of Barre City, Waters Evans of Charlotte, Wells of Brownington, White of Waitsfield, Wood of Waterbury, and Yacovone of Morristown

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Bakersfield Select Board member Brenda Churchill

Whereas, to many, Brenda Churchill was best known as a leading advocate for transgender rights within the LGBTQIA+ community, but this was not her sole civic or political engagement, and

Whereas, for over two decades, she was employed in the telecommunications industry and later brought this professional expertise to her service on the board of Northwest Fiberworx, the Communications Union District serving Franklin and Grand Isle Counties, and

Whereas, Brenda Churchill served as a key aide in Christine Hallquist's 2018 gubernatorial campaign, and she completed the Emerge Vermont candidate training program, and also served on the organization's board, and

Whereas, as the legislative liaison for the LGBTQIA Alliance of Vermont, her efforts were critical in legislative enactments related to ethnic and social equity studies in public schools; the provision of gender-neutral bathrooms; adding a non-binary designation option for Vermont drivers' licenses; and establishing a birth certificate authentication process, and

Whereas, Brenda Churchill's interests also focused on municipal government in the Town of Bakersfield, where she served as a zoning official and the local American Rescue Plan manager, and she won election as both a justice of the peace and select board member, and

Whereas, during the 2020 U.S. Census, she served as one of the Vermonters performing the vital role of data collector for the decennial headcount, and

Whereas, when not engaged in one of her many public or nonprofit sector roles, Brenda Churchill loved riding her bright orange Jeep off-trail on interesting journeys, and

Whereas, Brenda Churchill's participation in local and State government culminated in being selected as a member of the Vermont Commission on Women, and

Whereas, on January 13, 2025, Brenda Churchill died at 67 years of age, and her survivors include her partner, Sarah Chapman; her children; and her grandchildren, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly extends its sincere condolences to the family of Brenda Churchill, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to her family, the Bakersfield Town Clerk, and the Vermont Commission on Women.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, April 11, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

H.C.R. 104

Offered by Committee on Human Services

House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as National Foster Care Month in Vermont

Whereas, according to the U.S. Child Welfare Information Gateway, there are over 365,000 children and youth in foster care, and “77 percent of eligible youth in foster care, ages 14–21 years old, left care without receiving the federally funded services necessary to prepare them for adulthood and independent living,” and

Whereas, the Department for Children and Families reports that as of April 1, 2025, 868 Vermont children were in foster care, there were 820 licensed foster caregivers and 174 caregiver licenses were pending, and approximately 35 percent of foster caregivers were family members or close friends who voluntarily secured foster care licensure, and

Whereas, on May 10, 1988, at the initiative of the U.S. Children’s Bureau, President Ronald Reagan signed Proclamation 5820 establishing Foster Care Month, which continues to be observed annually to direct the public’s attention to the nation’s system of foster care, and

Whereas, Proclamation 5820 acknowledged that “the family has the prime responsibility for nurturing children...[but] some parents are unable to provide a minimally acceptable level of care for their children, and temporary or permanent alternative placement is necessary...[and that] foster care must... [focus] on the well-being of the child,” and

Whereas, the 2025 theme for National Foster Care Month is “Engaging Youth. Building Supports. Strengthening Opportunities.” — a theme that “highlights the need to create a child welfare system that authentically engages and supports young people who are preparing to leave foster care,” a current topic of great concern in the foster care community, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recognizes May 2025 as National Foster Care Month in Vermont, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the System of Care Unit Director at the Department for Children and Families’ Family Services Division.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, April 18, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

H.C.R. 123

Offered by Representatives Eastes of Guilford, Burke of Brattleboro, Goodnow of Brattleboro, Kornheiser of Brattleboro, and Mrowicki of Putney

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim

House concurrent resolution honoring Shaun Murphy of Guilford for his nearly quarter century of exemplary educational governance public service

Whereas, as a school board member, Shaun Murphy has strived to preserve the best of Vermont's system of public education while thinking forward towards the future, and

Whereas, his involvement with public education started in 2001 as a member of the Citizen Advisory Committee established to develop the renovation plan for Brattleboro Union High School and to prepare a bond issue, and

Whereas, this milestone odyssey in educational planning and strategizing proved successful, as the largest then-to-date bond issue in Vermont was passed, the construction work completed, and the school was able to maintain its accreditation, and

Whereas, as a result of his membership on this unusual panel, Shaun Murphy developed a strong desire to continue his participation as a citizen public education overseer, and

Whereas, not surprisingly, the BUHS District 6 Board, then responsible for the oversight of Brattleboro Union High School, was his destination, and

Whereas, in 2019, the Windham Southeast School District was created, replacing the BUHS District 6 Board, and Shaun Murphy joined this new school committee and served diligently until March 2025, and

Whereas, for the period 2024–2025, Shaun Murphy also served on the separate Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Board, and for many years, he was a member of the Guilford School Board, and

Whereas, throughout his over two decades of school board service, Shaun Murphy was committed to supporting the highest quality educational experience, and he advocated for the rights of all students, especially those of color, those who were LGBTQIA+, and individuals with disabilities, and

Whereas, complex topics, such as school financing, never intimidated him; he always worked with dignity and courtesy, observing the highest ethical standards and acting with courage and conviction, even during times of stress; and his public school board service constituted the highest strata of excellence, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors Shaun Murphy of Guilford for his nearly quarter century of exemplary educational governance public service, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Shaun Murphy.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, May 2, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

H.C.R. 128

Offered by Representatives McGill of Bridport, Arsenault of Williston, Bartley of Fairfax, Berbeco of Winooski, Bishop of Colchester, Bluemle of Burlington, Burke of Brattleboro, Burkhardt of South Burlington, Burrows of West Windsor, Cina of Burlington, Cole of Hartford, Cordes of Bristol, Critchlow of Colchester, Dodge of Essex, Dolan of Essex Junction, Donahue of Northfield, Eastes of Guilford, Garofano of Essex, Goldman of Rockingham, Harple of Glover, Headrick of Burlington, Howard of Rutland City, Krasnow of South Burlington, LaMont of Morristown, Logan of Burlington, Maguire of Rutland City, Mrowicki of Putney, Nugent of South Burlington, Ode of Burlington, Pezzo of Colchester, Pouech of Hinesburg, Rachelson of Burlington, Scheu of Middlebury, Stevens of Waterbury, Stone of Burlington, Tomlinson of Winooski, White of Waitsfield, White of Bethel, Wood of Waterbury, and Yacovone of Morristown

House concurrent resolution designating May 6, 2025 as Homelessness Awareness Day in Vermont

Whereas, the unhoused are our neighbors, community members, parents, children, seniors, and people with disabilities, and

Whereas, the 2024 Point-in-Time Count report found that 3,458 Vermonters, including 737 children, were without secure housing, and

Whereas, according to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency's most recent Vermont Housing Needs Assessment, by 2029, Vermont will need 3,295 homes to address homelessness and 3,957 homes to normalize vacancy rates, and

Whereas, on an evening in April 2025, Vermont's statewide shelter capacity was 655 households, and all were full, and in addition, there were 1,424 homeless adults and 467 children housed through the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program, and

Whereas, Black Vermonters are significantly less likely to own their home and are unhoused at a staggering rate compared with White Vermonters, and

Whereas, since 2020, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board has invested in affordable housing initiatives that have created 1,964 new rental units and 170 new homes for sale, and supported 1,077 lots across 11 manufactured home communities, and

Whereas, today, May 6, 2025, individuals concerned with the issues associated with unhoused Vermonters are visiting the State House to inform legislators on the impact of homelessness on life in the State of Vermont, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates May 6, 2025 as Homelessness Awareness Day in Vermont, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Housing and Homelessness Alliance of Vermont.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, May 2, 2025 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

Bill Committed

H. 86

House bill, entitled

An act relating to establishing the Chloride Contamination Reduction Program at the Agency of Natural Resources

Was taken up and, pending second reading, on motion of **Rep. Chapin of East Montpelier**, the bill was committed to the Committee on Environment.

Second Reading; Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

H. 504

Rep. Pinsonault of Dorset, for the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

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

Reported in favor of its passage.

Rep. Higley of Lowell, for the Committee on Ways and Means, reported that the bill ought to pass when amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 2, 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 9, in section 8.5, in subdivision (7), following the words “replacement of public works” by striking out “, police,” and inserting in lieu thereof “, police;”

Second: In Sec. 2, 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 9, in section 8.5, in subdivision (10), following the words “shall not exceed” by striking out “\$0.0180” and inserting in lieu thereof “\$0.018”

Third: By adding a Sec. 2a to read as follows:

Sec. 2a. REDESIGNATION

24 App. V.S.A. chapter 155E (Town of West Rutland) is redesignated as 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 162.

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

**Second Reading; Proposal of Amendment Agreed to;
Third Reading Ordered**

S. 51

Rep. Kimbell of Woodstock, for the Committee on Ways and Means, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit

Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence with proposal of amendment by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 32 V.S.A. § 5830f is amended to read:

§ 5830f. VERMONT CHILD TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who is entitled to a child tax credit under the laws of the United States or who would have been entitled to a child tax credit under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual or the individual’s spouse does not have a taxpayer identification number shall be entitled to a refundable credit against the tax imposed by section 5822 of this title for the taxable year. The total credit per taxable year shall be in the amount of \$1,000.00 per qualifying child, as defined under 26 U.S.C. § 152(c) but notwithstanding the taxpayer identification number requirements under 26 U.S.C. § 24(e) and (h)(7), who is five six years of age or younger as of the close of the calendar year in which the taxable year of the taxpayer begins. For a part-year resident individual, the amount of the credit shall be multiplied by the percentage that the individual’s

income that is earned or received during the period of the individual's residency in this State bears to the individual's total income. An otherwise eligible individual shall be entitled to the credit under this section without regard for the laws of the United States pertaining to the amount of federal child tax credit that may be refunded.

* * *

Sec. 2. 32 V.S.A. § 5828b is amended to read:

§ 5828b. EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who is entitled to an earned income tax credit granted under the laws of the United States ~~or who would have been entitled to an earned income tax credit under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual, the individual's spouse, or one or more of the individual's children does not have a qualifying taxpayer identification number~~ shall be entitled to a credit against the tax imposed for each year by section 5822 of this title. The credit shall be for an individual who claims one or more qualifying children 38 percent or for an individual who does not claim one or more qualifying children 100 percent of the earned income tax credit granted to the individual under the laws of the United States ~~or that would have been granted to the individual under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual, the individual's spouse, or one or more of the individual's children does not have a qualifying taxpayer identification number~~, multiplied by the percentage that the individual's income that is earned or received during the period of the individual's residency in this State bears to the individual's total income. A resident individual or part-year resident individual who would have been entitled to or granted an earned income tax credit under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual, the individual's spouse, or one or more of the individual's children does not have a qualifying taxpayer identification number shall be entitled to a credit under this section.

* * *

Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 5830e is amended to read:

§ 5830e. RETIREMENT INCOME; SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME

(a) Social Security income. The portion of federally taxable Social Security benefits excluded from taxable income under subdivision 5811(21)(B)(iv) of this chapter shall be as follows:

(1) For taxpayers whose filing status is single, married filing separately, head of household, or surviving spouse:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~\$50,000.00~~ \$55,000.00, all federally taxable benefits received under the federal Social Security Act shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~\$50,000.00~~ \$55,000.00 but less than ~~\$60,000.00~~ \$65,000.00, the percentage of federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~\$50,000.00~~ \$55,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~\$60,000.00~~ \$65,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by \$10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~\$60,000.00~~ \$65,000.00, no amount of the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act shall be excluded under this section.

(2) For taxpayers whose filing status is married filing jointly:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~\$65,000.00~~ \$70,000.00, all federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~\$65,000.00~~ \$70,000.00 but less than ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$80,000.00, the percentage of federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~\$65,000.00~~ \$70,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$80,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by \$10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$80,000.00, no amount of the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act shall be excluded under this section.

(b) Civil Service Retirement System income. The portion of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System excluded from taxable income under subdivision 5811(21)(B)(iv) of this title shall be subject to the limitations under subsection (e) of this section and shall be determined as follows:

(1) For taxpayers whose filing status is single, married filing separately, head of household, or surviving spouse:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~\$50,000.00~~ \$55,000.00, the first \$10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~\$50,000.00~~ \$55,000.00 but less than ~~\$60,000.00~~ \$65,000.00, the percentage of the first \$10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~\$50,000.00~~ \$55,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~\$60,000.00~~ \$65,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by \$10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the first \$10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~\$60,000.00~~ \$65,000.00, no amount of the income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded under this section.

(2) For taxpayers whose filing status is married filing jointly:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~\$65,000.00~~ \$70,000.00, the first \$10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~\$65,000.00~~ \$70,000.00 but less than ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$80,000.00, the percentage of the first \$10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~\$65,000.00~~ \$70,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$80,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by \$10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the first \$10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~\$75,000.00~~ \$80,000.00, no amount of the income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded under this section.

(c) Other contributory retirement systems; earnings not covered by Social Security. Other retirement income, except U.S. military retirement income pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, received by a taxpayer of this State shall be excluded pursuant to subsection (b) of this section as though the income were received from the Civil Service Retirement System and shall be subject to the limitations under subsection (e) of this section, provided that:

* * *

(d) U.S. military retirement income and U.S. military survivor benefit income. For taxpayers of any filing status, U.S. military retirement income, and U.S. military survivor benefit income received by an eligible beneficiary, received by a taxpayer of this State shall be excluded from taxable income under subdivision 5811(21)(B)(iv) of this chapter as follows:

(1) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to \$125,000.00, all federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income shall be excluded.

(2) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than \$125,000.00 but less than \$175,000.00, the percentage of federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over \$125,000.00, determined by:

(A) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from \$175,000.00;

(B) dividing the value under subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2) by \$50,000.00; and

(C) multiplying the value under subdivision (B) of this subdivision (2) by the federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income received.

~~(3) pursuant to subsection (b) of this section as though the income were received from the Civil Service Retirement System and shall be subject to the limitations under subsection (e) of this section. If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than \$175,000.00, no amount of the federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income received shall be excluded under this section.~~

~~(e)(1) Requirement to elect one exclusion. A taxpayer of this State who is eligible during the taxable year for more than one of the exclusions under subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section the Social Security income exclusion under subsection (a) of this section and any of the exclusions under subsections (b)–(d) of this section shall elect either only one of the exclusions for which the taxpayer is eligible under subsections (b)–(d) of this section or the Social Security income exclusion under subsection (a) of this section, but not both, for the taxable year. A taxpayer of this State who is eligible during the taxable year for more than one of the exclusions under subsections (b)–(d) of this section shall elect only one of the exclusions for which the taxpayer is eligible for the taxable year.~~

~~(2) A taxpayer of this State who is eligible during the taxable year for the military retirement and survivor benefit exclusion under subsection (d) of this section may elect that exclusion regardless of whether the taxpayer also elects an exclusion under subsections (a)–(c) of this section.~~

Sec. 4. 32 V.S.A. § 5813 is amended to read:

§ 5813. STATUTORY PURPOSES

* * *

(aa) The statutory purpose of the Vermont veteran tax credit in section 5830g of this title is to provide financial support to Vermonters who served in the U.S. uniformed services.

Sec. 5. 32 V.S.A. § 5830g is added to read:

§ 5830g. VERMONT VETERAN TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who served in the uniformed services shall be entitled to a refundable credit against the tax imposed by section 5822 of this title for the taxable year.

(b) A taxpayer shall be eligible for the credit under this section provided the taxpayer has a discharge record, or other record of separation from active duty, verifying service in the uniformed services.

(c)(1) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to \$25,000.00, the amount of tax credit provided under this section shall be \$250.00.

(2) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than \$25,000.00 but less than \$30,000.00, the amount of credit shall be \$250.00 less \$5.00 per \$100.00 of federal adjusted gross income exceeding \$25,000.00 of federal adjusted gross income.

(3) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is \$30,000.00 or greater, no amount of credit shall be provided under this section.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, this act shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2025.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to Vermont income tax exclusions and tax credits”

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

Pending the question, Shall the House propose to the Senate to amend the bill as recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means?, **Rep. Canfield of Fair Haven** 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 House propose to the Senate to amend the bill as recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means?, was decided in the affirmative. Yeas, 142. Nays, 2.

Those who voted in the affirmative are:

Arsenault of Williston	Garofano of Essex	Morgan, M. of Milton *
Austin of Colchester	Goldman of Rockingham	Morris of Springfield
Bailey of Hyde Park	Goodnow of Brattleboro	Morrissey of Bennington
Bartley of Fairfax	Goslant of Northfield	Morrow of Weston
Berbeco of Winooski	Graning of Jericho	Mrowicki of Putney
Birong of Vergennes	Greer of Bennington	Nelson of Derby
Bishop of Colchester	Gregoire of Fairfield	Nielsen of Brandon
Bluemle of Burlington	Hango of Berkshire	Nigro of Bennington
Bosch of Clarendon	Harple of Glover	North of Ferrisburgh
Bos-Lun of Westminster	Harrison of Chittenden	Noyes of Wolcott
Boutin of Barre City	Harvey of Castleton	Nugent of South Burlington
Boyden of Cambridge	Headrick of Burlington	O'Brien of Tunbridge
Brady of Williston	Higley of Lowell	Ode of Burlington
Branagan of Georgia	Holcombe of Norwich	Oliver of Sheldon
Brown of Richmond	Hooper of Randolph	Olson of Starksboro
Burditt of West Rutland	Hooper of Burlington	Page of Newport City

Burke of Brattleboro	Houghton of Essex Junction	Parsons of Newbury
Burkhardt of South Burlington	Howard of Rutland City	Pezzo of Colchester
Burrows of West Windsor	Howland of Rutland Town	Pinsonault of Dorset
Burt of Cabot	Hunter of Manchester	Pouech of Hinesburg
Canfield of Fair Haven	James of Manchester	Powers of Waterford
Carris-Duncan of Whitingham	Kascenska of Burke	Priestley of Bradford
Casey of Hubbardton	Keyser of Rutland City	Pritchard of Pawlet
Chapin of East Montpelier	Kimbell of Woodstock	Quimby of Lyndon
Charlton of Chester	Kleppner of Burlington	Rachelson of Burlington
Cina of Burlington	Kornheiser of Brattleboro	Satcowitz of Randolph
Coffin of Cavendish	Krasnow of South Burlington	Scheu of Middlebury
Cole of Hartford	Labor of Morgan	Sibilia of Dover
Conlon of Cornwall	Lalley of Shelburne	Southworth of Walden
Cooper of Pownal	LaLonde of South Burlington	Squirrell of Underhill
Corcoran of Bennington	LaMont of Morristown	Steady of Milton *
Cordes of Bristol	Laroche of Franklin	Stevens of Waterbury
Critchlow of Colchester	Lipsky of Stowe	Stone of Burlington
Demar of Enosburgh	Logan of Burlington	Surprenant of Barnard
Dickinson of St. Albans Town	Long of Newfane	Sweeney of Shelburne
Dobrovich of Williamstown	Luneau of St. Albans City	Tagliavia of Corinth
Dodge of Essex	Maguire of Rutland City	Taylor of Milton
Dolan of Essex Junction	Malay of Pittsford	Tomlinson of Winooski
Dolgin of St. Johnsbury	Marcotte of Coventry	Toof of St. Albans Town
Donahue of Northfield	Masland of Thetford	Torre of Moretown
Duke of Burlington	McCoy of Poultney	Walker of Swanton
Durfee of Shaftsbury	McFaun of Barre Town	Waszazak of Barre City *
Eastes of Guilford	McGill of Bridport	Waters Evans of Charlotte
Emmons of Springfield	Micklus of Milton	Wells of Brownington
Feltus of Lyndon	Mihaly of Calais	White of Waitsfield
Galfetti of Barre Town	Minier of South Burlington	White of Bethel
	Morgan, L. of Milton	Winter of Ludlow
		Wood of Waterbury
		Yacovone of Morristown

Those who voted in the negative are:

Black of Essex * Sheldon of Middlebury

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

Bartholomew of Hartland Casey of Montpelier McCann of Montpelier
Campbell of St. Johnsbury Christie of Hartford

Rep. Black of Essex provided the following vote explanation:

“Madam Speaker:

Knowing that we are facing catastrophic Federal Medicaid cuts, I cannot in good conscience vote to forgo revenue from pensioners that I know goes to support all the suicide prevention programs we have worked so hard to expand

in Vermont. I'm voting no for all the veterans who will die by suicide without those supports and programs."

Rep. M. Morgan of Milton provided the following vote explanation:

"Madam Speaker:

I voted yes today on S.51. I did so, however, with great trepidation. Numerous fellow Vermonters have reached out to me on the military tax relief component of this bill. Their viewpoint is the same as mine. They are perplexed why we did not fully exempt all military retiree pensions."

Rep. Steady of Milton provided the following vote explanation:

"Madam Speaker:

I voted yes with a great deal of hesitation, due to the 13.5 million dollar loss in revenues. I am remaining optimistic that, as presented, monies will be recouped by military families moving back to Vermont and staying after their service."

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

"Madam Speaker:

I am proud to support this bill which honors not only military retirees, but also our most vulnerable and low-income veterans, far too many of whom live in poverty, or are experiencing homelessness. This vote is dedicated to Navy veteran Edward Charles Waszazak Senior."

