

# Journal of the House

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

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

## Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Tamara Aguirre, educator, Burlington.

## Pledge of Allegiance

Pages Keira Hallmartel of Fairlee and Lia Tarrant of Montpelier led the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

### S. 243

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to distributing funds to the Vermont Language Justice Project

Appearing on the Notice Calendar, and pursuant to House Rule 35(a), carrying an appropriation, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

## Ceremonial Readings

### H.C.R. 251

Offered by Representatives Boyden of Cambridge, Bailey of Hyde Park, Higley of Lowell, Marcotte of Coventry, and Noyes of Wolcott

Offered by Senator Westman

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2026 Lamoille Union High School Lancers Division II championship boys' basketball team

*Whereas*, the second-ranked Lamoille Lancers and the top-seeded Hartford Hurricanes tipped off for the Division II title at the Barre Auditorium, a match of two teams hungry for a championship, which Hartford had not won since 1929, and although the former Lamoille Academy won the Division IV boys' basketball championship in 1963, Lamoille Union High School had, prior to 2026, never clinched this athletics laurel, and

*Whereas*, breaking Hartford's season-long undefeated streak and defeating the team that had halted Lamoille's postseason aspirations in the quarter-final round in both 2024 and 2025 were strong incentives for the Lancers boys, and

*Whereas*, a game with greater excitement was not imaginable, as Lamoille secured a slim 28–27 halftime lead and the teams were tied at 40—all at the fourth quarter’s start, and, with approximately two and a half minutes of regulation play remaining, the Lancers pulled ahead 50–49, and the tension-packed final moments concluded with a 56–53 Lancers upset victory, and

*Whereas*, the ecstatic Lancers (19–4) were Brayden LaFountain, Graesyn Stridsberg, Griffin Pinault, Jeremy Demers, Ryan Clark, Colby Hall, Isaac Schroeder, Caleb Wells, Ryan Germaine, James Wallace, Jackson Hoag, and Nicholas Bothfeld, and

*Whereas*, Head Coach Hosea Crittenden, assistant coaches Rick Sansom and Evan Slayton, athletic trainer Vin Faraci, and student managers Payton Skiffington and Kyrsten Whitney all savored this historic moment for Lancers boys’ basketball, *now therefore be it*

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

That the General Assembly congratulates the 2026 Lamoille Union High School Lancers Division II championship boys’ basketball team, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Lamoille Union High School.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, April 10, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**H.C.R. 281**

Offered by All Members of the House

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative and Moretown and Brandon Selectboard member Stephen Andrew Carr

*Whereas*, Rutland native Steve Carr was raised in Brandon, a member of the first class to attend the new Otter Valley Union High School, and earned a bachelor’s degree from the former Castleton State College, and

*Whereas*, after his college graduation, Steve Carr joined the staff of the former Chittenden Bank, proved adept at his duties, and earned positions as a senior vice president at the bank’s Montpelier and Waitsfield branches, and

*Whereas*, in 1981, he became senior vice president and senior loan officer at the former First Brandon National Bank, and, in 1997, he opened an independent financial consulting business, and

*Whereas*, during his Washington County residency, Steve Carr served on the selectboard in Moretown and, later, in Brandon, and

*Whereas*, his western Vermont community involvement included serving on the boards of Porter Hospital and BROCC Community Action, and as president of the local Visiting Nurses Association and the Brandon Industrial Corporation, and his 1982 commencement of writing the *Brandon Workbook* launched a nearly 40-year economic development odyssey, which evolved into the Segment 6 Project that received federal funding in 2005, came to fruition following the devastating impact in Brandon of Tropical Storm Irene, and was ultimately completed in 2020, and

*Whereas*, as a passionate golfer, Steve Carr was a pivotal leader and volunteer developer of the Neshobe Golf Club, and, culturally, he was associated with the Stephen A. Douglas Birthplace and the Friends of Otter Valley Music, and

*Whereas*, in 2012, the voters of the Rutland-6 House District elected Steve Carr to the first of three consecutive terms to the House of Representatives, where he served on the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development (2013–2016) and ably chaired the Committee on Energy and Technology (2017–2018); and the Carr family’s presence returned to the State House in 2024, when his granddaughter, James Ashley Carr, was honored to serve as a legislative page, and

