Journal of the Senate

Of the
STATE OF VERMONT
BIENNIAL SESSION, 2025

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025

Pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and the laws of the State of Vermont, the Senate convened at the State House at Montpelier, on the first Wednesday, after the first Monday, the 8th day of January in the year of two thousand twenty-five.

At ten o'clock in the forenoon, eastern standard time, the Senate was called to order by the President, Lieutenant Governor David E. Zuckerman.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Rachel Field of Northfield.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call

The roll of the Senate was thereupon called by the Secretary, John H. Bloomer, Jr., and it appeared that the following Senators were present.

Addison District	Senator Ruth Ellen Hardy Senator Steven P. Heffernan
Bennington District	Senator Seth B. Bongartz Senator Robert F. Plunkett
Caledonia District	Senator Scott L. Beck
Chittenden-Central District	Senator Philip E. Baruth Senator Martine Larocque Gulick Senator Tanya C. Vyhovsky
Chittenden-North District	Senator Christopher P. Mattos
Chittenden-Southeast District	Senator Thomas I. Chittenden Senator Virginia V. Lyons Senator Kesha Ram Hinsdale

Essex District	Senator Russell H. Ingalls
Franklin District	Senator Randolph D. Brock Senator Robert W. Norris
Grand Isle District	Senator Patrick M. Brennan
Lamoille District	Senator Richard A. Westman
Orange District	Senator Larry W. Hart
Orleans District	Senator Samuel A. Douglass
Rutland District	Senator Brian P. Collamore Senator David H. Weeks Senator Terry K. Williams
Washington District	Senator Ann E. Cummings Senator Andrew J. Perchlik Senator Anne Elizabeth Watson
Windham District	Senator Wendy K. Harrison Senator Nader A. Hashim
Windsor District	Senator Alison Clarkson Senator Joseph D. Major Senator Rebecca Elizabeth White

Oath Administered

The thirty Senators-elect present and in their seats were duly sworn by the Secretary and severally subscribed the oath of office.

Election of Officers

The President announced that the next order of business was the election of officers, and that nominations for Secretary were in order:

Senator White of Windsor District nominated

JOHN H. BLOOMER, JR.

of the Town of Wallingford.

Senator Collamore of Rutland District seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, on motion of Senator Baruth, the nominations were closed and the Assistant Secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for

JOHN H. BLOOMER JR.

of the Town of Wallingford, as Secretary of the Senate for the two years next ensuing.

Thereupon, he presented himself at the bar of the Senate and received the oath of office from the President.

Election of President *Pro Tempore*

The President then announced that the next order of business was the election of a President *pro tempore*.

Senator White of Windsor District nominated

PHILIP E. BARUTH

of Chittenden-Central District.

Senator Lyons of Chittenden-Southeast District seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, on motion of Senator Ram Hinsdale, the nominations were closed and the Secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for

PHILIP E. BARUTH

of Chittenden-Central District as President *pro tempore* of the Senate for the two years next ensuing.

Thereupon, he presented himself at the bar of the Senate and received the oath of office from the President.

Election of Third Member of Committee on Committees

The Senate then proceeded to the election of a Senator to serve with the President and President *pro tempore* as a member of the Committee on Committees, which appoints the standing committees of the Senate.

Senator Cummings of Washington District nominated

VIRGINIA V. LYONS

of Chittenden-Southeast District.

Senator Harrison of Windham District seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, on motion of Senator Baruth, the nominations were closed and the Secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for

VIRGINIA V. LYONS

of Chittenden-Southeast District to serve with the President and President *pro tempore* as a member of the Committee on Committees.

Thereupon, she presented herself at the bar of the Senate and received the oath of office from the President.

Appointments

The President announced the appointment by the Secretary of

MELISSA ROSE GRADEL

of Montpelier, as Assistant Secretary of the Senate, and she presented herself at the bar of the Senate and received the oath of office from the Secretary.

The President announced the appointment by the Secretary of

CHRISTINE F. GILHULY

of Waitsfield, as Operations Manager/Journal Clerk, and

ANDREA M. HUSSEY

of Montpelier, as Calendar Clerk, and

PENNY M. CARPENTER

of Waterbury, as Office Associate.

Senate Resolutions Adopted

Senate resolutions of the following titles were severally offered, read and adopted, and are as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 1. Senate resolution relating to the rules of the Senate.

Resolved by the Senate:

That for the 2025 Biennial Session the Senate be governed by the Permanent Rules of the Senate as in effect at the end of the 2024 Adjourned Session, until others are adopted, with the following amendments:

First: Senate Rule 2A is amended to read as follows:

2A. The Senators from the Addison Senatorial District shall occupy seats numbered 18 and 19; from the Bennington Senatorial District, seats numbered 5 and 6; from the Caledonia Senatorial District, seat number ~~26~~ 25; from the Chittenden-Central Senatorial District, seats numbered 10, 11 and 12; from the Chittenden-North Senatorial District, seat number 27; from the Chittenden-Southeast Senatorial District, seats numbered 7, 8 and 9; from the Essex Senatorial District, seat number 3; from the Franklin Senatorial District, seats numbered 20 and 21; from the Grand Isle Senatorial District, seat number ~~25~~ 26; from the Lamoille Senatorial District, seat number 1; from the Orange Senatorial District, seat number 4; from the Orleans

Senatorial District, seat number 2; from the Rutland Senatorial District, seats numbered 22, 23 and 24; from the Washington Senatorial District, seats numbered 28, 29 and 30; from the Windham Senatorial District, seats numbered 16 and 17; and from the Windsor Senatorial District, seats numbered 13, 14 and 15.

Second: In Rule 24, ninth paragraph, after the words "public buildings" by striking out the comma and inserting the following: ; information technology generally along with the acquisition, operation, and management of information technology (in state government and in the General Assembly);

Third: Senate Rule 102(a) is amended to read:

102. Ethics:

(a) The Committee on Committees shall, at the beginning of the biennium or as soon as possible thereafter, establish an Ethics Panel to receive and investigate allegations of ethical violations of senators and allegations of discrimination by senators, except for those complaints covered under Rule 101, and to recommend to the Senate any disciplinary action against a senator for an ethical or discriminatory violation, if the Panel deems it necessary.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 2. Senate resolution relating to concurrently conducted electronic committee meetings.

Resolved by the Senate:

Notwithstanding the language in Permanent Senate Rule 32A limiting the applicability of Senate Rule 32A to Declarations of Emergency, the provisions of Permanent Senate Rule 32A regarding committee meetings shall be in effect until Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 3. Senate resolution relating to electronic participation in Senate Session.

Resolved by the Senate:

That a temporary rule, to be designated by Rule 9B, be adopted to read as follows:

Rule 9B. Temporary Rule Regarding Electronic Participation in Senate Sessions

(a)(1) Senate Sessions shall be in-person, except a Senator may participate, debate, deliberate and vote pursuant the procedures of Senate Rule 9A in concurrently conducted electronic sessions on a temporary, emergency basis if:

(A) the Senator has tested positive for or diagnosed with COVID-19 and is within a required period of isolation;

(B) the Senator has COVID-19 symptoms and is awaiting the results of a diagnostic test;

(C) the Senator is the primary caregiver for a household member and the household member is required to be home due to one of the reasons set forth in subdivisions (A)–(B) of this subdivision (1); or

(D) the Senator or the household member for which the Senator is the primary caregiver has a temporary emergency relating to care or health.

(2) A Senator may avail themselves of section (a)(1)(D) for no more than two (2) consecutive days. A Senator may request the Rules Committee approve a longer duration of participation under section (a)(1)(D).

(b) This temporary rule shall remain in effect through Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 4. Senate resolution relating to appointment of a committee to inform the Governor of the organization of the Senate.

Resolved by the Senate:

That a committee of four Senators be appointed by the President to wait upon His Excellency, the Governor, and to inform him that the Senate has organized and is ready on its part to proceed with the business of the session.

Offered by Senator Ram Hinsdale,

S.R. 5. Senate resolution relating to informing the House of the organization of the Senate.

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Secretary be directed to inform the House of Representatives that a quorum of the Senate has assembled and organized by the election of **John H. Bloomer, Jr.**, of Wallingford, as Secretary, and **Philip E. Baruth**, a Senator from Chittenden-Central District, as President *pro tempore*, and is ready on its part to proceed with the business of the session.

Joint Senate Resolutions Adopted on the Part of the Senate

Joint Senate resolutions of the following titles were severally offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and are as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 1. Joint resolution relating to joint rules.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the joint rules of the Senate and the House as adopted in 2023 be adopted as the joint rules of this biennial session until others are adopted.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 2. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to receive the report of the committee appointed to canvass votes for state officers.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the two Houses meet in Joint Assembly on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at ten o'clock in the forenoon to receive the report of the Joint Canvassing Committee appointed to canvass votes for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, Auditor of Accounts and Attorney General, and if it shall be declared by said Committee that there had been no election by the voters of any of said state officers, then to proceed forthwith to elect such officers as have not been elected by the voters.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 3. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the inaugural message of the Governor.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the two Houses meet in Joint Assembly on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at two o’clock in the afternoon to receive the inaugural message of the Governor.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 4. Joint resolution relating to Town Meeting adjournment.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, February 28, 2025, or Saturday, March 1, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

Committee Appointed

Pursuant to the provisions of S.R. 4, the President appointed a Committee to wait upon His Excellency, the Governor, to inform him that the Senate is ready on its part to proceed with the business of the session:

Senator Ram Hinsdale
Senator White
Senator Beck
Senator Collamore

Report of Committee

Senator Ram Hinsdale of Chittenden-Southeast District, for the Committee appointed to wait upon His Excellency, the Governor, to inform him that the Senate is ready on its part to proceed with the business of the session, appeared at the bar of the Senate and reported that it had performed the duties assigned to it.

Canvassing Committee Elected

The President nominated as a committee on the part of the Senate to canvass votes for state officers,

Senator Hardy, of Addison District
Senator Plunkett, of Bennington District
Senator Beck, of Caledonia District
Senator Gulick, of Chittenden-Central District
Senator Mattos, of Chittenden-North District
Senator Ram Hinsdale, of Chittenden-Southeast District
Senator Ingalls, of Essex District
Senator Norris, of Franklin District
Senator Brennan, of Grand Isle District
Senator Westman, of Lamoille District
Senator Hart, of Orange District
Senator Douglass, of Orleans District
Senator Williams, of Rutland District
Senator Watson, of Washington District
Senator Harrison, of Windham District
Senator Major, of Windsor District

Thereupon, Senator Baruth moved that the nominees be elected by the Senate, which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the President declared the nominees elected, and the Committee so elected received the oath of office from the Secretary.

The President designated Senator Hardy, of Addison District, as Chair of the Joint Canvassing Committee to canvass votes for state officers.

Message from the House No. 1

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Mx. Nigel Hicks-Tibbles, its First Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

A quorum of the House has assembled and organized by the election of

Jill Krowinski

the Representative from Burlington (Chittenden-16), as Speaker, and

BetsyAnn Wrask

of Barre Town, as Clerk, who in turn has appointed Nigel Hicks-Tibbles of Northfield as First Assistant Clerk and Courtney Reckord of Williamstown as Second Assistant Clerk, and is ready on its part to proceed with the business of the session.

Message from the House No. 2

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolutions originating in the Senate of the following titles:

J.R.S. 1. Joint resolution relating to joint rules.

J.R.S. 2. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to receive the report of the committee appointed to canvass votes for state officers.

J.R.S. 3. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the inaurgural message of the Governor.

J.R.S. 4. Joint resolution relating to Town Meeting adjournment.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until nine o’clock and fifty minutes in the morning.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore*.

Message from the House No. 3

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has appointed as members of the Joint Canvassing Committee on the part of the House to canvass votes for state officers:

Addison District	Birong of Vergennes Cordes of Lincoln North of Ferrisburgh
Bennington District	Durfee of Shaftsbury Pinsonault of Dorset Hunter of Manchester
Caledonia District	Parsons of Newbury Campbell of St. Johnsbury Southworth of Walden
Chittenden-Central District	Rachelson of Burlington Tomlinson of Winooski Garofano of Essex
Chittenden-North District	Black of Essex Bartley of Fairfax Steady of Milton
Chittenden-Southeast District	Kleppner of Burlington Brown of Richmond Waters Evans of Charlotte
Essex District	Feltus of Lyndon Labor of Morgan Page of Newport City
Franklin District	Hango of Berkshire Dickinson of St. Albans Town Oliver of Sheldon