Thereupon, third reading was ordered.

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

S. 56

Rep. Stone of Burlington, for the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans

Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

Rep. Dickinson of St. Albans Town, for the Committee on Appropriations, reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

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. Dickinson of St. Albans Town** moved that the House propose to the Senate to amend the bill in Sec. 1, Office of New Americans Study Committee; report, subsection (b), by striking out subdivision (4) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (4) to read as follows:

(4) six members, appointed by the Governor, one who must be a New American with lived experience, who shall include:

(A) one member, nominated by the Association of Africans Living in Vermont;

(B) one member, nominated by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants;

(C) one member, nominated by the Vermont Afghan Alliance;

(D) one member, nominated by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation;

(E) one member, nominated by Migrant Justice; and

(F) one member, nominated by the Vermont State College System.

Which was agreed to. Thereupon, third reading was ordered.

Rules Suspended, Immediate Consideration; Senate Proposal of Amendment Not Concurred in; Committee of Conference Requested and Appointed; Rules Suspended, Messaged to Senate Forthwith

H. 494

Pending entry on the Notice Calendar, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the rules were suspended and House bill, entitled

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

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

First: In Sec. 1, legislative intent, by striking out subsection (a) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (a) to read as follows:

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that of the \$111,965,288.44 authorized in this act, not more than \$62,314,761.44 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, State buildings, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

Sec. 2. STATE BUILDINGS

(a) The following sums are appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services, and the Commissioner is authorized to direct funds appropriated in this section to the projects contained in this section; however, no project shall be canceled unless the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions are notified before that action is taken.

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| <u>(1) Statewide, major maintenance:</u> | <u>\$7,138,401.00</u> |
| <u>(2) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance:</u> | <u>\$1,500,000.00</u> |
| <u>(3) Statewide, Art in State Buildings Program:</u> | <u>\$75,000.00</u> |
| <u>(4) Rutland, Asa Bloomer Building roof repair and sewage system upgrades:</u> | <u>\$1,500,000.00</u> |
| <u>(5) Rutland, multimodal garage renovation:</u> | <u>\$600,000.00</u> |
| <u>(6) Middlesex, Print and Postal uninterruptable power supply upgrade:</u> | <u>\$58,279.44</u> |
| <u>(7) Waterbury, State Office Complex historic core roof replacement:</u> | <u>\$2,000,000.00</u> |
| <u>(8) Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs:</u> | <u>\$1,500,000.00</u> |

(c) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| <u>(1) Statewide, major maintenance:</u> | <u>\$8,500,000.00</u> |
| <u>(2) Statewide, planning, reuse, and contingency:</u> | <u>\$250,000.00</u> |
| <u>(3) Statewide, physical security enhancements:</u> | <u>\$250,000.00</u> |
| <u>(4) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance:</u> | <u>\$850,000.00</u> |
| <u>(5) Statewide, Art in State Buildings Program:</u> | <u>\$75,000.00</u> |
| <u>(6) Montpelier, State House replacement of historic interior finishes:</u> | <u>\$50,000.00</u> |
| <u>(7) Montpelier, 120 State Street HVAC – steam lines interior renovation:</u> | <u>\$2,000,000.00</u> |
| <u>(8) Middlesex, Vermont State Archives roof replacement, main building:</u> | <u>\$1,000,000.00</u> |

(9) Waterbury, State Office Complex historic core roof replacement:
\$2,000,000.00

(10) Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs:
\$250,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026 \$14,371,680.44

Appropriation – FY 2027 \$15,225,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 2 \$29,596,680.44

Third: By striking out Sec. 4, commerce and community development, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 4. COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance at statewide historic sites: \$550,000.00

(2) Vermont Underwater Historic Preserves: \$46,000.00

(3) Roadside historic site markers: \$25,000.00

(4) Bennington, Battle Monument, maintenance of safety fencing, restoration, planning, and design: \$425,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance at statewide historic sites: \$550,000.00

(2) Vermont Underwater Historic Preserves: \$46,000.00

(3) Roadside historic site markers: \$25,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026 \$1,046,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 \$621,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 4 \$1,667,000.00

Fourth: By striking out Sec. 5, grant programs, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 5 to read as follows:

Sec. 5. GRANT PROGRAMS

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 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: \$250,000.00

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: \$250,000.00

(3) To the Vermont Council on the Arts for the Cultural Facilities Grant Program, the sum of which may be used to match funds that may be made available from the National Endowment for the Arts, provided that all capital funds are made available to the Cultural Facilities Grant Program: \$250,000.00

