

# Journal of the Senate

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

## Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend James Zuccaro of Hinesburg.

## Bills Referred to the Committee on Appropriations

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

**S. 56.** An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

**S. 117.** An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

## Senate Resolution Placed on Calendar

### S.R. 10.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Committee on Government Operations,

**S.R. 10.** Senate resolution relating to the disapproval of Executive Order 01-25.

*Whereas*, on January 15, 2025, the Governor signed Executive Order 01-25 providing for the creation of an Agency of Public Safety by reorganizing the Department of Public Safety as the Agency of Public Safety, and

*Whereas*, according to the Executive Order, effective April 16, 2025, “the expansion of responsibilities accruing to the Department of Public Safety in service to the Governor’s Constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws and the public health and safety needs of Vermonters statewide, necessitate the elevation of the Department of Public Safety to a cabinet-level agency,” and

*Whereas*, in Executive Order 01-25, the Governor lists the expanding scope of responsibilities assigned to the Department, including “law enforcement provided by the Vermont State Police”; “special teams from both the Vermont

State Police and the Division of Fire Safety”; the dual responsibilities of the Division of Emergency Management (VEM), for both disaster relief and the management of the State Emergency Operations Center, and that VEM’s “responsibilities will only increase as Vermont faces the dynamic impacts of climate change”; the “[b]road responsibilities of the Division of Fire Safety”; the “[n]umerous support services including Radio Technology and Crime Information, as well as management of Vermont’s only accredited forensic lab”; and “[a]nimal welfare,” and

*Whereas*, the Senate Committee on Government Operations has carefully reviewed and discussed this Executive Order, and

*Whereas*, the Senate recognizes that the Department of Public Safety’s responsibilities are increasing, that they are of enormous importance for all Vermonters, and should be delivered in the most effective possible manner, and

*Whereas*, the Senate also wishes to ensure that the Governor’s reorganization achieves this goal without leading to unintended consequences, and

*Whereas*, the best mechanism to explore a possible reorganization of the Department of Public Safety into a new Agency of Public Safety is to use the standing committee process, with the resulting opportunity for enhanced research, analysis, and public participation, and

*Whereas*, as part of this process, the Senate Committee on Government Operations looks forward to reviewing and taking testimony on all the details of this proposed reorganization of the Department of Public Safety into the Agency of Public Safety, and

*Whereas*, the Senate is fully committed to working cooperatively and promptly with the Administration to develop the best possible governmental organizational arrangement for the delivery of the essential services now under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Safety, *now therefore be it*

***Resolved by the Senate:***

That the Senate of the State of Vermont, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 2002, disapproves of Executive Order 01-25, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Senate of the State of Vermont commits to bring forward draft legislation to maximize the delivery of public safety services to all Vermonters, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Governor Philip B. Scott.

Thereupon, under Rule 48 and 51, the resolution was placed on the Calendar for notice.

**Bill Introduced**

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

**S. 121.**

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick and White,  
An act relating to the regulation of kratom products.  
To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

**Bill Referred**

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

**H. 96.**

An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

**Bill Passed**

**S. 44.**

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to requiring legislative approval prior to entering into certain immigration agreements.

**Joint Resolution Amended; Third Reading Ordered**

**J.R.S. 15.**

Senator Hashim, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred joint Senate resolution entitled:

Joint resolution supporting Vermont's transgender and non-binary community and declaring Vermont's commitment to fighting discrimination and treating all citizens with respect and dignity.

Reported recommending that the joint resolution be amended in the final Resolved clause after "Pride Center of Vermont" by striking out "and" and inserting in lieu thereof "," and after "Outright Vermont" by inserting ", and to the Vermont Congressional Delegation"

And that when so amended the resolution ought to be adopted.

Thereupon, the resolution was read a second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the recommendation of amendment was agreed to on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

Senator Hardy having demanded the yeas and nays, they were taken and are as follows:

### **Roll Call**

**Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were:** Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

**Those Senators who voted in the negative were:** None.

Thereupon, third reading of the resolution was ordered.

