

Journal of the Senate

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 52

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Mx. Nigel Hicks-Tibbles, its First Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 626. An act relating to sexual extortion, voyeurism, and disclosure of sexually explicit images without consent.

And has concurred therein.

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:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the 22nd day of April, 2026, he approved and signed a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 210. An act relating to access to autopsy reports.

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:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the 22nd day of April, 2026, he returned without signature and *vetoed* a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 183. An act relating to home improvement and land improvement fraud.

Text of Communication from Governor

The text of the communication to the Senate from His Excellency, the Governor, whereby he vetoed and returned unsigned **Senate Bill No. S. 183** to the Senate is as follows:

“April 22, 2026

The Honorable John Bloomer
Secretary of the Senate
State House
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Mr. Bloomer:

Pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution, I’m returning S.183, *An act relating to home improvement and land improvement fraud* without my signature because of my objections described herein.

To be clear, I fully support this bill’s intent, which makes necessary changes to Vermont's home and land improvement fraud statute to restore the original criminal intent standard — requiring prosecutors to prove a contractor knowingly intended to defraud at the time of contracting — after a 2015 amendment that changed the law in a likely-unconstitutional way that was recently flagged by two Vermont trial courts.

However, this bill was passed with a cross-reference that was struck in error and requires a legislative correction. I understand this error has been flagged for relevant committees of jurisdiction, and a corrected version of S.183 can be added to another bill that is moving through the process.

With several weeks remaining in the legislative session, there is time for the Legislature to make the appropriate correction, either as a new bill or as an amendment to a bill that is still currently under consideration. Again, to be clear I support this bill’s intent and look forward to a version I can sign.

Based on this objection I must return S.183 without my signature pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution.

Sincerely,
Philip B. Scott
Governor

PBS/kp”

Bills Referred to Committee on Finance

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were referred to the Committee on Finance:

H. 567. An act relating to unclaimed property, State retirement systems, and capital debt.

H. 577. An act relating to establishing the Vermont Prescription Drug Discount Card Program.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 519.

Senator Collamore, for the Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to Vermont State Employees' Retirement System Group G membership.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Hardy, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, Senators Collamore, Clarkson, Morley, Vyhovsky and White moved that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out Sec. 1, 3 V.S.A. § 455, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 1 to read as follows:

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 455 is amended to read:

§ 455. DEFINITIONS

(a) As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(11) "Member" means any employee included in the membership of the Retirement System under section 457 of this title.

* * *

(F) "Group G member" means:

(i) the following employees who are first employed in the positions listed in this subdivision (F)(i) on or after July 1, 2023, or who are members of the System as of June 30, ~~2022~~ 2023, and make an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before June 30, 2023, pursuant to the terms set by the Board: facility employees of the Department of Corrections, as Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, and employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its successor in interest, who provide direct patient care; ~~and~~

(ii) the following employees who are first employed in the positions listed in this subdivision (F)(ii) or first included in the membership of the System on or after January 1, 2025, or who are members of the System as of December 31, 2024, and make an irrevocable election to join Group G on or before December 31, 2024, pursuant to the terms set by the Board:

(I) all sheriffs; and

(II) deputy sheriffs who:

(aa) are employed by county sheriff's departments that participate in the Vermont Employees' Retirement System;

(bb) have attained Level II or Level III law enforcement officer certification from the Vermont Criminal Justice Council;

(cc) are required to perform law enforcement duties as the primary function of their employment; and

(dd) are not full-time deputy sheriffs compensated by the State of Vermont whose primary function is transports as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 290(b) and eligible for Group C pursuant to subdivision (9)(B) of this subsection (a); ~~and~~

(iii) the following employees who are first employed in the positions listed in this subdivision (F)(iii) or first included in the membership of the System on or after January 1, 2027, or who are members of the System as of December 31, 2026, and make an irrevocable election to join Group G on or before December 31, 2026, pursuant to the terms set by the Board and who:

(I) are employed by a municipal employer that participates in the Vermont Employees' Retirement System;

(II) have attained Level II or Level III law enforcement officer certification from the Vermont Criminal Justice Council; and

(III) are required to perform law enforcement duties as the primary function of their employment.

* * *

(13) “Normal retirement date” means:

* * *

(E) with respect to a Group G member:

(i) for facility employees of the Department of Corrections, Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, or employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its predecessor or successor in interest, who provide direct patient care, who were first included in the membership of the System on or before June 30, 2008, who were employed as of June 30, 2022 2023, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before July 1, 2023, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 62 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) completion of 30 years of creditable service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(ii) for facility employees of the Department of Corrections, Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, as employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, or employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its predecessor or successor in interest, who provide direct patient care, who were first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who were employed as of June 30, 2022 2023, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before July 1, 2023, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) attainment of 87 points reflecting a combination of the age of the member and number of years of service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(iii) for facility employees of the Department of Corrections, Department of Corrections employees who provide direct security and treatment services to offenders under supervision in the community, employees of a facility for justice-involved youth, or employees of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital or its predecessor or successor in interest, who provide direct patient care, who first become a Group G member on or after July 1, 2023, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) attainment of 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(II) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(iv) for all sheriffs and those deputy sheriffs who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(ii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or before June 30, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2024, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2025, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 62 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) completion of 30 years of creditable service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(v) for all sheriffs and those deputy sheriffs who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(ii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2024, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2025, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) attainment of 87 points reflecting a combination of the age of the member and number of years of service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(vi) for all sheriffs and those deputy sheriffs who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(ii) of this subsection (a), who first become a Group G member on or after January 1, 2025, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) attainment of 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(II) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(vii) for all municipal law enforcement officers who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(iii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or before June 30, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2026, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2027, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 62 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) completion of 30 years of creditable service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service;

(viii) for all municipal law enforcement officers who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(iii) of this subsection (a), who were first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who were employed as of December 31, 2026, and who made an irrevocable election to prospectively join Group G on or before January 1, 2027, pursuant to the terms set by the Board, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service;

(II) attainment of 87 points reflecting a combination of the age of the member and number of years of service; or

(III) 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(ix) for all municipal law enforcement officers who meet the requirements pursuant to subdivision (11)(F)(iii) of this subsection (a) who first become a Group G member on or after January 1, 2027, the first day of the calendar month next following the earlier of:

(I) attainment of 55 years of age and following completion of 20 years of creditable service; or

(II) 65 years of age and following completion of five years of creditable service.

* * *

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, third reading was ordered.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 762.

Senator Collamore, for the Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to the County and Regional Governance Study Committee.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 118, Sec. 1, by striking out subsection (e) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (e) to read:

(e) Report. On or before November 1, ~~2025~~ 2027, the Committee shall report to the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

Second: In Sec. 1, 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 118, Sec. 1, by striking out subsection (f) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (f) to read:

(f) Meetings.

* * *

~~(2) The Committee shall be co-chaired by the Chair of the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Government Operations. [Repealed.]~~

* * *

~~(4) The Committee shall cease to exist on July 1, 2026~~ November 2, 2027.

* * *

And that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with such proposal of amendment.

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Government Operations.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the proposal of amendment was agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Message from the House No. 53

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 considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

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

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption 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. 50. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 24, 2026.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the morning.