

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Government Operations to which was referred Senate
3 Bill No. 56 entitled “An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans”
4 respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the
5 bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in
6 lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS STUDY COMMITTEE; REPORT

8 (a) Creation. There is created the Office of New Americans Study
9 Committee to make recommendations for creating an independent Office of
10 New Americans.

11 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
12 members:

13 (1) the Director of the Vermont Refugee Office, who shall be Chair;

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

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

18 (4) one member, appointed by the Secretary of Human Services;

19 (5) one member, appointed by the Commissioner of Labor;

20 (6) one member, appointed by the Executive Director of the Office of
21 Racial Equity;

1 (7) one member representing the Association of Africans Living in
2 Vermont; and

3 (8) seven members, appointed by the Governor, who shall include:

4 (A) one member, nominated by the Association of Africans Living in
5 Vermont;

6 (B) one member, nominated by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and
7 Immigrants;

8 (C) one member, nominated by the Brattleboro Development Credit
9 Corporation;

10 (D) one member, nominated by the Vermont Afghan Alliance;

11 (E) one member, nominated by World Education Services;

12 (F) one member, nominated by the Vermont Asylum Assistance
13 Project; and

14 (G) one member with experience or expertise serving nonnative
15 Vermonters on a statewide level.

16 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study and submit a written
17 report to the House Committee on Government Operations and Military
18 Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations concerning
19 recommendations for creating an independent Office of New Americans,
20 including:

1 (1) a summary of the current demographic, economic, and public health
2 data regarding New Americans in the State and information regarding the
3 government services being utilized and underutilized by New Americans;

4 (2) a summary or survey of varying and successful approaches to
5 providing government services to New Americans in other states, with
6 particular focus on the topics of the role of education and training institutions,
7 professional licensing, housing, and support for employers and municipalities;

8 (3) in consultation with community-based organizations composed of or
9 servicing New Americans, State agencies and departments that provide services
10 to New Americans, the Office of Professional Regulation, municipal
11 government leaders, educational institutions, and business leaders, information
12 on:

13 (A) the existing State and local-level barriers for New Americans for
14 gainfully participating in the State’s workforce, economy, and business
15 communities;

16 (B) additional governmental services needed by New Americans but
17 not yet offered by the State; and

18 (C) the transfer or consolidation of existing governmental services
19 for New Americans that would be more efficiently provided by a new Office of
20 New Americans;

1 (4) the proposed structure, duties, funding, and labor needs of an Office
2 of New Americans; and

3 (5) a definition of the term “New Americans” for the purposes of an
4 Office of New Americans.

5 (d) The Committee may create subcommittees, with duties and leadership
6 to be assigned by the Chair.

7 (e) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,
8 and legal assistance of the Agency of Human Services.

9 (f) Date of Report. On or before September 1, 2026, the Committee shall
10 submit the written report required by subsection (c) of this section.

11 (g) Meetings.

12 (1) The Chair shall call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on
13 or before September 1, 2025.

14 (2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

15 (3) The Committee shall cease to exist on the earlier of September 1,
16 2026 or the date that the Committee submits its written report.

17 (h) Compensation and reimbursement.

18 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
19 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee serving in the member’s
20 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
21 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than 20

1 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the
2 General Assembly.

3 (2) Other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem
4 compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.
5 § 1010 for not more than 20 meetings. These payments shall be made from
6 monies appropriated to the Agency of Human Services.

7 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

8 This act shall take effect on passage.

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12 (Committee vote: _____)

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Senator _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE