

# Journal of the Senate

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026

The Senate was called to order by the President.

## Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

## Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

### H. 650.

House bill of the following title, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule was referred to the Committee on Finance:

An act relating to educational technology products.

## Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

### H. 938.

House bill of the following title, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

An act relating to establishing the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum.

## Proposal of Amendment; Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

### H. 171.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to criminal justice agency protocols for an officer-involved shooting.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Harrison moved that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended in Sec. 1, officer-involved shooting protocol, in subdivision (c)(5), after “independent assessments” by inserting “and the role of victim advocates”

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment.

**Bills Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment**

House bills of the following titles were read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment:

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

**H. 588.** An act relating to professions and occupations regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation.

**H. 611.** An act relating to miscellaneous provisions affecting the Department of Vermont Health Access.

**Bill Passed in Concurrence****H. 635.**

House bill of the following title was read the third time and passed in concurrence:

An act relating to eliminating Department of Corrections supervisory fees.

**Proposal of Amendment; Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment****H. 657.**

House bill entitled:

An act relating to various programming and requirements within the Department for Children and Families.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Heffernan moved to amend the Senate proposal of amendment in Sec. 16, Prenatal Engagement and Family Support Working Group, in subsection (b), by inserting a new subdivision to be subdivision (12) to read as follows:

(12) the Director of the Women's Center located in Middlebury or designee;

and by renumbering the remaining subdivisions to be numerically correct.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment.

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**Proposal of Amendment; Action Postponed****H. 660.**

House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2027 Opioid Abatement Special Fund appropriations.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Norris, Baruth, Brennan and Perchlik moved that the Senate proposal of amendment be amended by inserting a reader assistance heading and Sec. 6a after Sec. 6 to read as follows:

\* \* \* Syringe Recovery Plan \* \* \*

Sec. 6a. PLAN; SYRINGE RECOVERY

On or before December 15, 2026, the Department of Health shall submit a plan to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare containing recommendations for the implementation of one or more syringe recovery models throughout the State to enhance public health and safety. The plan shall require syringe service providers to report to the Department on the percentage of distributed syringes that are returned to the provider or otherwise collected.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Ingalls moved that the Senate proposal of amendment be amended in Sec. 1, appropriations; Opioid Abatement Special Fund, by striking out subsection (a) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (a) to read as follows:

(a) In fiscal year 2027, the following sums shall be appropriated from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund established in 18 V.S.A. § 4774:

(1)(A) \$455,000.00 to the Department of Health to fund 26 outreach or case management staff positions within the preferred provider network for the provision of services that increase the motivation of and engagement with individuals with substance use disorder in settings such as police barracks, shelters, social service organizations, and elsewhere in the community.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly that these positions shall be funded annually by the Opioid Abatement Special Fund unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(2)(A) \$3,550,000.00 to the Department of Health for recovery residences certified by the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences.

(B) It is the intent of the General Assembly that recovery residences be funded annually by the Opioid Abatement Special Fund unless and until the Special Fund does not have sufficient monies to fund this expenditure.

(3) \$1,100,000.00 to the Department of Corrections to provide peer recovery center coaches in Vermont correctional facilities and in probation and parole offices to provide group and individual coaching and reentry support, which shall not be used to cover administrative expenses.

(4) \$250,000.00 to the Department for Children and Families' Office of Economic Opportunity to support long-term programs at shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness, including harm-reduction supports, transportation to recovery meetings and appointments, and clinical nursing programs.

(5)(A) \$600,000.00 to the Department of Health for the creation of new recovery residence beds at National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) certification level III or above.

(B) \$600,000.00 to the Department of Health for opioid use disorder residential treatment beds at American Society of Addiction Medicine level 3.1.

(6) \$248,000.00 to the Department of Health for the Prehospital Vermont EMS Buprenorphine Treatment (PREVENT) Program to expand training for emergency service providers on carrying buprenorphine and administering buprenorphine after administering naloxone.

(7) \$35,000.00 to the Department of Health to subsidize room and board for individuals in Rutland Mental Health Services' transitional housing program.

(8) \$237,646.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to Springfield Project ACTION to support public safety enhancement team coordinator positions in Bennington, Springfield, Brattleboro, St. Johnsbury, and central Vermont for the purposes of providing administrative support, meeting facilitation, data tracking, outreach event coordination, and sustainability planning.

(9) \$800,000.00 to the Department of Health for distribution to recovery centers.

(10) \$287,000.00 to the Department of Public Safety to provide funding for expanding the Public Safety Enhancement Team's harm reduction and strategic community intervention efforts.

Thereupon, Senator Baruth moved to postpone action until later in the legislative day, which was agreed to.

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**House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In with Amendment****S. 227.**

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to creating immigration protocols in Vermont schools.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

**Sec. 1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this act is to secure the right of every child to equal access to a free public education and to a school that is safe from intimidation and fear, regardless of immigration status. In order to ensure the right to educational equality, schools must take steps to protect the integrity of school learning environments for all children, so that no parent is discouraged from sending a child to, and no child is discouraged from attending, school, including due to the threat of immigration enforcement on a school campus.

Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. chapter 33 is amended to read:

**CHAPTER 33. FIRE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS  
AND, SAFETY PATROLS, AND IMMIGRATION PROTOCOLS**

\* \* \*

**§ 1486. IMMIGRATION PROTOCOLS**

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1)(A) “Law enforcement officer” has the same meaning as in 20 V.S.A. § 2351a and includes any officer of a federal law enforcement agency or any person acting on behalf of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.

(B) “Law enforcement officer” does not include a school resource officer or safety officer who is stationed at a school.

(2) “Nonpublic area of a school” means an area of a school that normally requires authorization to enter, consistent with the policy required by section 1484 of this chapter, and includes any area a superintendent or head of school or designee determines to be nonpublic.

(3) “School” means a public school or an independent school approved under section 166 of this title.

(b) Immigration resources and support.

(1) A superintendent or head of school shall:

(A) distribute the immigration resource guide developed by the Office of the Attorney General pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection (b) to staff, students, and family members of students;

(B) at each school the superintendent or head of school oversees, designate at least one individual to serve as a resource for immigration-related matters who shall receive on an ongoing basis updated information and training material as provided to the superintendent or head of school by the Office of the Attorney General; and

(C) provide support, to the greatest extent possible, to a student with regard to immigration-related concerns, including connecting the student and the student's family with an immigration advocacy institution and similar resources.

(2)(A) The Office of the Attorney General, in consultation with the Agency of Education, shall develop an immigration resource guide that shall:

(i) include immigration- and civil rights-related resources; information regarding standby guardianships pursuant to 14 V.S.A § 2626a; and a list of immigration, human rights, and relevant advocacy organizations available to provide immigration assistance to students and staff; and

(ii) be developed in a manner that serves to protect the privacy and safety of students and staff.

(B) The Office of the Attorney General shall review the guide at least once annually and send any updates made to the guide to the Agency of Education for distribution to all superintendents and heads of schools not later than 30 days after completing the update.

(c) Student information privacy. School districts and independent schools are prohibited from:

(1) collecting or requesting information regarding citizenship or immigration status of a student or of a family member of the student except as required by State or federal law or as required to administer a State- or federally supported educational program;

(2) disclosing a student's immigration status, citizenship, place of birth, nationality, or national origin:

(A) in any database that the school maintains; or

(B) as directory information, as that term is defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 C.F.R. Part 99; and

(3) voluntarily sharing student information, including immigration status, citizenship, place of birth, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, status as a survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault, status as a recipient of public assistance, or school discipline records, with a third party unless required to do so by State or federal law.

(d) Law enforcement on-site and requests for information.

(1) A superintendent or head of school shall:

(A) subject to subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1), be the sole authority to admit a law enforcement officer who appears on an immigration-related matter into a nonpublic area of school; and

(B) designate at least one individual who works at each school to serve as a designee of the superintendent or head of school in the event that the superintendent or head of school is not present when the law enforcement officer appears on-site.

(2) The superintendent or head of school or designee shall not allow a law enforcement officer appearing on an immigration-related matter into a nonpublic area of a school unless the officer provides official identification and a judicial warrant that authorizes entrance into a specific area of the school and names a specific individual located within the school who is subject to a search or arrest.

(3) Absent a judicial warrant pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, no school or individual working at a school shall reveal any information about a student or school staff member in response to an immigration-related request from a law enforcement officer unless otherwise required by law.

(4) As used in this subsection, “immigration-related matter” and “immigration-related request” mean an administrative warrant, civil warrant, immigration detainer, or any other document or request that pertains to an individual’s immigration or citizenship status.

(e) Immigration agreements.

(1) Except as required by State or federal law, no school, school district, or supervisory union shall enter into an agreement with a State, local, or federal government entity that furthers the enforcement of any immigration law.

(2)(A) Any proposed agreement pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (e) that purports to be required by State or federal law shall be subject to review by the superintendent or head of school after the superintendent or head of school has consulted with the Office of the Attorney General.

(B) The superintendent or head of school shall provide a recommendation on the proposed agreement to the school's appropriate governing body after the superintendent's or head of school's review pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2).

(f) Applicability. Nothing in this section is intended to prohibit or impede any public agency from complying with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373 and 1644. To the extent any school, school district, or supervisory union policy or practice conflicts with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373 and 1644, the policy or practice is, to the extent of such conflict, abolished.

(g) Policy required.

(1) Model policy and recommended procedures. On or before January 1, 2027, the Agency of Education, in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General, the Vermont Independent Schools Association, and the Vermont School Boards Association, shall develop, and review at least annually, a model policy along with recommended procedures that reflect the requirements set forth in subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

(2) Adoption of policy and procedures.

(A) Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, each school board shall develop, adopt, ensure the enforcement of, and make available in the manner described under subdivision 563(1) of this title an immigration protocol policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed by the Agency. Any school board that fails to adopt a policy shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model policy published by the Agency.

(B) Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, each independent school shall develop, adopt, and ensure the enforcement of an immigration protocol policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed by the Agency. Any approved independent school that fails to adopt a policy shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model policy published by the Agency.

### Sec. 3. IMMIGRATION RESOURCE GUIDE

The Office of the Attorney General shall complete the immigration resource guide required pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1486(b)(2) on or before August 1, 2026, and shall send the completed guide to the Agency of Education for distribution to all superintendents and heads of schools on or before August 31, 2026.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, Senator Ram Hinsdale moved that the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment with a further proposal of amendment as follows:

First: In Sec. 2, 16 V.S.A. chapter 33, in section 1486, in subsection (c), following “School districts and” by striking out “independent”

Second: In Sec. 2, 16 V.S.A. chapter 33, in section 1486, in subdivision (d)(2), following “authorizes entrance into” by striking out “a specific area” and inserting in lieu thereof “specific areas”

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment with further proposal of amendment?, was decided in the affirmative.

**House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In**

**S. 327.**

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to economic development.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. [Deleted.]

Sec. 2. [Deleted.]

Sec. 3. [Deleted.]

Sec. 4. [Deleted.]

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 6. [Deleted.]

\* \* \* Business Resources and Growth Study \* \* \*

Sec. 7. BUSINESS RESOURCES AND GROWTH; INVENTORY; STUDY;  
REPORT

(a) Business growth and development study. The Commissioner of Economic Development, in consultation with the stakeholders set forth in subsection (b) of this section, for the purpose of determining how the State can better enable and support the growth of Vermont businesses, shall:

(1) clearly define each stage of business development in order to provide business leaders, investors, and the General Assembly with an understanding of the resources businesses need at each stage of development;

(2) identify the public and private resources available to businesses and determine how the resources are currently communicated to businesses;

(3) create an inventory of resources, pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, that are poised to serve businesses for each stage of development;

(4) determine how best to communicate the inventory of resources created pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection to Vermonters and the business community;

(5) determine how to better communicate succession planning options for businesses;

(6) identify what resources are available to businesses to access capital;

(7) determine the state of capital access opportunities, including the:

(A) investment environment in Vermont and the New England region;

(B) availability of tax credits to leverage private capital; and

(C) requirements to maintain Vermont's Tech Hub designation; and

(8) identify investor education opportunities for high net worth individuals interested in investing in Vermont businesses.

(b) Stakeholders. The Commissioner shall consult and convene with stakeholders to assist in the Commissioner's work pursuant to subsection (a) of this section that have relevant experience in business growth and access to capital, including representation from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Vermont Small Business Development Center, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, regional development corporations, regional planning commissions, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Vermont Professionals of Color Network, the Vermont Small Business Law Center, the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, the Vermont Employee Ownership Center, a regional community action agency, postsecondary institutions, and local and regional chambers of commerce.

(c) Report. On or before December 15, 2026, the Commissioner shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with the Commissioner's findings pursuant to the business resources and growth study set forth in this section along with any recommendations for legislative action and a list of the stakeholders consulted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

\* \* \* Convention Center Task Force \* \* \*

Sec. 8. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 65, Sec. 3 is amended to read:

Sec. 3. TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT OF  
CONVENTION CENTER AND PERFORMANCE VENUE

\* \* \*

(b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

(1) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development or designee;

(4) the President of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce or designee;

(5) the Chief Executive Officer of the Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce or designee;

(6) the President of the Vermont Regional Development Corporations or designee; ~~and~~

(7) the Chair of the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies or designee; and

(8) the President of the University of Vermont or designee.

\* \* \*

(e) Reports. On or before November 1, 2025, the Task Force shall submit an interim report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with an update on its work pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. On or before ~~November~~ December 1, 2026, the Task Force shall submit a final written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

(f) Meetings.

\* \* \*

(4) The Task Force shall cease to exist on ~~December 1, 2026~~ July 1, 2027.

~~(5) The Task Force shall meet not more than six times.~~

(g) Reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Task Force 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 ~~six~~ 14 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Task Force shall be entitled to reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than ~~six~~ 14 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

\* \* \*

\* \* \* Repeal of VEGI Prospective Repeal \* \* \*

Sec. 9. 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 157, Sec. H.12, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 164, Sec. 5, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 72, Sec. 39, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 176, Sec. 1, is further amended to read:

Sec. H.12. ~~VEGI; REPEAL OF AUTHORITY TO AWARD INCENTIVES~~

~~Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Vermont Economic Progress Council shall not accept or approve an application for a Vermont Employment Growth Incentive under 32 V.S.A. chapter 105, subchapter 2 on or after January 1, 2027. [Repealed.]~~

\* \* \* VEGI Annual Cap \* \* \*

Sec. 9a. 32 V.S.A. § 3342 is amended to read:

§ 3342. ANNUAL PROGRAM CAP

(a) In each calendar year the Vermont Economic Progress Council may approve one or more incentives under this subchapter, the total value of which shall not exceed:

(1) ~~\$15,000,000.00~~ \$10,000,000.00 for one or more initial approvals; and

(2) ~~\$10,000,000.00~~ \$5,000,000.00 for one or more final approvals.

(b) The Council may increase the cap imposed in subdivision (a)(2) of this section by not more than \$5,000,000.00 upon application by the Governor to, and approval of, the Joint Fiscal Committee.

(c) In evaluating the Governor's request, the Committee shall consider the economic and fiscal condition of the State, including recent revenue forecasts and budget projections.

(d) The Council shall provide the Committee with testimony, documentation, company-specific data, and any other information the Committee requests to demonstrate that increasing the cap will create an opportunity for return on investment to the State.

Sec. 10. [Deleted.]

\* \* \* Study of Culinary and Hospitality Education \* \* \*

Sec. 10a. CULINARY AND HOSPITALITY EDUCATION; STUDY;  
REPORT

(a) Purpose and findings. The State of Vermont lost a significant contributor to its culinary and hospitality workforce pipeline when the New England Culinary Institute closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The General Assembly finds that the establishment of postsecondary educational programs in the fields of culinary arts and hospitality is critical for the long-term workforce needs in those sectors and for the economic health of the State.

(b) Task. The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, shall engage with the stakeholders set forth in subsection (c) of this section to determine how best to develop postsecondary educational programs in the fields of culinary arts and hospitality by:

(1) investigating suitable locations that could host the programs;

(2) researching and identifying possible educational and business models;

(3) identifying organizations that could stand up, administer, or operate the programs;

(4) gauging the interest from private investors to determine whether there is interest in private funding for the programs;

(5) establishing relationships with culinary and hospitality businesses in Vermont that have or will have workforce needs;

(6) cataloging opportunities currently available for culinary and hospitality training and certification;

(7) determining whether there are gaps in the availability of culinary and hospitality training and certification programs; and

(8) conducting any additional research or outreach that would promote the development of the programs.

(c) Stakeholders. The Department shall consult and convene with stakeholders to assist in its work pursuant to subsection (b) of this section that have relevant experience in the food and hospitality sectors, including representation from the State Workforce Development Board, Office of Workforce Strategy and Development, Vermont Association of Career and Technical Directors, Vermont Professionals of Color, Vermont Independent Restaurants, Vermont Specialty Foods Association, Vermont Lodging Association, University of Vermont, Vermont State Colleges System, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, Vermont Employee Ownership Center, and an institutional food and beverage provider.

(d) Report. On or before December 1, 2026, the Department shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with its findings and information gathered pursuant to subsection (b) of this section along with any recommendations concerning the development of postsecondary educational programs for culinary arts and hospitality. The report shall also list the stakeholders consulted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

\* \* \* Culinary Apprenticeship Pilot Program \* \* \*

Sec. 10b. HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY APPRENTICESHIP PILOT;  
REPORT

(a) Creation and purpose; coordination.

(1) The Department of Labor, through the Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program, shall establish and maintain a two-year hospitality and culinary apprenticeship pilot that develops and evaluates a new registered apprenticeship training program specific to accommodation and food services. The pilot shall be structured as a regional, multi-employer model, with the goal of the program being to strengthen workforce pathways and improve job quality in the hospitality and culinary services, which have been identified as priority sectors by the State Workforce Development Board.

(2) The Department shall coordinate its work on the pilot with the Department of Tourism and Marketing, Department of Economic Development, Office of Workforce Strategy and Development, and Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

(b) Pilot details.

(1) The Department shall:

(A) implement the pilot in a hospitality-based regional economy and include multiple employers, including at least one large employer, located within the same regional economy;

(B) incorporate an intermediary or coordinating entity;

(C) include structured work-based learning across more than one employer;

(D) align with education and training providers, including secondary and adult career technical education programs;

(E) be structured to rely on existing resources, including the physical assets of schools, technical centers, and restaurants;

(F) be built around not more than two apprenticeable occupations, as that term is defined in 21 V.S.A. § 1111(4); and

(G) establish specific numeric targets and track outcomes including completion, retention, and wage progression.

(2) The pilot shall be designed to achieve, at minimum:

(A) participation of multiple employers;

(B) enrollment of at least one apprentice cohort; and

(C) measurable completion outcomes.

(c) Funding. The Department shall implement the pilot using existing State and federal funds to the extent practicable and may seek additional grants or funding as such funds become available.

(d) Report. The Department shall, based on its work on the hospitality and culinary apprenticeship pilot set forth in this section, submit to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs:

(1) on or before December 15, 2026, an interim written report on the progress of the pilot program that includes the design, participation, and preliminary results of the pilot; and

(2) on or before December 15, 2028, a final written report on the pilot program, including outcomes, evaluation of effectiveness, and recommendations for future legislative action.

Sec. 11. [Deleted.]

Sec. 12. [Deleted.]

~~\*\*\* Rural Industry Development Grant Program \*\*\*~~

Sec. 12a. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. F.8 is amended to read:

~~Sec. F.8 RURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM~~

~~(a) Creation; purpose.~~

~~(1) A Rural Industry Development Grant Program is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide grant funding through local development corporations for business relocation and expansion efforts, including the purchase, demolition, and renovation of property for industrial use.~~

~~(2)(A) To the extent funding is appropriated, the Agency shall make grants through the Program to assist local development corporations with business relocation and expansion efforts throughout Vermont.~~

~~(B) The Agency shall ensure an accounting of the respective State and Grantee shares of investment in any property be maintained to refund to the State an appropriate share of any net proceeds resulting from future sale or transfer of such property acquired or improved through a grant awarded under this program.~~

~~(b) Grant considerations. In making grant awards, the Agency shall consider:~~

~~(1) the real estate needs of growing and relocating businesses, including nonprofit organizations, in the applicant's region;~~

~~(2) the ability of the proposed project to meet the site-specific needs of businesses considering whether to expand or locate in this State;~~

~~(3) the funding that the applicant has identified, or secured, to leverage a grant award; and~~

~~(4) the readiness of an applicant to move a project forward.~~

~~(c) Eligible applicants; priority.~~

~~(1) To be eligible for a grant, an applicant must be a local development corporation, as defined in subdivision 212(10) of this title, located within this State.~~

~~(2) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development may designate projects and agreements as first priority based on rural communities that continue to experience insufficient economic and grand list growth.~~

~~(d) Eligible activities. A grant recipient may use funding for the following:~~

~~(1) to purchase land for potential industrial use;~~

~~(2) for the costs of site development, permitting, or providing infrastructure for property the recipient owns;~~

~~(3) for the equity investment required for a loan transaction through the Vermont Economic Development Authority under 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, subchapter 3; or~~

~~(4) for the matching requirement of another State or federal grant consistent with this section.~~

~~(e) Application; market assessment.~~

~~(1) An applicant shall include in its application a local and regional market assessment that demonstrates reasonable need for the proposed development and identifies imminent, potential, or existing business growth opportunities.~~

~~(2) An applicant shall submit the following to demonstrate a readiness to begin and complete the proposed project:~~

~~(A) community and regional support for the project;~~

~~(B) that grant funding is needed to complete the proposed project;~~

~~(C) an ability to manage the project, with requisite experience and a plan for fiscal viability; and~~

~~(D) a description of the permitting required to proceed with the project and a plan for obtaining the permits.~~

~~(f) Awards; amount.~~

~~(1) An award shall not exceed the lesser of \$1,000,000 or 20 percent of the total project cost.~~

~~(2) A recipient may combine grant funds with funding from other sources.~~

~~(3) The Agency shall release grant funds upon determining that the applicant has met all application conditions and requirements.~~

~~(4) A grant recipient may apply for additional grant funds if future amounts are appropriated for the Program and the funds are for a separate but eligible use.~~

~~(g) Deed restrictions; property sales. The Agency shall include deed restrictions that require the return of the principal amount to the state and may require the payment of a percentage of the sales profit. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. 12b. 10 V.S.A. § 6 is added to read:

§ 6. RURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Creation; purpose.

(1) The Rural Industry Development Grant Program is created within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to provide grant funding through local development corporations for the purpose of business relocation and expansion activities set forth in subsection (d) of this section.

(2) To the extent funding is appropriated, the Agency shall make grants through the Program fund to assist local development corporations with business relocation and expansion efforts throughout Vermont.

(3) As used in this section, “federally impacted property” means real property that is:

(A) owned by the United States or by any federal agency or an instrumentality thereof; or

(B) under the custody or control of a federally appointed receiver, trustee, or conservator, and includes property subject to federal court jurisdiction.

(b) Grant considerations. In making grant awards, the Agency shall consider:

(1) the real estate needs of growing and relocating businesses, including nonprofit organizations, in the applicant’s region;

(2) the ability of the proposed project to meet the site-specific needs of businesses considering whether to expand or locate in this State;

(3) the funding that the applicant has identified, or secured, to leverage a grant award; and

(4) the readiness of an applicant to move a project forward.

(c) Eligible applicants; priority.

(1) To be eligible for a grant, an applicant must be a local development corporation, as defined in subdivision 212(10) of this title, located within this State.

(2) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development may designate projects and agreements as first priority based on rural communities that continue to experience insufficient economic and grand list growth.

(d) Eligible activities. A grant recipient shall use any funding provided through this section only for the following:

(1) to purchase real property for potential industrial, commercial, or, in the case of a federally impacted property, residential use;

(2) for the costs of site development, permitting, or providing infrastructure for property the recipient owns;

(3) for a project that supports future commercial or industrial development as outlined in a development agreement;

(4) for the equity investment required for a loan transaction through the Vermont Economic Development Authority under 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, subchapter 3;

(5) for the matching requirement of another State or federal grant consistent with this section; or

(6) for the purchasing, holding, and renovation of property for the repurposing or redevelopment of a federally impacted property.

(e) Application; market assessment.

(1) An applicant shall include in its application a local and regional market assessment that demonstrates reasonable need for the proposed development and identifies imminent, potential, or existing business growth opportunities.

(2) An applicant shall submit the following to demonstrate a readiness to begin and complete the proposed project:

(A) community and regional support for the project;

(B) that grant funding is needed to complete the proposed project;

(C) an ability to manage the project, with requisite experience and a plan for fiscal viability; and

(D) a description of the permitting required to proceed with the project and a plan for obtaining the permits.

(f) Awards; amount.

(1)(A) An award shall not exceed the lesser of \$1,000,000.00 or 50 percent of the total project cost, subject to the exception in subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1).

(B) An award may exceed \$1,000,000.00 but shall not exceed \$2,000,000.00 if the property is classified as a federally impacted property and the Secretary certifies that the project is located in:

(i) a designated downtown development district; and

(ii) a rural economic area partnership program (REAP Zone); or

(iii) a federally declared natural disaster area, provided the declaration was made not more than five years from the application date.

(2) A recipient may combine grant funds with funding from other sources.

(3) The Agency shall release grant funds upon determining that the applicant has met all application conditions and requirements.

(4) A grant recipient may apply for additional grant funds if future amounts are appropriated for the Program and the funds are for a separate but eligible use.

(g) Deed restrictions. Any deed restriction requiring a Rural Industry Development Grant Program award recipient to return to the State the principal amount of the grant or a percentage of the sales profit is void and shall not be enforced.

#### Sec. 12c. INTENT AND RETROACTIVITY

The intent of Secs. 12a and 12b of this act is to move the Rural Industry Development Grant Program from its original placement in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. F.8 to Title 10 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated. The move is intended to increase the visibility of the Program. Any person that was awarded a grant through the Program before the effective date of this act shall:

(1) not have its award rescinded solely due to the Program language being moved to Title 10;

(2) if the award has not been fully paid out, be eligible to have the applicant's invoices that are submitted on or after the effective date of this act to the Agency reimbursed at a rate of 50 percent; and

(3) not be eligible for an increased total award amount.

#### Sec. 13. [Deleted.]

\* \* \* Nickel Rounding \* \* \*

#### Sec. 13a. PURPOSE

The purpose of Sec. 13b of this act is to authorize the rounding of cash transactions to the nearest five cents where one-cent coins are unavailable or impractical, while ensuring legal clarity and consumer fairness.

Sec. 13b. 9 V.S.A. chapter 1 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 1. MONEY OF ACCOUNT

§ 1. DOLLAR, CENT, AND MILL

The money of account in the State shall be the dollar, cent, and mill; and accounts in public offices and proceedings in court shall be in conformity herewith; but this section shall not affect an account, charge, or entry originally made or a contract expressed in other money of account, but the same shall be reduced to dollars and parts of a dollar in an action thereon.

§ 2. NICKEL ROUNDING; AUTHORIZED

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Cash" means coins or paper currency of the United States offered in physical form.

(2) "Cash transaction" means a sale of goods or services where payment is made entirely or partially in cash.

(3) "Rounding" means adjusting the final total amount due, after taxes and fees, to the nearest five-cent increment.

(b) Rounding authorization.

(1) A person engaged in a cash transaction may round the final amount due to the nearest \$0.05 as follows:

(A) If the final digit of the amount due is \$0.01, \$0.02, \$0.06, or \$0.07, rounded down to the nearest amount divisible by five.

(B) If the final digit of the amount due is \$0.03, \$0.04, \$0.08, or \$0.09, rounded up to the nearest amount divisible by five.

(2) If a person rounds a cash transaction under this section, any cash refund of the amount paid shall be issued to the purchaser in the exact amount initially paid for the goods or service.

(c) Exclusions. This section shall not apply to:

(1) electronic and other noncash payments;

(2) payment of wages as that term is defined in 21 V.S.A. § 341;

(3) rebates or cash disbursements; and

(4) transactions governed by federal law that prohibits rounding.

(d) Application. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, rounding under this section shall not constitute an unlawful price increase, surcharge, unfair or deceptive act or practice in commerce, or discrimination.

(e) Notice requirements.

(1) On or before July 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Liquor and Lottery shall prepare and provide individuals and businesses with a model notice pursuant to this section that shall also include a reference to the Vermont Consumer Assistance Program.

(2) A person rounding transactions under this section shall post the model notice developed pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection in a clear and conspicuous manner at the point of sale or at the entrance to the business.

(3) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets may issue a penalty for the failure to provide the notice required under this subsection in accordance with 6 V.S.A. § 687.

(f) Taxes and fees. All taxes and fees shall be calculated and remitted based on the prerounding amount.

Sec. 14. [Deleted.]

\* \* \* C-PACE Program \* \* \*

Sec. 14a. 24 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 3 is added to read:

Subchapter 3. Commercial Property-Assessed Clean Energy

§ 3275. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY-ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY DISTRICTS; APPROVAL OF LEGISLATIVE BODY

(a) The legislative body of a town, city, or incorporated village may vote to designate the municipality as a commercial property-assessed clean energy district or C-PACE district. In a district, only those property owners who have entered into written agreements with the municipality under section 3276 of this title would be subject to a special assessment, as set forth in section 3255 of this title.

(b) Upon a vote of approval by a majority of the legislative body of the municipality voting at a duly warned meeting, the municipality shall allow for the imposition of a special assessment to secure private financing for property owners of commercial or industrial buildings within the boundaries of the municipality for renewable energy projects as defined in 30 V.S.A. § 8002(17), energy efficiency projects as defined by section 3267 of this title, water conservation projects, and resiliency improvement projects.

(c) As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Commercial or industrial building" means any building other than a residential dwelling with fewer than five units.

(2) “District” means a commercial property-assessed clean energy district which includes the entire municipality.

(3) “Resilience” means the ability of interconnected ecological, social, physical, and economic systems to anticipate, adapt, withstand, respond, and thrive in the face of current and future conditions and disasters.

(4) “Resiliency improvement” means improvements that increase the resilience of a property, including air quality and stormwater infrastructure improvements, snow and flood mitigation, energy storage and microgrids, alternative vehicle charging infrastructure, and fire and wind resistance.

(5) “Water conservation improvement” means measures, equipment, or devices that decrease the consumption of or demand for water, address safe drinking water, or eliminate lead from water used for drinking or cooking.

§ 3276. WRITTEN AGREEMENTS; CONSENT OF PROPERTY

OWNERS; ENERGY SAVINGS ANALYSIS; LENDER CONSENT

(a) Upon an affirmative vote made pursuant to section 3275 of this title and the performance of an analysis pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, an owner of a commercial or industrial building, within the boundaries of a district, may enter into a written agreement with the municipality that shall constitute the owner’s consent to be subject to a special assessment, as set forth in section 3255 of this title.

(b) Prior to entering into a written agreement, a property owner shall have an analysis performed that includes the following components:

(1) where energy or water usage improvements are proposed, an energy analysis by a licensed professional engineer or engineering firm stating that the proposed qualified improvements will result in either more efficient use or conservation of energy or water, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, or the addition of renewable sources of energy or water;

(2) where renewable energy is proposed, an engineering study showing that the improvements are feasible;

(3) where resiliency improvements are proposed, certification by a licensed professional engineer stating that the qualified improvements will result in improved resilience; or

(4) for new construction, certification by a licensed professional engineer or engineering firm stating that the proposed qualified improvements will enable the project to meet or exceed the energy efficiency or water efficiency or renewable energy or water usage requirements of the current building code and the Commercial Building Energy Standards established under 30 V.S.A. § 53.

(c) A written agreement shall provide that:

(1) The length of time allowed for the property owner to repay the assessment shall not exceed the life expectancy of the improvement. In instances where multiple improvements have been installed, the length of time shall not exceed the average lifetime of all improvements, weighted by cost.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law:

(A) A lien under this section:

(i) is a first and prior lien on the property, subordinate only to a lien for property taxes, from the date on which the notice of special assessment is recorded until the assessment, interest, or penalty is paid; and

(ii) runs with the land, and that portion of the assessment under the assessment contract that is not yet due shall not be accelerated or extinguished by foreclosure of a property tax lien or any other foreclosure.

(B) In the event of a foreclosure action, all payments on an assessment under this subchapter that are due and unpaid as of the date the action is filed, and all payments on the assessment that become due after that date and that accrue up to and including the date title to the property is transferred to the mortgage holder, the lienholder, or a third party in the foreclosure action shall be paid in order for title to transfer.

(3) A capital provider shall disclose to participating property owners each of the following:

(A) the risks associated with participating in the program, including risks related to the failure of participating property owners to make payments and the risk of foreclosure; and

(B) the provisions of subsection (h) of this section that pertain to prepayment of the assessment.

(d) The notice of an agreement shall include at least each of the following:

(1) the name of the property owner as grantor;

(2) the name of the municipality as grantee;

(3) the date of the agreement;

(4) a legal description of the real property against which the assessment is made pursuant to the agreement;

(5) the amount of the assessment and the period during which the assessment will be made on the property;

(6) a statement that the assessment will remain a lien on the property until paid in full or released; and

(7) the location at which the original agreement may be examined.

(e) Prior to entering into the written assessment contract, the property owner shall obtain and furnish to the municipality a written statement, executed by each holder of a mortgage or deed of trust on the property securing indebtedness, in their sole and absolute discretion, that consents to the assessment and indicates that the assessment does not constitute an event of default under the mortgage or deed of trust.

(f) The combined amount of the assessment plus any outstanding mortgage obligations for the property shall not exceed 90 percent of the appraised real property value of that property, as stabilized or as complete.

(g) With respect to an agreement under this section:

(1) the assessments to be repaid under the agreement, when calculated as if they were the repayment of a loan, shall not violate 9 V.S.A. §§ 41a, 43, 44, and 46–50; and

(2) the maximum length of time for the owner to repay the assessment shall not exceed 30 years.

(h) For projects under subchapter 2 of this chapter, there shall be no penalty or premium for prepayment of the outstanding balance of an assessment under this subchapter if the balance is prepaid in full. Projects under this subchapter 3 are not subject to these provisions, but shall be subject to the private agreement for the financing of improvements.

(i) Property may be eligible for financing if otherwise qualified improvements were completed and operational not more than 36 months prior to submission of the application to the Program. Waivers to the 36-month requirement may be granted in the sole discretion of the program administrator.

(j) This section shall not be construed to affect a taxpayer's liability, or municipality's responsibility for payment, under 32 V.S.A. § 5402.

#### § 3277. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

(a) An entity that administers the commercial property-assessed clean energy program or C-PACE Program under this subchapter shall be referred to as a program administrator. A municipality, a public agency, or a private entity may serve as a program administrator.

(b) A municipality that has adopted a C-PACE district may:

(1) enter into a contract with an entity to serve as the program administrator and to administer the functions of the C-PACE Program for the municipality; or

(2) serve as the program administrator itself, to administer the functions of a C-PACE Program, including entering into C-PACE agreements with commercial property owners in its jurisdiction and collecting C-PACE assessments.

(c) An entity may:

(1) enter into a contract with a C-PACE municipality where the entity shall serve as the program administrator in the municipality; and

(2) collect fees necessary to administer the C-PACE Program.

(d) Other than the fulfillment of its obligations specified in a C-PACE agreement, neither the program administrator nor a municipality has any liability to a commercial property owner for or related to energy savings or resiliency improvements financed under a C-PACE Program.

Sec. 14b. 24 V.S.A. § 3263 is amended to read:

#### § 3263. COSTS OF OPERATION OF DISTRICT

The owners of real property who have entered into written agreements with the municipality under section 3262 of this title shall be obligated to cover the costs of operating the district. A municipality may use other available funds to operate the district. A municipality may charge fees to cover the operation of the C-PACE Program under subchapter 3 of this chapter.

Sec. 14c. 24 V.S.A. § 3264 is amended to read:

#### § 3264. RIGHTS OF PROPERTY OWNERS

A property owner who has entered into a written agreement with the municipality under section 3262 or section 3276 of this title may enter into a private agreement for the installation or construction of a project relating to renewable energy, as defined in 30 V.S.A. § 8002(17), relating to resiliency improvements as defined in section 3275 of this title, or relating to energy efficiency as defined in section 3267 of this title.

Sec. 14d. 24 V.S.A. § 3265 is amended to read:

#### § 3265. LIABILITY OF MUNICIPALITY

(a) A municipality that incurs indebtedness for or otherwise finances projects under this subchapter shall not be liable for the failure of performance of a project.

(b) A municipality that incurs indebtedness for bonding under this subchapter shall pledge the full faith and credit of the municipality.

(c) A municipality that enters into a written agreement with a property owner under subchapter 3 of this chapter shall not incur any indebtedness or otherwise finance projects under this chapter, nor shall be liable for the failure of the performance of a project, nor shall pledge the full faith and credit of the municipality.

Sec. 14e. 24 V.S.A. § 3268 is amended to read:

§ 3268. RELEASE OF LIEN

(a) A municipality shall release a participating property owner of the lien on the property against which the assessment under this subchapter or subchapter 3 of this chapter is made upon full payment of the value of the assessment.

(b) Notice of a release of a lien for an assessment under this subchapter or subchapter 3 of this chapter shall be filed with the clerk of the applicable municipality for recording in the land records of that municipality.

Sec. 14f. 24 V.S.A. § 3255 is amended to read:

§ 3255. COLLECTION OF ASSESSMENTS; LIENS

(a) Special assessments under this chapter shall constitute a lien on the property against which the assessment is made in the same manner and to the same extent as taxes assessed on the grand list of a municipality, and all procedures and remedies for the collection of taxes shall apply to special assessments.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a lien for an assessment under subchapter 2 of this chapter shall be subordinate to all liens on the property in existence at the time the lien for the assessment is filed ~~on~~ in the land records, shall be subordinate to a first mortgage on the property recorded after such filing, and shall be superior to any other lien on the property recorded after such filing. In no way shall this subsection affect the status or priority of any municipal lien other than a lien for an assessment under subchapter 2 of this chapter. A lien for an assessment under subchapter 3 of this chapter shall be exempt from the provisions of this section and, upon receipt of consent from lenders, pursuant to subsection 3276(e) of this title, shall not be subordinate to all liens on the property in existence at the time the lien for the assessment is filed in the land records.

Sec. 14g. 9 V.S.A. § 46 is amended to read:

§ 46. EXCEPTIONS

Section 43 of this title, relating to deposit requirements, and section 45 of this title, relating to prepayment penalties, shall not apply and the parties may contract for a rate of interest in excess of the rate provided in section 41a of this title in the case of:

(1) obligations of corporations, including municipal and nonprofit corporations; ~~or~~

(2) obligations incurred by any person, partnership, association, or other entity to finance in whole or in part income-producing business or activity, but not including obligations incurred to finance family dwellings of four units or fewer when used as a residence by the borrower or to finance real estate that is devoted to agricultural purposes as part of an operating farming unit when used as a residence by the borrower; ~~or~~

(3) obligations to finance the purchase, construction, or improvement of property for seasonal or part-time occupancy and not as a place of legal residence; ~~or~~

(4) obligations guaranteed or insured by the United States of America or any agency thereof; or

(5) obligations incurred for commercial property-assessed clean energy projects pursuant to 24 V.S.A. chapter 87, subchapter 3.

\* \* \* Effective Date \* \* \*

Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, was decided in the affirmative.

**Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered**

**H. 583.**

Senator Lyons, for the Committee on Health and Welfare, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to clinical decision making.

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

First: In Sec. 1, 18 V.S.A. chapter 233, in section 9773, in subsection (a), following “On or before”, by striking out “July 1, 2026” and inserting in lieu thereof “March 1, 2027”

Second: In Sec. 1, 18 V.S.A. chapter 233, in section 9773, in subsection (c), following “After”, by striking out “July 1, 2026” and inserting in lieu thereof “March 1, 2027”

Third: In Sec. 1, 18 V.S.A. chapter 233, in section 9773, by inserting a subsection (d) to read:

(d) The Green Mountain Care Board shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders to develop the processes for reporting data pursuant to this section and the Agency of Human Services shall provide relevant, necessary data to the Board.

and by relettering the remaining subsections accordingly

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

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

**Consideration Resumed; Proposal of Amendment; Bill Passed in  
Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment**

**H. 660.**

Consideration was resumed on House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2027 Opioid Abatement Special Fund appropriations.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the Senate proposal of amendment be amended as recommended by Senator Ingalls?, was decided in the negative, on a roll call, Yeas 12, Nays 18.

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

**Roll Call**

**Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were:** Beck, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Collamore, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

**Those Senators who voted in the negative were:** Baruth, Benson, Bongartz, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Morley, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, White.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment.

**House Proposal of Amendment Not Concurred In; Committee of  
Conference Requested; Committee of Conference Appointed**

**S. 223.**

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to water quality of the waters of Vermont.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill 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;

(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.

(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. [Deleted.]

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.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, on motion of Senator Watson, the Senate refused to concur in the House proposal of amendment and requested a Committee of Conference.

Thereupon, pursuant to the request of the Senate, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Watson  
Senator Bongartz  
Senator Williams

as members of the Committee of Conference on the part of the Senate to consider the disagreeing votes of the two Houses.

**Third Reading Ordered****H. 956.**

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

An act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington relating to the Office of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

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

**Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered****H. 293.**

Senator Benson, for the Committee on Health and Welfare, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to health equity data reporting and registry disclosure requirements.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

\* \* \* Community Violence Prevention Program Report \* \* \*

Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. § 13 is amended to read:

§ 13. COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

\* \* \*

~~(d)(1) The Commissioner of Health, in consultation and collaboration with the Chief Prevention Officer, the Department of Public Safety, the Director of Violence Prevention, the Executive Director of Racial Equity, and the Council for Equitable Youth Justice, shall report on the Community Violence Prevention Program:~~

~~(A) on or before September 1, 2023 and December 1, 2023 to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee; and~~

~~(B) on or before January 15, 2024, and annually on that date thereafter, to the Senate and House Committees on Judiciary, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House Committee on Human Services, and the House Committee on Health Care.~~

~~(2) The report required by this subsection shall include:~~

~~(A) a complete description of the Community Violence Prevention Program grant application and award process;~~

~~(B) guidelines for the award of grants developed under subdivision (b)(2) of this section;~~

~~(C) the number of applications submitted and grants awarded, and the amount of each grant awarded;~~

~~(D) detailed descriptions of the programs and purposes for which all grants were awarded;~~

~~(E) the impacts and outcomes of funded projects; and~~

~~(F) descriptions of any grants applied for or awarded. [Repealed.]~~

\* \* \* Cancer Registry Disclosure Requirements \* \* \*

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 155 is amended to read:

§ 155. DISCLOSURE

\* \* \*

(b) The Commissioner may furnish confidential information to the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, other states' cancer registries, federal cancer control agencies, or health researchers in order to collaborate in a national cancer registry or to collaborate in cancer control and prevention research studies. However, before releasing confidential information, the Commissioner shall first obtain from such state registries, agencies, or researchers an agreement in writing to keep written assurances acceptable to the Commissioner that the identifying information shall be kept confidential and privileged as required by law. In the case of researchers, the Commissioner shall also first obtain written evidence of the approval of their academic committee for the protection of human subjects established in accordance with 45 C.F.R. part 46 an institutional review board or privacy board in accordance with 45 C.F.R. § 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (B).

\* \* \* Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Registry Disclosure Requirements and Reporting \* \* \*

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 174 is amended to read:

§ 174. CONFIDENTIALITY

(a)(1) All identifying information regarding an individual patient or health care provider is exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and shall be kept confidential.

(2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Commissioner may enter into data sharing and protection agreements with researchers or state, regional, or national amyotrophic lateral sclerosis registries for bidirectional data exchange, provided access under such agreements is consistent with the privacy, security, and disclosure protections in this chapter. In the case of researchers, the Commissioner shall also first obtain written evidence of the approval of ~~their academic committee for the protection of human subjects established in accordance with 45 C.F.R. Part 46~~ an institutional review board or privacy board in accordance with 45 C.F.R. § 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (B). The Commissioner shall disclose the minimum information necessary to accomplish a specified research purpose.

\* \* \*

Sec. 4. 18 V.S.A. § 175 is amended to read:

§ 175. ANNUAL REPORT

Annually, on or before ~~January 15~~ November 1, the Department shall submit a written report to the Governor, the House Committee on Human Services, and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare containing the statewide prevalence and incidence estimates of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, including any trends occurring over time across the State. Reports shall not contain information that directly or indirectly identifies an individual patient or health care provider.

\* \* \* Health Equity Data Reporting \* \* \*

Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 252 is amended to read:

§ 252. HEALTH EQUITY ADVISORY COMMISSION

\* \* \*

(e) Report. ~~Annually, on~~ On or before January 15 of odd-numbered years, the Advisory Commission shall submit a written report to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action. The Advisory Commission is encouraged to base recommendations on the data collected and analysis completed pursuant to section 253 of this title.

\* \* \*

Sec. 6. 18 V.S.A. § 253 is amended to read:

§ 253. DATA RESPONSIVE TO HEALTH EQUITY INQUIRIES

\* \* \*

(b)(1) The Department of Health shall systematically analyze such health equity data using the smallest appropriate units of analysis feasible to detect racial and ethnic disparities, as well as disparities along the lines of primary language, sex, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status, and report the results of such analysis on the Department's website periodically, but not less than biannually. The Department's analysis shall be used to measure over time the impact of actions taken to reduce health disparities in Vermont. The data informing the Department's analysis shall be made available to the public in accordance with State and federal law.

(2) ~~Annually~~ Every three years beginning in 2029, on or before January 15, the Department shall submit a report containing the results of the analysis conducted pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services.

\* \* \* Emergency Service Provider Wellness Commission Report \* \* \*

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. § 7257b(h) is amended to read:

~~(h) Notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), the Commission shall report its conclusions and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly as the Commission deems necessary but not less frequently than once per calendar year. The report shall disclose individually identifiable health information only to the extent necessary to convey the Commission's conclusions and recommendations, and any such disclosures shall be limited to information already known to the public. The report shall be available to the public through the Department of Health. [Repealed.]~~

\* \* \* Service Members and Veterans; Food Service Licensing \* \* \*

Sec. 8. 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 119, Sec. 8 is amended to read:

Sec. 8. REPORTING; UTILIZATION BY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

\* \* \*

~~(d) The Commissioner of Health shall, on or before February 1 of each year, report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development, on General, Housing, and Military Affairs, and on Government Operations and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Government Operations regarding the number of service members and veterans who, during the previous calendar year, were deemed to have knowledge of the prevention of food-borne disease, be able to apply the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point principles, and have met the~~

~~criteria for “demonstration of knowledge” requirements set forth by the Department of Health in rule for the purposes of obtaining a food establishment license as provided pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 4303(b) and the total number of food establishment licenses issued to those service members and veterans. [Repealed.]~~

\* \* \* Recovery Service Organizations \* \* \*

#### Sec. 9. REPORT; RECOVERY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

On or before February 15, 2027, the Department of Health, in consultation with other Agency of Human Services’ departments and recovery service organizations, shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Appropriations, on Health Care, and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare containing information on the total actual income and expenditures for recovery service organizations in fiscal years 2024–2026. Specifically, the report shall address:

- (1) public funding sources, including all appropriated State funds, federal funds, and municipal funds;
- (2) recipients of recovery service organization funding;
- (3) an analysis of recovery service organization grant performance measures and outcomes; and
- (4) any recommendations for enhancing the financial stability of recovery service organizations.

\* \* \* Repeals \* \* \*

#### Sec. 10. REPEALS

(a) 18 V.S.A. § 5208 (Department of Health; report on statistics) is repealed.

(b) 18 V.S.A. § 1756 (lead screening; annual report) is repealed.

\* \* \* Effective Date \* \* \*

#### Sec. 11. 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 miscellaneous amendments to the Department of Health’s reporting and programming requirements”

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

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.

### **Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered**

#### **H. 642.**

Senator Mattos, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to youthful offender proceedings.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 5285 is amended to read:

#### § 5285. MODIFICATION OR REVOCATION OF DISPOSITION

(a)(1) If it appears that the youth has violated the terms of juvenile probation ordered by the court pursuant to subdivision 5284(c)(1) of this title, a motion for modification or revocation of youthful offender status may be filed in the Family Division of the Superior Court. The court shall set the motion for hearing as soon as practicable. The hearing may be joined with a hearing on a violation of conditions of probation under section 5265 of this title. A supervising juvenile or adult probation officer may detain in an adult facility a youthful offender who has attained 18 years of age for violating conditions of probation.

(2) Notwithstanding subdivision 5103(c)(2)(D) of this title, when a motion for revocation of youthful offender status is pending pursuant to this section, the Family Division's jurisdiction over the youth shall remain in effect until the youth is discharged or until probation is revoked. The Family Division may extend its jurisdiction over the youth beyond the youth's 22nd birthday to the extent necessary to maintain jurisdiction under this subdivision.

(b) A hearing under this section shall be held in accordance with section 5268 of this title.

(c)(1) If the court finds after the hearing that the youth has violated the terms of ~~his or her~~ the youth's probation, the court may:

~~(1)(A)~~ (A) maintain the youth's status as a youthful offender, with modified conditions of juvenile probation if the court deems it appropriate;

~~(2)(B)~~ revoke the youth's status as a youthful offender and transfer the case with a record of the petition, affidavit, adjudication, disposition, and revocation to the Criminal Division for sentencing; or

~~(3)(C)~~ transfer supervision of the youth to the Department of Corrections with all of the powers and authority of the Department and the Commissioner under Title 28, including graduated sanctions and electronic monitoring.

(2) For purposes of making its determination under subdivision (1) of this subsection, the court shall consider whether:

(A) under the criteria of subdivision 5284(a)(2) of this title, public safety will be protected by continuing to treat the youth as a youthful offender;

(B) the youth continues to be amenable to treatment or rehabilitation as a youthful offender; and

(C) there continue to be sufficient services in the juvenile court system, the Department for Children and Families, and the Department of Corrections to meet the youth's treatment and rehabilitation needs.

(d) If the youth fails to appear at a probation revocation hearing under this section, the court may, unless it finds there was good cause for the failure to appear, issue an order pursuant to subsection 5108(c) of this title for an officer to pick up the youth and bring the youth to court.

