

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Government Operations to which was referred House
3 Bill No. 762 entitled “An act relating to the County and Regional Governance
4 Study Committee” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and
5 recommends that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended by
6 striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the
7 following:

8 Sec. 1. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 118, Sec. 1, is amended to read:

9 Sec. 1. ~~COUNTY AND~~ REGIONAL GOVERNANCE STUDY
10 COMMITTEE; REPORT

11 (a) ~~Creation~~ Legislative intent and creation of Committee.

12 (1) Legislative intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly that
13 existing direct coordination and communication between the State and
14 Vermont municipalities should be retained or strengthened. Regional
15 governance should enhance the work of local and State governments and not
16 become a procedural barrier between the State and municipalities.

17 (2) Creation of Committee. There is created the ~~County and~~ Regional
18 Governance Study Committee to address local government capacity
19 challenges, ~~enhance and optimize public safety;~~ regional collaboration and
20 planning; ~~efficient, equitable, and transparent public resource allocation;~~ and
21 effective regional public services for individuals and municipalities.

1 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be, to the extent possible, composed
2 of members from geographically diverse regions of the State. The Committee
3 shall elect its chair from among its members. The Committee shall be
4 composed of the following members:

5 (1) three current members of the House of Representatives, who shall
6 not all be from the same political party, ~~the first of whom shall be the Chair of~~
7 ~~the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, and the~~
8 ~~second and third of whom~~ shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

9 (2) three current members of the Senate, who shall not all be from the
10 same political party, ~~the first of whom shall be the Chair of the Senate~~
11 ~~Committee on Government Operations, and the second and third of whom~~
12 shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees.

13 (c) Powers and duties.

14 (1) The Committee shall study and make recommendations to the
15 General Assembly on how to improve the structure and organization of **county**
16 **and** regional government, including:

17 (A) ~~enhancement~~ coordination and optimization of ~~public safety~~
18 regional government provided by State, regional, and local agencies, for the
19 provision of services;

20 (B) enhancement of regional collaboration and planning and
21 implementation;

1 and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations
2 with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

3 (f) Meetings.

4 * * *

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

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9 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on July 1, ~~2026~~ 2028.

10 * * *

11 Sec. 2. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 118, Sec. 2, is amended to read:

12 ~~Sec. 2. COUNTY AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE TECHNICAL~~
13 ~~ADVICE~~

14 (a) On or before September 1, 2024, the Executive Director of the Vermont
15 Bond Bank, shall convene the first meeting of ~~a County and~~ the Regional
16 Governance Technical Advisory Group. The Technical Advisory Group shall
17 analyze the subject matter being considered by the County and Regional
18 Governance Study Committee and advise, assist, and provide
19 recommendations to the Study Committee, specifically on the structure and
20 organization of county and regional government. The Vermont Bond Bank
21 shall participate in order to support improvements to local capacity.

1 (b) The following individuals and entities shall be invited to participate in
2 the meeting or meetings described in this section:

3 (1) the Department of State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs;

4 (2) the State Court Administrator;

5 (3) the Vermont Association of County Judges;

6 (4) the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies;

7 (5) the Vermont Municipal Clerks’ and Treasurers’ Association;

8 (6) the Vermont League of Cities and Towns;

9 (7) the Vermont Regional Development Corporations;

10 (8) the Vermont School Boards Association;

11 (9) the Vermont Town and City Management Association; and

12 (10) other relevant stakeholders identified by the Technical Advisory
13 Group.

14 (c) The Study Committee may at any time request advice from the
15 Technical Advisory Group regarding issues relating to the structure and
16 organization of ~~county~~ and regional government, which shall be provided by
17 the Technical Advisory Group.

18 * * *

19 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

20 This act shall take effect on passage.

1 and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating
2 to the Regional Governance Study Committee”

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7 (Committee vote: _____)

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Senator _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE