

1 Introduced by Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure

2 Date:

3 Subject: Public service; utilities; energy; energy efficiency; enhanced energy
4 planning; telecommunications

5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to allow an
6 energy efficiency utility that is also a retail electric provider to use thermal and
7 process fuel funds on additional projects; to require regional planning
8 commissions to apply to the Department of Public Service for an enhanced
9 energy determination concurrently with their submission of draft regional plans
10 to the Land Use Review Board; to require the adoption of a new
11 Telecommunications Plan every five years instead of three; and to abolish the
12 Telecommunications and Connectivity Advisory Board.

13 An act relating to miscellaneous public utility subjects

14 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

15 Sec. 1. USE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY CHARGE FUNDS FOR

16 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION PROGRAMS

17 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of law or order of the Public Utility

18 Commission (PUC) to the contrary, the PUC shall authorize an entity

19 appointed under 30 V.S.A. § 209(d)(2)(A) that is also a retail electricity

20 provider for the calendar years 2027–2029 to spend any amounts the entity has

1 available to it through annually budgeted thermal energy and process fuel
2 funds and carryforward thermal energy and process fuel funds from prior
3 periods on programs, measures, and services that reduce fossil fuel use and
4 greenhouse gas emissions in the thermal energy or transportation sector
5 regardless of the preexisting fuel source of the customer. The entity may also
6 use thermal energy and process fuel funds under this section to deliver thermal
7 and transportation measures or programs that enable fossil fuel and greenhouse
8 gas emissions reductions, such as geothermal test well funding, regardless of
9 the preexisting fuel source of the customer.

10 (b) Under this section, the entity shall also prioritize weatherization and
11 thermal sector efficiency programs within its offerings pursuant to this section,
12 and shall budget at least 60 percent of the funds for programs under this
13 section for weatherization and thermal sector efficiency programs, to be
14 offered to customers regardless of their preexisting fuel source, with a
15 minimum of 60 percent of those weatherization and thermal sector efficiency
16 program funds allocated for customers with low income and low-to-moderate
17 income and projects requiring electric panel or wiring upgrades or abatement
18 of other health-or building-related items to facilitate weatherization and
19 thermal efficiency.

20 (c) The entity shall seek approval from the PUC for all planned
21 expenditures throughout the three-year performance period as part of the

1 triennial energy efficiency utility planning process in the Demand Resources
2 Plan proceeding, and report, to the PUC, annually on program participation,
3 including any customer survey data obtained that discuss how impactful
4 incentives offered under this section were for customer adoption.

5 (d) Any funds spent on programs, measures, and services pursuant to this
6 section shall not be counted towards the calculation of funds used by the entity
7 for energy transformation projects pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 8005(a)(3) and the
8 calculation of project costs pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 8005(a)(3)(C)(iv).

9 Sec. 2. 24 V.S.A. § 4352 is amended to read:

10 § 4352. OPTIONAL DETERMINATION OF ENERGY COMPLIANCE;

11 ENHANCED ENERGY PLANNING

12 (a) Regional plan. A regional planning commission may submit its ~~adopted~~
13 regional plan to the Commissioner of Public Service appointed under 30
14 V.S.A. § 1 for a determination of energy compliance. The submission shall
15 happen when the draft regional plan is submitted to the Land Use Review
16 Board for review and adoption pursuant to section 4348 of this title. The
17 Commissioner shall issue an affirmative determination on finding that the
18 regional plan meets the requirements of subsection (c) of this section and
19 allows for the siting in the region of all types of renewable generation
20 technologies.

21 * * *

1 Sec. 3. 30 V.S.A. § 202d(f) is amended to read:

2 (f) The Department shall adopt a new Plan every ~~three~~ five years pursuant
3 to the procedures established in subsection (e) of this section. The Plan shall
4 outline significant deviations from the prior Plan. For good cause or upon
5 request by a joint resolution passed by the General Assembly, an interim
6 review and revision of any section of the Plan may be made after conducting
7 public hearings on the interim revision. At least one hearing shall be held
8 jointly with committees of the General Assembly designated by the General
9 Assembly for this purpose.

10 Sec. 4. REPEAL

11 30 V.S.A. § 202f (establishing the Telecommunications and Connectivity
12 Advisory Board) is repealed.

13 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

14 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.