(e) If a youth's status as a youthful offender is revoked and the case is transferred to the Criminal Division pursuant to subdivision ~~(e)(2)(c)(1)(B)~~ of this section, the court shall enter a conviction of guilty based on the admission to or finding of merits, hold a sentencing hearing, and impose sentence. Unless it serves the ~~interest~~ interests of justice, the case shall not be transferred back to the Family Division pursuant to section 5203 of this title. When determining an appropriate sentence, the court may take into consideration the youth's degree of progress toward or regression from rehabilitation while on youthful offender status. The Criminal Division shall have access to all Family Division records of the proceeding.

Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 5288 is amended to read:

§ 5288. RIGHTS OF VICTIMS IN YOUTHFUL OFFENDER  
PROCEEDINGS

(a) The victim in a proceeding involving a youthful offender shall have the following rights:

(1) To be notified by the prosecutor in a timely manner:

(A) when a court proceeding is scheduled to take place and when a court proceeding ~~to~~ of which the victim has been notified will not take place as scheduled; and

(B) of any conditions of release or conditions of probation and of any restitution unless otherwise limited by court order.

(2) To be present during all court proceedings subject to the provisions of Rule 615 of the Vermont Rules of Evidence; to attend the hearing on the motion to consider youthful offender status and the disposition hearing to present a victim impact statement and to express reasonably the victim's views concerning the offense and the youth, including testimony in support of the victim's claim for restitution; and to submit oral or written statements to the court at such other times as the court may allow. The court shall consider the victim's statement when ordering disposition.

(3) To be notified by the agency having custody of the youth before the youth is released into the community from a secure or staff-secured residential facility.

(4) To be notified by the prosecutor as to the final disposition of the case.

(5) To be notified by the prosecutor of the victim's rights under this section.

(b) In accordance with court rules, at a hearing on a motion for youthful offender treatment, the court shall ask if the victim is present and, if so, whether the victim would like to be heard regarding disposition. In ordering disposition, the court shall consider any views offered at the hearing by the victim. If the victim is not present, the court shall ask whether the victim has expressed, either orally or in writing, views regarding disposition and shall take those views into consideration in ordering disposition.

(c) No youthful offender proceeding shall be delayed or voided by reason of the failure to give the victim the required notice or the failure of the victim to appear.

(d) As used in this section, "victim" ~~shall have~~ has the same meaning as in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(4).

(e) This section shall not prohibit a victim from discussing underlying facts of the alleged offense that resulted in death or physical, emotional, or financial injury to the victim, provided that, unless otherwise provided by law or court order, a victim shall not disclose what occurs during a court proceeding or information learned through a court proceeding that is not an underlying fact of the alleged offense that resulted in death or physical, emotional, or financial injury to the victim.

## Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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

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.

**House Proposal of Amendment Not Concurred In; Committee of  
Conference Requested; Committee of Conference Appointed**

**S. 325.**

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to regional planning and Act 250 Tier jurisdiction.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

\* \* \* Act 181 Repeals \* \* \*

Sec. 1. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 19 (road jurisdiction) is amended to read:

Sec. 19. [Deleted.]

Sec. 2. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 21 (Tiers 2 and 3) is amended to read:

Sec. 21. [Deleted.]

Sec. 3. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 114 is amended to read:

Sec. 114. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

(1) Secs. 12 (10 V.S.A. § 6001), and 13 (10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(8)), ~~and 21 (10 V.S.A. § 6001)~~ shall take effect on ~~December 31, 2026~~ January 1, 2028;

(2) ~~Sec. 19 (10 V.S.A. § 6001(3)(A)(xii)) shall take effect on July 1, 2026;~~ [Deleted.]

\* \* \*

## Sec. 4. REPEAL

2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 22 (Tier 3 rulemaking) is repealed.

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Sec. 5. REPEAL

2024 Acts and Resolves No, 181, Sec. 34 (Tier 2 area report) is repealed.

\* \* \* Act 250 \* \* \*

Sec. 6. 10 V.S.A. § 6081 is amended to read:

§ 6081. PERMITS REQUIRED; EXEMPTIONS

\* \* \*

(t) No permit or permit amendment is required for the construction of improvements for an accessory on-farm business for the storage or sale of qualifying products or the other eligible enumerated products as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 4412(11)(A)(i)(I). No permit or permit amendment is required for the construction of improvements for an accessory on-farm business for the preparation or processing of qualifying products as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 4412(11)(A)(i)(I), provided that more than 50 percent of the total annual sales of the prepared or processed qualifying products come from products produced on the farm where the business is located. ~~This subsection shall not apply to~~ No permit or permit amendment is required for the construction of improvements related to hosting events or farm stays as part of for an accessory on-farm business for educational, recreational, or social events that feature agricultural practices or qualifying products, or both, as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 4412(11)(A)(i)(II).

\* \* \*

(z)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, no permit or permit amendment is required for any subdivision, development, or change to an existing project that is located entirely within a Tier 1A area ~~under~~ as established in section 6034 of this chapter.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, no permit or permit amendment is required within a Tier 1B area approved by the Board under section 6033 of this chapter for 50 units or fewer of housing on a tract or tracts of land involving 10 acres or less or for mixed-use development with 50 units or fewer of housing on a tract or tracts of land involving 10 acres or less.

(3) Upon receiving notice and a copy of the permit issued by an appropriate municipal panel pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4460(g), a previously issued permit for a development or subdivision located in a Tier 1A area shall remain attached to the property. However, neither the Board nor the Agency of Natural Resources shall enforce the permit or assert amendment jurisdiction on the tract or tracts of land unless the designation is revoked or the municipality has not taken any reasonable action to enforce the conditions of the permit.

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\* \* \*

(dd) Interim housing exemptions.

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, until January 1, ~~2027~~ 2028, no permit or permit amendment is required for the construction of housing projects such as cooperatives, condominiums, dwellings, or mobile homes, with 75 units or fewer, constructed or maintained on a tract or tracts of land, located entirely within the areas of a designated new town center, a designated growth center, or a designated neighborhood development area served by public sewer or water services or soils that are adequate for wastewater disposal. Housing units constructed pursuant to this subdivision shall not count towards the total units constructed in other areas. This exemption shall not apply to areas within mapped river corridors and floodplains except those areas containing preexisting development in areas suitable for infill development as defined in 29-201 of the Vermont Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule.

(2)(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, until ~~July~~ January 1, ~~2027~~ 2028, no permit or permit amendment is required for the construction of housing projects such as cooperatives, condominiums, dwellings, or mobile homes, with 50 or fewer units, ~~constructed or maintained on a tract or tracts of land of.~~ To qualify, the housing project, including any land incidental to the use of the housing project such as lawns, parking lots, driveways, leach fields, and accessory buildings, shall be on 10 contiguous acres or less, located entirely within:

(i) areas of a designated village center and within one-quarter mile of its boundary with permanent zoning and subdivision bylaws and served by public sewer or water services or soils that are adequate for wastewater disposal; or

(ii) areas of a municipality that are within a census-designated urbanized area with over 50,000 residents and within one-quarter mile of a transit route.

\* \* \*

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, until January 1, ~~2027~~ 2028, no permit or permit amendment is required for the construction of housing projects such as cooperatives, condominiums, dwellings, or mobile homes, constructed or maintained on a tract or tracts of land, located entirely within a designated downtown development district with permanent zoning and subdivision bylaws served by public sewer or water services or soils that are adequate for wastewater disposal. Housing units constructed pursuant to this subdivision shall not count towards the total units

constructed in other areas. This exemption shall not apply to areas within mapped river corridors and floodplains except those areas containing preexisting development in areas suitable for infill development as defined in 29-201 of the Vermont Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule.

Sec. 7. 24 V.S.A. § 4460 is amended to read:

§ 4460. APPROPRIATE MUNICIPAL PANELS

\* \* \*

(g)(1) This subsection shall apply to a subdivision or development that:

(A) was previously permitted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 151;

(B) is located in a Tier 1A area pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 6034; and

(C) has applied for a permit or permit amendment required by zoning regulations or bylaws adopted pursuant to this subchapter.

(2) The appropriate municipal panel reviewing a municipal permit or permit amendment pursuant to this subsection shall include conditions contained within a permit previously issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 151, so that the conditions may be enforced as part of the municipal permit, unless the panel determines that the permit condition pertains to any of the following:

(A) the construction phase of the project that has already been constructed;

(B) compliance with another State permit that has independent jurisdiction;

(C) federal or State law that is no longer in effect or applicable;

(D) an issue that is addressed by municipal regulation and the project will meet the municipal standards; or

(E) a physical or use condition that is no longer in effect or applicable or that will no longer be in effect or applicable once the new project is approved.

(3) After issuing or amending a permit containing conditions pursuant to this subsection, the appropriate municipal panel shall provide notice and a copy of the permit to the Land Use Review Board.

(4) The appropriate municipal panel shall comply with the notice and hearing requirements provided in subdivision 4464(a)(1) of this title. In addition, notice shall be provided to those persons requiring notice under 10 V.S.A. § 6084(b) and shall explicitly reference the existing Act 250 permit.

(5) The appropriate municipal panel's decision shall be issued in accordance with subsection 4464(b) of this title and shall include specific findings with respect to its determinations pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(6) Any final action by the appropriate municipal panel affecting a condition of a permit previously issued pursuant to 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 shall be recorded in the municipal land records.

~~(h) Within a Tier 1A area, the appropriate municipal panel shall enforce any existing permits issued under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 that has not had its permit conditions transferred to a municipal permit pursuant to subsection (g) of this section.~~

Sec. 8. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 14 is amended to read:

Sec. 14. CRITERION 8(C) RULEMAKING

\* \* \*

(c) The Board shall file a final proposed rule with the Secretary of State and Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules on or before June 15, ~~2026~~ 2027.

\* \* \*

Sec. 9. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

(a) On or before January 15, 2027, the State Natural Resources Conservation Council shall contract with the Vermont Council on Rural Development and the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts to develop a report outlining recommendations for a public engagement plan, in consultation with the Land Use Review Board and the Land Access and Opportunity Board. The contractors shall:

(1) ensure the engagement planning process would maintain neutrality on policy and political issues;

(2) utilize neutral facilitation for statewide, democratic public engagement;

(3) ensure alignment with the core principles for community engagement plans developed pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 6006; and

(4) design the plan to inclusively and meaningfully engage a full range of stakeholders, including Vermont residents and landowners and historically marginalized communities.

(b) The purpose of the public engagement plan would be to gather statewide input from Vermonters to inform the General Assembly on:

(1) the risks of losing working lands, both agricultural and forestland, and critical natural resources not already well protected by current land use policy, permitting programs, or other regulatory tools, including agricultural soils, rare natural communities, forest blocks, habitat connectors of statewide significance, and headwaters; and

(2) equitable, efficient, and effective regulatory or nonregulatory tools to protect these working lands and critical natural resources.

(c) On or before January 15, 2027, the Council shall submit the report with the recommended public engagement plan to the House Committee on Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

(d) In fiscal year 2027, \$30,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the State Natural Resources Conservation Council for the public engagement plan design described in this section.

Sec. 10. 2 V.S.A. chapter 32 is added to read:

CHAPTER 32. JOINT LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL OVERSIGHT  
COMMITTEE

§ 1031. CREATION OF COMMITTEE

(a) Creation. There is created the Joint Legislative Environmental Oversight Committee whose membership shall be appointed each biennial session of the General Assembly. The Committee shall exercise oversight over the Land Use Review Board and Agency of Natural Resources permitting processes.

(b) Composition. The Committee shall be composed of five members: three members of the House of Representatives, who shall not all be from the same party, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and two members of the Senate, who shall not all be from the same party, appointed by the Committee on Committees.

(c) Procedure. The Committee shall elect a chair and vice chair from among its members and shall adopt rules of procedure. The Chair shall rotate biennially between the House and the Senate members. The Committee shall keep minutes of its meetings. A quorum shall consist of three members.

(d) Meetings. When the General Assembly is in session, the Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair. The Committee may meet six times per year during adjournment and may meet more often subject to approval of the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

(e) Compensation. For attendance at a meeting when the General Assembly is not in session, members of the Committee shall be entitled to compensation for services and reimbursement of expenses as provided under subsection 23(a) of this title.

(f) Assistance. The administrative and legal services of the Joint Fiscal Office and the Office of Legislative Counsel shall be available to the Committee.

(g) Duties. The Committee shall meet with the Land Use Review Board to ensure strong communication and coordination regarding the implementation of the statutes amended as part of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, how the permitting process under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 is working, and how the new Board structure is working. The Committee shall also meet with the Agency of Natural Resources to learn about Agency efforts to improve and better coordinate its permitting processes and to coordinate efforts for further improvements to the process for applicants and outcomes for Vermonters.

(h) Sunset. The Committee shall cease to exist on July 1, 2029.

#### Sec. 11. LAND USE REVIEW BOARD REPORTS

(a) The Land Use Review Board shall deliver reports that collect the data and analyze:

(1) whether and how Act 250 jurisdiction over commercial activities on farms should be revised, including accessory on-farm businesses on or before November 15, 2026;

(2) the effects of Act 250 mitigation actions on primary agricultural soils on or before July 1, 2027; and

(3) the effects of jurisdictional triggers and criterion 9(L) on the development of retail and service businesses outside village centers in addressing sprawl and strip development, and how to improve the effectiveness of criterion 9(L) on or before November 15, 2027.

(b) The Board shall engage relevant stakeholders as part of the development of this report.

(c) The report shall be submitted 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.

\* \* \* Regional Planning \* \* \*

Sec. 12. 24 V.S.A. § 4348 is amended to read:

§ 4348. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF REGIONAL PLAN

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\* \* \*

(b) ~~60~~ Sixty days prior to holding the first public hearing on a regional plan adoption, a regional planning commission shall submit a draft regional plan to the Land Use Review Board for review and comments related to conformance of the draft with sections 4302 and 4348a of this title and chapter 139 of this title and, if it is seeking an optional determination of energy compliance, to the Department of Public Service for review and comments related to conformance of the draft plan with section 4352 of this title. The Board shall coordinate with other State agencies and the Community Investment Board and respond within 60 days unless more time is granted by the regional planning commission.

(c) The regional planning commission shall hold two or more public hearings within the region after public notice on any proposed plan ~~or amendment~~. The minimum number of required public hearings may be specified within the bylaws of the regional planning commission.

(d)(1) At least 30 days prior to the first hearing, a copy of the proposed plan ~~or amendment~~, a report documenting conformance with the goals established in section 4302 of this chapter and the plan elements established in section 4348a of this chapter, and a description of any changes to the Regional Future Land Use Map with a request for general comments and for specific comments with respect to the extent to which the plan ~~or amendment~~ is consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title, shall be delivered physically or electronically with proof of receipt or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following:

\* \* \*

(2) At least 30 days prior to the first hearing, the regional planning commission shall provide each of its member municipalities with a written description of map changes within the municipality, a municipality-wide map showing old versus new areas with labels, and information about the new Tier structure under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151, including how to obtain Tier 1A or 1B status, and the process for updating designated area boundaries. The regional planning commission shall, if it is seeking an optional determination of energy compliance, solicit feedback on its enhanced energy plan, including consistency with section 4352 of this chapter and the enhanced energy planning standards.

(e) Any of the foregoing bodies, or their representatives, may submit comments on the proposed regional plan ~~or amendment~~ to the regional planning commission, and may appear and be heard in any proceeding with respect to the adoption of the proposed plan ~~or amendment~~.

(f) The regional planning commission may make revisions to the proposed plan ~~or amendment~~ at any time not less than 30 days prior to the final public hearing held under this section. If the proposal is changed, a copy of the proposed change shall be delivered physically; electronically with proof of receipt; or by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the chair of the legislative body of each municipality within the region and to any individual or organization requesting a copy at least 30 days prior to the final hearing.

\* \* \*

(h)(1) Within 15 days following adoption, a regional planning commission shall submit its regionally adopted regional plan to the Land Use Review Board for a determination of regional plan compliance with a report documenting conformance with the goals established in section 4302 of this chapter and the plan elements established in section 4348a of this chapter and a description of any changes to the regional plan future land use map. The regional planning commission shall also at this time, if it is seeking an optional determination of energy compliance pursuant to section 4352 of this chapter, submit the plan to the Department of Public Service for review with a description of conformance with the enhanced energy planning standards and with a summary of any comments received during the public hearings.

\* \* \*

(j) Minor amendments to regional plan future land use map. A regional planning commission may submit a request for a minor amendment to boundaries of a future land use area for consideration by the Land Use Review Board with a letter of support from the municipality. The request may only be submitted after an affirmative vote of the municipal legislative body and the regional planning commission board. The Land Use Review Board, after consultation with the Community Investment Board and the regional planning commissions, shall provide guidance about what constitutes a minor amendment. Minor amendments may include any change to a future land use area consisting of fewer than 10 acres. A minor amendment to a future land use area shall not require an amendment to a regional plan and shall be included in the next iteration of the regional plan. The Land Use Review Board may adopt rules to implement this section.

\* \* \*

(n) Regional plan amendments, nonminor future land use map amendments, and Tier 1B area status requests. Regional plans may be reviewed from time to time and may be amended in the light of new developments and changed conditions affecting the region. Nonminor future land use map amendments shall be processed as part of a regional plan amendment. Tier 1B area status requests may be made separate from the regional plan approval or amendment process.

(1) Process.

(A) To amend a regional plan, which may include a nonminor future land use map amendment, a regional planning commission shall hold one public hearing. At least 15 days in advance of the hearing, the regional planning commission shall provide notice of the public hearing to the parties listed in subdivision (d)(1) of this section and the Land Use Review Board. The public hearing notice shall include a description of changes to the plan, including nonminor amendments to future land use maps, or any changes to Tier 1B area status.

(B) After adoption of the regional plan amendment, the regional planning commission shall submit a request to the Land Use Review Board for an affirmative determination of regional plan compliance for the regional plan amendment.

(C) Stand-alone requests for Tier 1B area status shall be submitted to the Land Use Review Board after the public hearing required under subdivision (A) of this subdivision (1).

(D) The Land Use Review Board shall hold a public hearing within 30 days after receiving the request for an affirmative determination of regional plan amendment compliance or approval of Tier 1B area status. The Land Use Review Board shall issue its determination within 30 days after the hearing.

(2) Expiration date. Adoption of a regional plan amendment, nonminor future land use map amendment, or Tier 1B area status request or amendment shall not change the expiration date of the regional plan.

\* \* \*

Sec. 13. 24 V.S.A. § 4348a is amended to read:

§ 4348a. ELEMENTS OF A REGIONAL PLAN

(a) A regional plan shall be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and shall include the following:

\* \* \*

(12) A future land use element, based upon the elements in this section, that sets forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity, and character of such land uses in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and services and that consists of a map delineating future land use area boundaries for the land uses in subdivisions (A)–(J) of this subdivision (12) as appropriate and any other special land use category the regional planning commission deems necessary; descriptions of intended future land uses, consistent with the smart growth principles in section 4303 of this chapter; and policies intended to support the implementation of the future land use element using the following land use categories:

(A) Downtown or village centers. These areas are the mixed-use centers bringing together community economic activity and civic assets. They include downtowns, villages, and new town centers previously designated under chapter 76A and downtowns and village centers seeking benefits under the Community Investment Program under section ~~5804~~ 5803 of this title. The downtown or village centers are the traditional ~~and~~ or historic central business and civic centers within planned growth areas, village areas, or may stand alone. Municipalities may have more than one center, including planned new or emerging centers that anchor planned growth or village areas. Village centers are not required to have public water, wastewater, zoning, or subdivision bylaws.

(B) Planned growth areas. These areas include the high-density existing settlement and future growth areas with high concentrations of population, housing, and employment in each region and town, as appropriate. They include a mix of historic and nonhistoric commercial, residential, and civic or cultural sites with active streetscapes, supported by land development regulations; public water or wastewater, or both; and multimodal transportation systems. These areas include ~~new town centers, downtowns, village centers, growth centers,~~ and neighborhood development areas previously designated under chapter 76A of this title. These areas should generally meet ~~the smart growth principles definition in chapter 139 of this title and~~ the following criteria:

\* \* \*

(iii) The area is generally within walking distance from the municipality's or an adjacent municipality's downtown, or village center, ~~new town center, or growth center.~~

\* \* \*

(vi) The area provides ~~for~~ opportunity for development, infill development, and redevelopment that is needed to meet the regional and municipal housing targets that meets meet the present and future needs of a diversity of social and income groups in the community.

