

Journal of the Senate

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2026

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bill Referred

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

H. 545.

An act relating to issuing immunization recommendations.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 202.

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to portable solar energy generation devices.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended 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) “Portable solar energy generation device” means a movable 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

(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. PORTABLE SOLAR ENERGY GENERATION DEVICES

(a) A customer may install one or more portable solar energy generation devices per electric meter if the devices have a maximum combined capacity of not more than 1,200 watts. Portable solar energy generation devices shall only be connected to systems using smart meters.

(b) The installation of a portable solar energy generation device that complies with subsection (a) of this section shall not be required to comply with the requirements of section 248 of this chapter or be required to obtain an interconnection agreement with an electric distribution company.

(c) An electric distribution company shall not require a customer using a portable solar energy generation 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 device; or

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

(d) A customer with a net metering system shall not also install a portable solar energy generation device. A portable solar energy generation device shall not be eligible for net metering. Excess generation fed back into the grid by a portable solar energy generation device shall not be compensated by an electric distribution company.

(e) A portable solar energy 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.

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 portable solar energy generation 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 portable solar energy generation 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 portable solar energy generation device.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the recommendation of amendment was agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

Senator White 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, Benson, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Morley, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Hashim.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, January 29, 2026.