*Whereas*, Steve Carr was a well-liked and respected member of the peoples’ house who served his community with distinction and honor, and his death on April 12, 2026, at 76 years of age, saddened his many friends, and especially his wife of 47 years, Jane Ellen; their children; and grandchildren, *now therefore be it*

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

That the General Assembly extends its sincere sympathies to the family of former Representative and Moretown and Brandon Selectboard member Stephen Andrew Carr, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the family of Steve Carr.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, May 1, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

**Second Reading; Amendment Offered and Withdrawn; Proposal of  
Amendment Agreed to; Third Reading Ordered**

**S. 223**

**Rep. Hoyt of Hartford**, for the Committee on Environment, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to water quality of the waters of Vermont

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. WATER QUALITY, LAKE CLASSIFICATION, AND  
ANTIDegradation STUDY GROUP; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created the Water Quality, Lake Classification, and Antidegradation Study Group, which shall conduct the evaluations set forth in subsection (c) of this section, including the review of existing classified waters of the State and candidate waters with water quality data supporting reclassification, assessment of antidegradation requirements, examination of the regulatory framework for Class A waters, and examination of the adequacy of the current water classification system for lakes and ponds. Based on these evaluations, the Study Group shall recommend to the General Assembly legislative or policy changes to strengthen environmental protection, provide regulatory certainty, and support public uses of State waters.

(b) Membership. The Study Group shall be composed of the following members:

(1) two current members of the House of Representatives, not all from the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) two current members of the Senate, not all from the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;

(4) a Department of Environmental Conservation water quality scientist or technical staff member, appointed by the Secretary of Natural Resources;

(5) two persons representing businesses, industries, or development that interact with water quality permitting, including the State antidegradation policy, use of high quality waters, and water classification, one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(6) two persons representing nonprofit environmental advocacy groups, one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(7) one person representing the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds, appointed by the Governor; and

(8) one person representing the Green Mountain Water Environment Association, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

(c) Powers and duties. The Study Group shall:

(1) Develop an inventory of the waters of the State, with the existing classification designations, as set forth in the Vermont Water Quality Standards, including candidate high quality waters with water quality data that meets or exceeds the minimum criteria supporting reclassification for such waters.

(2) Assess the State's obligations under the federal Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1251–1388, as enacted as of January 1, 2026, with respect to the adoption of an antidegradation rule to implement the State's antidegradation policy under the Vermont Water Quality Standards, including an evaluation of State and federal statutory and regulatory requirements and the identification of any legal, administrative, policy, or practical barriers to full compliance.

(3) Identify and evaluate the statutory and regulatory frameworks, rules, policies, and procedures governing Class A waters, including whether modifications are needed to facilitate the reclassification of eligible waters, adequately protect and support designated and existing uses, and provide regulatory certainty for activities in Class A waters.

(4) Evaluate whether the existing water classification system in the State and related statutory and regulatory frameworks protect the ecological integrity of the State's lakes and ponds, adequately address current and potential threats to the water quality of the State's lakes and ponds, and provide regulatory certainty.

(5) Recommend legislative amendments and identify any rules, policies, or procedures that may require revision to implement the Study Group's recommendations.

(d) Assistance. The Study Group shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Natural Resources and shall have the legal and drafting assistance of the Office of Legislative Counsel.

(e) Report. On or before December 15, 2026, the Study Group shall submit a written report to the General Assembly that shall include its findings and recommendations under subsection (c) of this section.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Secretary of Natural Resources shall call the first meeting of the Study Group to occur on or before August 1, 2026.

(2) The Study Group shall select at its first meeting a chair from among the four legislators serving as members.

(3) A majority of the Study Group shall constitute a quorum.

(4) The Study Group shall cease to exist on February 15, 2027.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Study Group serving in the member's capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than eight meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Study Group shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than eight meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

## Sec. 2. CONTINGENCY OF FUNDING

Notwithstanding the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 23 and 32 V.S.A. § 1010 to the contrary, the required payment under Sec. 1(g) of this act of per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses to the legislative members and other members of the Water Quality, Lake Classification, and Antidegradation Study Group is contingent upon an appropriation of funds in fiscal year 2027 from the General Fund to the Vermont General Assembly for the specific purpose of compensation and reimbursement of the Study Group members.