(vii) The area is served by planned or existing transportation infrastructure that conforms with "complete streets" principles as described under 19 V.S.A. chapter 24 and establishes pedestrian access directly to the downtown, or village center, ~~or new town center.~~ Planned transportation infrastructure includes those investments included in the municipality's capital improvement program pursuant to section 4430 of this title.

(C) Village areas. These areas include the traditional settlement area or a proposed new settlement area, typically composed of a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and or mixed-use buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the ~~core~~ downtown center or village center. ~~These areas include existing village center designations and similar areas statewide, but this area is larger than the village center designation.~~ Village areas shall meet the following criteria:

\* \* \*

(iv) The municipality has either ~~municipal~~ public water or wastewater. If no public wastewater is available, the area must have soils that are adequate for wastewater disposal.

(v) The area has some opportunity for infill development or new development areas where the village can grow, support the development of housing to meet the regional and municipal housing targets, and be flood resilient.

\* \* \*

(J) Rural; conservation. These are areas of significant natural resources, identified by regional planning commissions or municipalities based upon existing Agency of Natural Resources mapping that require special consideration for aquifer protection; for wetland protection; for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors; or for other conservation purposes. ~~The mapping of these areas and accompanying policies are intended to help meet requirements of 10 V.S.A. chapter 89. Any portion of this area that is approved by the LURB as having Tier 3 area status shall be identified on the future land use map as an overlay upon approval.~~

\* \* \*

(d) With the exception of preexisting, nonconforming designations approved prior to the establishment of the State Community Investment program, the areas eligible for designation benefits under that program upon the Land Use Review Board's approval of the regional plan future land use map for designation as a downtown center or village center shall not include development that is disconnected from a downtown or village center and that lacks an existing or planned pedestrian connection to the center via a complete street.

\* \* \*

Sec. 14. 24 V.S.A. § 4303 is amended to read:

§ 4303. DEFINITIONS

~~The following definitions shall apply throughout~~ As used in this chapter unless the context otherwise requires:

\* \* \*

(43) “Smart growth principles” means growth that:

(A) maintains the historic development pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside;

(B) develops compact mixed-use centers at a scale appropriate for the community and the region;

(C) enables choice in modes of transportation;

(D) protects the State’s important environmental, natural, and historic features, including natural areas, water quality, scenic resources, and historic sites and districts;

(E) serves to strengthen agricultural and forest industries, including homesteading, small-scale agriculture and forestry, and supporting housing, while minimizing conflicts of development with these industries;

(F) balances growth with the availability of economic and efficient public utilities and services;

(G) supports a diversity of viable businesses in downtowns and villages;

(H) provides for housing that meets the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each community; and

(I) reflects a settlement pattern that, at full build-out, is not characterized by:

(i) scattered development located outside compact urban and village centers that is excessively land consumptive;

(ii) development that limits transportation options, especially for pedestrians;

(iii) the fragmentation of farmland and forestland;

(iv) development that is not serviced by municipal infrastructure or that requires the extension of municipal infrastructure across undeveloped lands in a manner that would extend service to lands located outside compact village and urban centers; and

(v) linear development along well-traveled roads and highways that lacks depth, as measured from the highway.

Sec. 15. REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL PLAN EXTENSIONS

Any regional or municipal plan due to expire in 2026 or 2027 shall have its expiration date extended until December 31, 2027.

Sec. 16. REPEAL

24 V.S.A. § 4476 (formal review of regional planning commission decisions) is repealed.

\* \* \* State Community Investment Program \* \* \*

Sec. 17. 24 V.S.A. § 5801 is amended to read:

§ 5801. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

\* \* \*

(8) “Planned growth area” means an area on the regional plan future land use maps ~~required under section 4348a of this title, which may encompass a downtown center or village center on the regional future land use map and may be designated as a center or neighborhood, or both~~ meeting the requirements of subdivision 4348a(a)(12)(B) of this title and that may be designated as a neighborhood.

\* \* \*

(10) “Sprawl repair” means the redevelopment of lands with buildings, traffic and circulation, parking, or other land coverage in a pattern that is consistent with smart growth principles as defined in section 4303 of this title.

\* \* \*

(12) “~~State Designated Downtown and~~ Center or Village Center” or “designated center” means a ~~contiguous downtown or village~~ contiguous downtown or village ~~a portion of which is listed or eligible for listing in the national register of historic places area~~ center approved as part of the LURB review of regional plan future land use maps, ~~which may include an approved preexisting designated~~ designated ~~downtown, village center, or designated new town center established prior to the approval of the regional plan future land use maps.~~

(13) “~~State designated~~ Designated neighborhood” or “neighborhood” means a ~~contiguous geographic~~ village area or planned growth area approved as part of the ~~Land Use Review Board~~ LURB review of regional plan future land use maps that is ~~compact and adjacent and~~ contiguous to a center.

\* \* \*

(15) “Village area” means an area on the regional plan future land use maps adopted pursuant to ~~section 4348a of this title, which may encompass a village center on the regional future land use map~~ meeting the requirements of subdivision 4348a(a)(12)(C) of this title and that may be designated as a neighborhood.

Sec. 18. 24 V.S.A. § 5803 is amended to read:

§ 5803. DESIGNATION OF DOWNTOWN AND VILLAGE CENTERS

(a) Designation established. A regional planning commission may apply to the LURB for approval and designation of all downtown and village centers by submitting the regional plan future land use map adopted by the regional planning commission. ~~The regional plan future land use map shall identify downtown centers and village centers as the downtown and village areas eligible for designation as centers.~~ The Department and State Board shall provide comments to the LURB and the regional planning commission on areas eligible for center designation as provided ~~under~~ in section 4348 of this chapter title.

\* \* \*

(c) Exclusions. ~~With the exception for preexisting, nonconforming designations approved prior to the establishment of the program under this chapter or areas included in the municipal plan for the purposes of relocating a municipality’s center for flood resiliency purposes, the areas eligible for designation benefits upon the LURB’s approval of the regional plan future land use map for designation as a Center shall not include development that is disconnected from a Center and that lacks a pedestrian connection to the Center via a complete street. [Repealed.]~~

\* \* \*

Sec. 19. 32 V.S.A. § 5930bb is amended to read:

§ 5930bb. ELIGIBILITY AND ADMINISTRATION

\* \* \*

(c) Application shall be made in accordance with the guidelines set by the State Board. The guidelines shall clearly indicate that only applications located in Step 2 and Step 3 State-designated centers or Step 1 centers where a portion of the designated center is listed or eligible for listing in the national register of historic places shall be considered.

\* \* \*

Sec. 20. 24 V.S.A. § 5808 is added to read:

§ 5808. ANNUAL REPORT

On or before January 15 of each year, the Vermont Community Investment Board shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Environment and on General and Housing and the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs. The report shall include, at a minimum:

(1) a summary of the Community Investment Program's activities during the preceding fiscal year, including designations, Steps, or other actions taken by the Board that confer eligibility for or priority access to State funding, tax credits, and other Program benefits;

(2) an analysis of the types of municipalities benefiting from the Program by:

(A) county;

(B) population size;

(C) future land use category or categories;

(D) State designation status; and

(E) whether the municipality contains areas eligible for Act 250 exemption through 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181; and

(3) any legislative, regulatory, or programmatic changes recommended by the Board to improve the effectiveness, accessibility, and geographic equity of the Community Investment Program.

Sec. 21. MUNICIPAL APPEALS AND DISCRETIONARY REVIEW OF HOUSING; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2027, the Department of Housing and Community Development, after consultation with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Let's Build Homes, the Vermont Natural Resources Council, the Vermont Planners Association, the Land Access and Opportunity Board, the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, the Vermont Bar Association, the Vermont Realtors Association, Vermonters for a Clean Environment, and the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee shall report on the following:

(1) mechanisms for limiting appeals of municipal permits while allowing municipalities to address legitimate concerns with projects, including:

(A) the most commonly raised issues on appeal; and

(B) an evaluation of statutory or procedural tools to limit duplicative or frivolous appeals and recommend legislative action needed, if any;

(2) impacts of discretionary review on residential development,

(3) the potential value of the federal Right to Build Zone legislation and steps the State can take to maximize that value;

(4) assistance the State can offer municipalities seeking to limit discretionary review, including incentives, planning, and whether the State should develop objective standards, including model codes;

(5) data on housing that has been built in the areas exempt from Act 250 jurisdiction under the 10 V.S.A. § 6081(dd) including how many units, the price, and where; and

(6) a status update on the 802 Homes pilot program.

(b) The report shall be submitted to the House Committees on Environment and on General and Housing and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Natural Resources and Energy.

\* \* \* Environmental Justice \* \* \*

Sec. 22. 3 V.S.A. chapter 72 is amended to read:

#### CHAPTER 72. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

\* \* \*

#### § 6004. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE POLICY

\* \* \*

(i)(1) Beginning on January 15, ~~2028~~ 2029, and annually thereafter, the covered agencies shall either integrate the following information into existing annual spending reports or issue annual spending reports that include:

\* \* \*

#### § 6005. RULEMAKING

(a) On or before ~~July 1, 2027~~ January 1, 2029, the Agency of Natural Resources, in consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee, shall adopt rules to:

\* \* \*

(b) On or before July 1, ~~2028~~ 2030, and as appropriate thereafter, the covered agencies, in consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall adopt or amend policies and procedures, plans, guidance, and rules, where applicable, to implement this chapter.

\* \* \*

§ 6007. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MAPPING TOOL

\* \* \*

(c) On or before January 1, ~~2027~~ 2028, the mapping tool shall be available for use by the public as well as by the State government.

\* \* \* Effective Date \* \* \*

Sec. 23. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, on motion of Senator Watson, the Senate refused to concur in the House proposal of amendment and requested a Committee of Conference.

Thereupon, pursuant to the request of the Senate, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Watson  
Senator Bongartz  
Senator Williams

as members of the Committee of Conference on the part of the Senate to consider the disagreeing votes of the two Houses.

**Rules Suspended; Action Messaged**

On motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended, and the following bills were ordered messaged to the House forthwith:

**S. 223.** An act relating to water quality of the waters of Vermont.

**S. 325.** An act relating to regional planning and Act 250 Tier jurisdiction.

**Adjournment**

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until ten o'clock in the morning.