(4) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Recreational Facilities Grant Program: \$250,000.00

(5) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Human Services and Educational Facilities Competitive Grant Program: \$250,000.00

(6) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Regional Economic Development Grant Program: \$250,000.00

(7) To the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(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

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(3) To the Vermont Council on the Arts for the Cultural Facilities Grant Program, the sum of which may be used to match funds that may be made available from the National Endowment for the Arts, provided that all capital funds are made available to the Cultural Facilities Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(4) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Recreational Facilities Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(5) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Human Services and Educational Facilities Competitive Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(6) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Regional Economic Development Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(7) To the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program: \$300,000.00

(c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the sums appropriated in subdivisions (a)(5) and (b)(5) of this section be equally allocated between grants for human services and grants for educational facilities.

Appropriation – FY 2026 \$1,800,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 \$2,100,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 5 \$3,900,000.00

Fifth: By striking out Sec. 14, judiciary, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 14 to read as follows:

Sec. 14. JUDICIARY

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Judiciary for the following projects:

(1) Woodstock Courthouse, purchase and installation of backup power system: \$100,000.00

(2) Essex County Courthouse, connector and security upgrades: \$3,685,910.00

(3) Lamoille County Courthouse, purchase and installation of backup power system: \$190,000.00

(b) The sum of \$1,100,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction.

Appropriation – FY 2026 \$5,075,910.00

Total Appropriation – Section 14 \$5,075,910.00

Sixth: In Sec. 19, FY 2026 and 2027; capital projects; FY 2026 appropriations act; intent; authorizations, by striking out subsection (c) and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (c) to read as follows:

(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:

(1) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide major maintenance: \$861,599.00

(2) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide planning, reuse, and contingency: \$250,000.00

(3) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide physical security enhancements: \$250,000.00

(4) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for State House repointing: \$219,500.00

(5) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for an uninterruptable power supply system for the Middlesex print and postal facility: \$250,000.00

(6) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction: \$6,900,000.00

(7) to the Vermont Veterans' Home for the design and construction of the American unit: \$1,500,000.00

(8) to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Bennington Veterans Incubator Farm at the Vermont Veterans' Home: \$45,000.00

(9) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Bennington, high school redevelopment housing infrastructure: \$1,100,000.00

(10) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Barre, Prospect Heights housing infrastructure: \$1,000,000.00

(11) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Brattleboro, Winston Prouty Center housing infrastructure: \$1,000,000.00

(12) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for a grant to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to support a site study focused on economic development, parking, housing, and flood mitigation for the 1.6-acre parcel at 87 State Street and parcels at 89 State Street and 42 Court Street: \$100,000.00

(13) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Hope Grove Recovery to establish a new recovery residence in St. Albans: \$250,000.00

(14) to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the purchase of a fire apparatus: \$275,000.00

(15) to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Lake Champlain Walleye Association, Inc. to upgrade and repair the Walleye rearing, restoration, and stocking infrastructure: \$25,000.00

(16) to the Department of Public Safety for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the dry hydrant program: \$35,000.00

Seventh: By adding a new section to be Sec. 22a to read as follows:

Sec. 22a. CASH FUND; JOINT FISCAL OFFICE; REPORT

On or before December 15, 2025, the Joint Fiscal Office shall submit a report to the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions on considerations for use of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments under 32 V.S.A. § 1001b that:

(1) provides the historical context, including the economic rationale, for the Cash Fund;

(2) compares financial management practices for expenditures made through cash and through bonded dollars, including long-term financial impacts;

(3) distinguishes between the intended uses of the Capital Infrastructure subaccount and the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount;

(4) describes, for each year since the Cash Fund's inception:

(A) the sources of funds; and

(B) the annual expenditures from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount; and

(5) outlines the current legislative process by which appropriations are made from the Cash Fund.

Pending the question, Shall the House concur in the Senate proposal of amendment?, **Rep. Emmons of Springfield** moved that the House refuse to concur and ask for a Committee of Conference, which was agreed to, and the Speaker appointed as members of the Committee of Conference on the part of the House:

Rep. Emmons of Springfield

Rep. Gregoire of Fairfield

Rep. Headrick of Burlington

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

Adjournment

At eleven o'clock and forty-seven minutes in the forenoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at one o'clock in the afternoon.