

# Journal of the House

---

**Tuesday, March 31, 2026**

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

## **Devotional Exercises**

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. John O'Brien of Tunbridge.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

Page Ella Morrison of Barre Town led the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Senate Bills Referred**

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

### **S. 323**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects

To the Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry.

### **S. 325**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to regional planning and Act 250 Tier jurisdiction

To the Committee on Environment.

### **S. 328**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to housing and common interest communities

To the Committee on General and Housing.

## **House Resolution Adopted**

### **H.R. 16**

Offered by Representatives Graning of Jericho, Bosch of Clarendon, Boutin of Barre City, Carris Duncan of Whitingham, Cooper of Pownal, Duke of Burlington, Marcotte of Coventry, Micklus of Milton, Olson of Starksboro, Priestley of Bradford, and White of Bethel

House resolution reaffirming the abiding friendship between the State of Vermont and the Republic of China (Taiwan) on the 27th anniversary of the Vermont-Taiwan sister-state relationship and supporting enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations

*Whereas*, the United States and Taiwan share a vibrant and mutually beneficial bilateral relationship, based on their shared values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and a free market economy, and

*Whereas*, the U.S. government has encouraged economic, including trade, and cultural engagements and exchanges between the American and Taiwanese peoples, particularly at the state level, and

*Whereas*, in 2022, the United States and Taiwan launched the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade to strengthen the two nations' economic and trade relationship, and, in 2023, Congress enacted the United States-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade First Agreement Implementation Act, Pub. L. No. 118-13, approving the first agreement under this initiative, and

*Whereas*, in 2025, Taiwan was America's fourth-largest trading partner, with U.S. exports valued at \$54.7 billion and imports from Taiwan worth roughly \$201.4 billion; and for the first time in over a quarter century, the United States was Taiwan's largest export market; and in the agriculture sector, U.S. exports to Taiwan totaled approximately \$2.3 billion, and

*Whereas*, 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the United States' establishment as a republic based on democratic principles and the 30th anniversary of Taiwan's first direct presidential election, symbolizing this Asian nation's enduring commitment to democracy, and

*Whereas*, in 1999, the State of Vermont and Taiwan entered a sister-state relationship that has proven mutually beneficial in many ways, and

*Whereas*, the 2020 driver's license reciprocity agreement between the State of Vermont and Taiwan exemplifies the sister-state relationship in action, and

*Whereas*, in 2025, Vermont exports to Taiwan were worth approximately \$268 million, meaning Taiwan was Vermont's most valuable Asian export destination, and second worldwide, and Vermont imported an estimated \$76 million worth of goods from Taiwan, and

*Whereas*, establishing a Vermont trade office in Taiwan would further enhance this already successful and long-standing trade relationship, and

*Whereas*, the government of Taiwan has expressed interest in establishing memorandums of understanding with the State of Vermont, one pertaining to economic affairs to establish a clearer structural framework for the two

jurisdictions' burgeoning business ties and a second related to education to expand educational exchanges and cooperation, particularly with respect to Mandarin language teaching, and

*Whereas*, in 1979, Congress enacted the Taiwan Relations Act, Pub. L. No. 96-8, which broadly addresses the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, and one of its provisions “provides for the continued membership of the people on Taiwan in any international financial institution or any other international organization,” and

*Whereas*, Taiwan's participation and contributions in international organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Health Organization, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would greatly benefit the United States and the international community, *now therefore be it*

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

That this legislative body reaffirms the abiding friendship between the State of Vermont and the Republic of China (Taiwan) on the 27th anniversary of the Vermont-Taiwan sister-state relationship and supports enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Donald J. Trump; President Lai Ching-te of the Republic of China (Taiwan); Director-General Charles Liao of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston; Governor Philip B. Scott; and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Was read and adopted.

**Remarks Journalized**

On motion by **Rep. Galfetti of Barre Town**, the following remarks by **Rep. Waszazak of Barre City** were ordered printed in the Journal:

“Madam Speaker:

I have been asked to kick-off this Tuesday with a week of celebration. As I drove into Montpelier this morning, the streets of Barre were flooded—not with flood water or because of the rain—but the tears of the populus, Madam Speaker, because this is our final week with the Representative from Barre Town. Throughout the week we will be celebrating him on the floor and sharing stories.

A quick story. The first time I ever talked with the Representative from Barre Town, I was on the City Council at the time and we were having a debate as to whether to fund the ice rink and Zamboni and such up at the Barre outdoor rink, which is now the Barre indoor rink—but we still call it the BOR because we are particular like that.

I got a phone call from a number I didn't recognize, and I picked it up and without any introduction or niceties, 'Teddy, what the heck are you people doing down in the City? We need that ice rink. It's been there as long as I've been alive!' Of course, Madam Speaker, I voted to keep the ice rink.

For this, our last Tuesday morning with the member from Barre Town, we want to thank him for his service. The people of Barre thank him for his service, and we are going to miss him very, very much."

#### **Action on Bill Postponed**

##### **H. 657**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to enabling unaccompanied homeless youth to obtain certain services without parental consent

Was taken up and, pending third reading of the bill, on motion of **Rep. Wood of Waterbury**, action on the bill was postponed one legislative day.

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

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

##### **H. 727**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to sustainable data center deployment

##### **H. 935**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to emergency management

##### **H. 938**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to establishing the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum

---

**House Resolution Committed****H.R. 15**

House resolution reaffirming the abiding friendship between the State of Vermont and the Republic of China (Taiwan) on the 27th anniversary of the Vermont-Taiwan sister-state relationship and supporting enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations

Appearing on the calendar for Action, was taken up and pending the vote on adoption, on motion of **Rep. Graning of Jericho**, the resolution was committed to the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

**Committee Bill; Second Reading; Bill Amended;  
Third Reading Ordered****H. 941**

**Rep. Durfee of Shaftsbury** spoke for the Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry.

House bill, entitled

An act relating to municipal regulation of agriculture

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. Durfee of Shaftsbury** moved to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

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

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

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to clarify that municipalities lack authority to regulate farming or the construction of farm structures as set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4413, with the exception of farming and the construction of farm structures in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4412.

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

§ 4413. LIMITATIONS ON MUNICIPAL BYLAWS

\* \* \*

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

(A) ~~required agricultural practices, including the construction of farm structures, as those practices are defined by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets farming that meets the minimum threshold criteria in the Required Agricultural Practices Rule and is therefore required to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices Rule, except as described in section 4412(16) of this title;~~

(B) construction of a farm structure as defined by the Required Agricultural Practices Rule, except as described in section 4412(16) of this title;

(C) the cultivation or other use of land for growing plants for food for personal use, donation, or sale, including orchard crops, viticultural crops, and for maple sap. As used in this subdivision, “food” means articles or agricultural commodities for human or animal consumption;

(D) the cultivation of ornamental plants as defined in 6 V.S.A. § 1101;

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

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

(2) As used in this section:

(A) ~~“Farm structure” means a building, enclosure, or fence for housing livestock, raising horticultural or agronomic plants, or carrying out other practices associated with accepted agricultural or farming practices, including a silo, as “farming” is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22) has the same meaning as defined in the Required Agricultural Practices Rule, but excludes a dwelling for human habitation.~~

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

(C) “Farming” has the same meaning as in 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22).

\* \* \*

Sec. 3. 24 V.S.A. § 4412 is amended to read:

§ 4412. REQUIRED PROVISIONS AND PROHIBITED EFFECTS

Notwithstanding any existing bylaw, the following land development provisions shall apply in every municipality:

\* \* \*

(15) No bylaw shall have the effect of prohibiting the raising, feeding, or management of poultry, excluding roosters, for personal use, donation, or sale. As used in this section, “poultry” has the same meaning as in 6 V.S.A. § 1459(4).

(16) A bylaw may regulate the following for a farm or farm structure subject to the Required Agricultural Practices Rule on a parcel less than 0.75 acres that was not operating as of July 1, 2026 and is not on conserved land:

(A) Ingress and egress of vehicular traffic and ensuring pedestrian safety, including regulating parking, signage, pavement markings, functional enclosure of livestock adjacent to road; and

(B) Siting and setbacks requirements.

Sec. 4. MUNICIPAL REGULATION OF FARMING STUDY; REPORT

(a) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall convene a stakeholder group to examine options to address conflicts between landowners that involve agricultural livestock activities in densely populated villages, towns, or cities in Vermont. At a minimum, the stakeholder group shall include membership-based agricultural organizations, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Vermont Farm to Plate, and individuals with expertise in local or regional planning, as well as zoning administration.

(b) The stakeholder group shall consider options to address conflicts, including establishing or expanding the Required Agricultural Practices Rule to regulate livestock, particularly addressing stocking densities on parcels of less than 10 acres; utilizing ordinances to address livestock; protecting the right to grow food for personal consumption, including livestock; and creating rules like the Cannabis Control Board rule to enforce against an operation based on health, safety, or the integrity of the broader industry.

(c) On or before January 31, 2027, the Secretary shall submit a report to the House Committees on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and on Environment and the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Natural Resources and Energy that summarizes findings, considerations, and any recommendations of the stakeholder group and offers a recommendation from the Secretary on solutions, including recommended statutory changes or

rulemaking, that would best support municipalities when significant landowner conflicts arise regarding livestock.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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

**House Ethics Panel Appointment**

Pursuant to House Rule 90(b), the Committee on House Rules appointed the following member to the House Ethics Panel to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Rep. Taylor of Milton:

**Rep. Bartley of Fairfax**

**Committee Appointment Change**

The Speaker announced the following change to Committees due to the resignation of Rep. Taylor of Milton:

**Rep. Quimby of Lydon** is designated Vice Chair of the Committee on Education.

**Message from the Senate No. 35**

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. 64.** An act relating to amendments to the scope of practice for optometrists.

**S. 278.** An act relating to cannabis.

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

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

**J.R.S. 47.** Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 3, 2026.

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

**Adjournment**

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