## Sec. 3. AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT ON

### ESTABLISHING A CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR

### WETLANDS PROFESSIONALS

(a)(1) On or before January 15, 2027, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall submit to the House Committee on Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy a report recommending whether to establish a program to certify wetlands professionals in the State for the purposes of identifying and delineating wetlands boundaries. The report shall:

(A) describe the benefits and disadvantages of a wetlands professional certification program, including whether it could accelerate wetlands permitting, reduce the amount of wetlands services available, increase the cost of wetlands services, or delay the permitting process; and

(B) discuss how a wetlands professional certification program could impact the liability of wetlands professionals, including whether certification requirements would subject wetlands professionals to increased risk of liability or increased liability insurance requirements.

(2) If the Secretary of Natural Resources recommends the establishment of a program to certify wetlands professionals in the State, the report shall include:

(A) a description of the proposed certification program;

(B) the proposed requirements for certification;

(C) a description of the activities that a wetlands professional would be authorized to conduct as part of or exclusively under a certification; and

(D) what benefit, if any, services from a certified wetlands professional would provide to customers or in regulatory proceedings.

(b) In developing the report required under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall consult with wetlands professionals who currently conduct wetlands delineations and other persons with knowledge of wetlands permitting and services provided by wetlands professionals.

#### Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

**Rep. Squirrell of Underhill**, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommended that the report of the Committee on Environment be amended by striking out Sec. 2, contingency of funding, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

#### Sec. 2. [Deleted.]

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, and the report of the Committee on Environment was amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations.

Pending the question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Environment, as amended?, **Rep. Page of Newport City** moved to further amend the report of the Committee on Environment in Sec. 1, Water Quality, Lake Classification, and Antidegradation Study Group; report, subsection (b), by striking out subdivisions (7) and (8) in their entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

(7) one person representing the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds, appointed by the Governor;

(8) one person representing the Green Mountain Water Environment Association, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(9) one person representing the Memphremagog Watershed Association, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

(10) one person representing the Lake Champlain Citizen's Advisory Committee, appointed by the Committee on Committees.

Which was agreed to.

Pending the question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Environment, as amended?, **Rep. Page of Newport City** moved to further amend the report of the Committee on Environment, in Sec. 1, Water Quality, Lake Classification, and Antidegradation Study Group; report, in subsection (c), by striking out subdivision (4) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

(4) Evaluate whether the existing water classification system in the State and related statutory and regulatory frameworks protect the ecological integrity of the State's lakes and ponds, provide regulatory certainty, and adequately address current and potential threats to the water quality of the State's lakes and ponds, including threats from the leaching of chemicals, such as perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, to lakes and ponds from waste treatment facilities in the State.

Thereupon, **Rep. Page of Newport City** asked and was granted leave of the House to withdraw the amendment.

Thereafter, the report of the Committee on Environment, as amended, was agreed to and third reading ordered.

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

**S. 202**

**Rep. Morrow of Weston**, for the Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to portable solar energy generation devices

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. 30 V.S.A. § 201 is amended to read:

§ 201. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

\* \* \*

(9) “Plug-in photovoltaic device” means a photovoltaic generation device that:

(A) is designed to be connected to a building’s electrical system via an electrical cord plugged into a receptacle;

(B) includes a feature that prevents the system from energizing the building’s electrical system during a power outage;

(C) complies with UL 3700 for plug-in photovoltaic systems by UL Solutions or an equivalent certification by an equivalent Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory for use in the United States and is installed and operated in compliance with IEEE 1547-2018 and any successor standard, using default performance and setting profiles consistent with those developed by regional transmission and distribution system operators; and

(D) is connected to a building that is connected to the electric grid.

Sec. 2. 30 V.S.A. § 256 is added to read:

§ 256. PLUG-IN PHOTOVOLTAIC DEVICES

(a) A customer may install one or more plug-in photovoltaic devices per electric meter if the devices have a maximum combined inverter capacity of not more than 1,200 watts. Plug-in photovoltaic devices shall only be connected to systems using smart meters. A customer shall ensure a device is temporarily but securely attached to the ground or a structure.

(b) The installation of a plug-in photovoltaic device that complies with subsection (a) of this section shall not be required to comply with the requirements of section 248 of this chapter, shall not be required to obtain an interconnection agreement with an electric distribution company, and shall not otherwise be subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utility Commission.

(c) An electric distribution company shall not require a customer using a plug-in photovoltaic device that complies with subsection (a) of this section to:

(1) obtain the company’s approval before installing or using the device;

(2) pay any fee or charge related to the installation of the device; or

(3) install any additional controls or equipment beyond what is integrated into the device.

(d) Nothing in this section shall prevent an electric distribution company from recovering costs associated with the overloading of the service provided due to the presence of a plug-in photovoltaic device.

(e) A customer with a net metering system shall not also install a plug-in photovoltaic device. A plug-in photovoltaic device shall not be eligible for net metering. Generation exported to the grid by a plug-in photovoltaic device shall not be compensated by an electric distribution company.

(f) A plug-in photovoltaic device in a public building, as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2730, shall be used in a manner that complies with all applicable requirements of the most recent Fire and Building Safety Code adopted by the Division of Fire Safety.

(g) No tenant shall install a plug-in photovoltaic device without the landlord's permission. A tenant shall provide at least 10 days' notice to the landlord of the tenant's intent to install a plug-in photovoltaic device in compliance with subsection (a) of this section in the building. The landlord shall respond within 10 days with any reasonable restrictions on the installation of the device or may deny installation.

Sec. 3. 24 V.S.A. § 4413(g) is amended to read:

(g) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a bylaw adopted under this chapter shall not:

(1) Regulate the installation, operation, and maintenance of a plug-in photovoltaic device or, on a flat roof of an otherwise complying structure, of a solar energy device that heats water or space or generates electricity. For the purpose of this subdivision, "flat roof" means a roof having a slope less than or equal to five degrees.

(2) Prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the installation of solar collectors not exempted from regulation under subdivision (1) of this subsection, clotheslines, or other energy devices based on renewable resources.

Sec. 4. 27 V.S.A. § 544 is amended to read:

#### § 544. ENERGY DEVICES BASED ON RENEWABLE RESOURCES

(a) No deed restrictions, covenants, or similar binding agreements running with the land shall prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting solar collectors, clotheslines, or other energy devices based on renewable resources from being installed on or, for a plug-in photovoltaic device as defined in 30 V.S.A. § 201, appurtenant to buildings erected on the lots or parcels covered by the deed restrictions, covenants, or binding agreements. A property owner may not be denied permission to install solar collectors or other energy devices based on renewable resources by any entity granted the power or right in any deed

restriction, covenant, or similar binding agreement to approve, forbid, control, or direct alteration of property with respect to residential dwellings. For purposes of this subsection, that entity may determine the specific location where solar collectors may be installed on the roof within an orientation to the south or within 45° east or west of due south, provided that this determination does not impair the effective operation of the solar collectors.

\* \* \*

(c) The legislative intent in enacting this section is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by encouraging the development and use of renewable resources in order to conserve and protect the value of land, buildings, and resources by preventing measures that will have the ultimate effect, whether or not intended, of driving the costs of owning and operating commercial or residential property beyond the capacity of private owners to maintain. This section shall not apply to patio railings in condominiums, cooperatives, or apartments, except for a plug-in photovoltaic device.

Sec. 5. 9 V.S.A. § 2795 is amended to read:

§ 2795. EFFICIENCY AND WATER CONSERVATION STANDARDS

(a) The Commissioner shall adopt rules in accordance with the provisions of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 establishing minimum efficiency standards for the types of new products set forth in section 2794 of this title. The rules shall provide for the following minimum efficiency standards for products sold or installed in this State:

\* \* \*

(6) In the rules, the Commissioner shall adopt minimum efficiency and water conservation standards for each product that is subject to a standard under 10 C.F.R. §§ 430 and 431 as those provisions existed on January 19, ~~2017~~ 2025. The minimum standard and the testing protocol for each product shall be the same as adopted in those sections of the Code of Federal Regulations, except that for faucets, showerheads, and urinals, the minimum standard and testing protocol shall be as otherwise set forth in this section.

\* \* \*

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to plug-in photovoltaic devices”

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

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

**S. 232**

**Rep. Brown of Richmond**, for the Committee on Education, to which had been referred Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to public libraries and the Department of Libraries

Reported in favor of its passage in concurrence.

**Rep. Burkhardt of South Burlington**, for the Committee on Ways and Means, 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, read the second time, and third reading was ordered.

**Message from the Senate No. 53**

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 House proposal of amendment to Senate bill of the following title:

**S. 89.** An act relating to expanding survivor benefits.

And has concurred therein.

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

**H. 933.** An act relating to miscellaneous administrative and policy changes to the tax laws.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption 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. 52.** Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 8, 2026.

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

**Adjournment**

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