### **Message from the House No. 26**

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

**H. 2.** An act relating to increasing the minimum age for delinquency proceedings.

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

**H. 50.** An act relating to identifying underutilized State buildings and land.

**H. 105.** An act relating to expanding the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program.

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

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

**J.R.S. 16.** Joint resolution providing for a Joint Assembly to vote on the retention of seven Superior Court Judges and one Magistrate.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

**H.C.R. 49.** House concurrent resolution recognizing March 21, 2025 as World Day for Glaciers in Vermont.

**H.C.R. 50.** House concurrent resolution recognizing the unique role of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the Vermont health care system.

**H.C.R. 51.** House concurrent resolution honoring Louis Lamphere on his receipt of the gubernatorial Rays of Kindness recognition.

**H.C.R. 52.** House concurrent resolution honoring Anthony P. Romeo on his 70th birthday.

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

The House has considered concurrent resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

**S.C.R. 3.** Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Liliane Gordon of Hinesburg on her receipt of the Girl Scout Gold Award.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The Governor has informed the House that on March 14, 2025, he returned without signature and vetoed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

**H. 141.** An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

#### **Text of Communication from Governor**

The text of the communication from His Excellency, the Governor, whereby he vetoed and returned unsigned **House Bill No. 141** is as follows:

“March 14, 2025

The Honorable BetsyAnn Wrask  
Clerk of the Vermont House of Representatives  
State House  
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Ms. Wrask:

Pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution, I’m returning H.141, *An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments*, without my signature.

For weeks, I have been clear that I do not support H.141 as passed by the House or the Senate for many reasons including:

1. Given growing uncertainty around federal funding and the potential for significant funding cuts to critical programs, spending additional general funds in the budget adjustment for expenses that are not time sensitive is irresponsible. These new spending proposals should be

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considered as part of the FY26 budget to be weighed against other initiatives that may have been reduced due to federal budget cuts.

2. Expanding the free “hotel/motel program,” moves us backwards, reversing important progress made towards reforming this failed program, agreed upon by the Administration and Legislature just last year. After nearly five years of experience, we know this approach is far too expensive and fails our constituents, communities and taxpayers.

I proposed a compromise path to the Committee of Conference which would have moved these spending and policy decisions to the FY26 budget while providing \$2.1 million in flexible grants to municipalities to address needs in their communities during April, May and June. My compromise proposal protects the most vulnerable, develops emergency shelter capacity, adheres to the agreement from the last session, and limits unnecessary appropriations while we monitor federal action.

This compromise proposal, or something similar, remains on the table.

For these reasons, I’m vetoing H.141 pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution.

It’s my hope the Legislature will reconsider and send me a budget adjustment I can agree to.

Sincerely,

/s/Philip B. Scott  
Governor”

### **Senate Concurrent Resolution**

The following joint concurrent resolution, having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, was adopted on the part of the Senate:

Offered By Senators Lyons, Chittenden and Ram Hinsdale,

### **S.C.R. 3.**

Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Liliane Gordon of Hinesburg on her receipt of the Girl Scout Gold Award.

### **House Concurrent Resolutions**

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having

requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Rep. Greer,

**H.C.R. 49.**

House concurrent resolution recognizing March 21, 2025 as World Day for Glaciers in Vermont.

Offered by Rep. Cordes,

**H.C.R. 50.**

House concurrent resolution recognizing the unique role of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the Vermont health care system.

Offered by Reps. Austin and others,

**H.C.R. 51.**

House concurrent resolution honoring Louis Lamphere on his receipt of the gubernatorial Rays of Kindness recognition.

Offered by Reps. Howard and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

**H.C.R. 52.**

House concurrent resolution honoring Anthony P. Romeo on his 70th birthday.

**Adjournment**

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 17.