



1 increase criminal penalties for arson of a covered bridge or intentionally  
2 injuring a covered bridge.

3 An act relating to protections for covered bridges

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

5 Sec. 1. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE; INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS;

6 COVERED BRIDGES

7 The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Secretary of  
8 Commerce and Community Development, the Vermont League of Cities and  
9 Towns, and, in the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation, other  
10 stakeholders, shall:

11 (1) on or before November 15, 2026, develop and make available to  
12 municipalities informational materials regarding establishing weight, height,  
13 and width limits for covered bridges and the enhanced penalties pursuant to  
14 23 V.S.A. § 1434(c) for persons who operate a vehicle on a covered bridge,  
15 which exceeds the limits established for that bridge;

16 (2) provide technical assistance to municipalities in relation to  
17 establishing weight, height, and width limits for covered bridges;

18 (3) provide information and technical assistance to municipalities  
19 regarding the construction of barriers, warning devices, and other measures

1       designed to prevent vehicles that exceed the weight, height, and width limits  
2       for a covered bridge from being operated on the bridge; and  
3        (4) provide information and technical assistance to municipalities in  
4       relation to potential opportunities to obtain funding or in-kind assistance  
5       related to the construction of barriers, warning devices, and other measures  
6       designed to prevent vehicles that exceed the weight, height, and width limits  
7       for a covered bridge from being operated on the bridge.

8       Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 503 is amended to read:

9       § 503. SECOND DEGREE ARSON; ARSON OF A COVERED BRIDGE  
10      (a) A person who willfully and maliciously sets fire to or burns or causes to  
11      be burned, or who willfully and maliciously aids, counsels, or procures the  
12      burning of any building or structure of whatsoever class or character, whether  
13      the property of ~~himself or herself~~ themselves or of another, not included or  
14      described in section 502 of this title, shall be guilty of arson in the second  
15      degree, and shall be imprisoned not more than five years nor less than one year  
16      or fined not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

17      (b) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section by committing  
18      arson of a covered bridge shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years nor less  
19      than two years or fined not more than \$2,000.00, or both.

1 Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 3733 is amended to read:

2 § 3733. MILLS, DAMS OR BRIDGES

3       (a) A person who willfully and maliciously injures, removes, or opens a  
4        dam, reservoir, gate, or flume or injures or removes the wheels, mill gear, or  
5        machinery of a water mill, or injures, removes, or destroys a public or toll  
6       bridge, shall be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than  
7       \$500.00, or both.

8       (b) A person who willfully and maliciously injures, removes, or destroys a  
9       covered bridge shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years or fined not more  
10       than \$1,000.00, or both.

11 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

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