Grand Isle District	Critchlow of Colchester Austin of Colchester Bishop of Colchester
Lamoille District	LaMont of Morristown Boyden of Cambridge Bailey of Hyde Park
Orange District	Dobrovich of Williamstown Tagliavia of Corinth Satcowitz of Randolph
Orleans District	Kascenska of Burke Marcotte of Coventry Harple of Glover
Rutland District	Malay of Pittsford Maguire of Rutland City Howard of Rutland City
Washington District	Chapin of East Montpelier Lipsky of Stowe Galfetti of Barre Town
Windham District	Bos-Lun of Westminster Carris-Duncan of Whitingham Goodnow of Brattleboro
Windsor District	Bartholomew of Hartland Morris of Springfield Winter of Ludlow

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 5.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 5. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 10, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 10, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, January 14, 2025.

Recess

The President declared a recess until the fall of the gavel.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore.*

Joint Assembly

At ten o'clock in the morning, the hour having arrived for the meeting of the two Houses in Joint Assembly pursuant to:

J.R.S. 2. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to receive the report of the committee appointed to canvass votes for state officers.

The Senate repaired to the hall of the House.

Having returned therefrom, at ten o'clock and fifty minutes in the morning, the President *pro tempore* assumed the Chair.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore.*

Recess

The Chair declared a recess until the fall of the gavel.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore.*

Incoming President Takes Oath of Office

Senator Lyons moved that the President *pro tempore* appoint a Committee of two Senators to wait upon His Excellency, John S. Rodgers, Lieutenant Governor-elect and escort him to the bar of the Senate.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the President *pro tempore* appointed as members of the Committee:

Senator Ram Hinsdale
Senator Beck

The Committee appointed to wait upon His Excellency, John S. Rodgers, Lieutenant Governor-elect, performed the duties assigned to it and appeared at the bar of the Senate accompanied by His Excellence, John S. Rodgers, who

took and subscribed the oath of office required by the Constitution from the Secretary.

Remarks of Incoming Lieutenant Governor John S. Rodgers Journalized

Thereupon, the incoming President addressed the Senate, assuring his full cooperation and accommodation on a nonpartisan and objective basis, and, on motion of Senator Baruth, his remarks were entered in the Journal, and are as follows:

"Good morning, thank you all for coming out on my special day.

"I've had a lot of people recently asking me what does the Lieutenant Governor do? I've been telling them I will let them know when I figure it out.

"For anyone who did not recognize it. That was humor.

"I like to laugh and I like to make people laugh. I believe that laughter is some of the very best medicine. We have a lot of serious issues to deal with and hard choices to make, but that does not mean that we cannot laugh a little and try to have some fun while we do it.

"I start this morning by paying my respect to President Jimmy Carter. A man, who like me, grew up on a farm and worked very hard to climb the political ladder. President Carter famously once said in a speech to the American people: "I'll never tell a lie. I'll never make a misleading statement. I'll never betray the confidence that any of you had in me. And I'll never avoid a controversial issue."

"Like President Carter, I value honesty. I give Vermonters' my word that I will always be honest, I will not lie, and I will never avoid the controversial issues. I hope that I can count on the same from every legislator and every person that works in Vermont state and local government.

"President Carter was also great at working with everyone no matter what their party affiliation. Even after his death, his congenial spirit showed through as he planned his own funeral to be a bipartisan event, with speakers from both parties. I hope that my election shows everyone that most Vermonters are bipartisan and moderate. I was not elected by Republicans. I was not elected by Democrats. I was elected by Vermonters. I am the first challenger to beat an incumbent lieutenant governor since 1815. If 209 years of history is any measure, I believe that my election proves that Vermonters from both parties want us to work together. We need to hush the noise from the left and the right and govern from the middle for the benefit of all Vermonters.

"To do what needs to be done we will all need to have courage. We will be facing many hard decisions. There will be painful choices that some people

will not like. But the hard reality is that Vermonters can no longer afford the systems that the legislature has built. When we look at income potential compared to the cost of living in Vermont, it is not an affordable place to live.

"There are three disturbing things that I heard over and over last summer and fall. The first is that many people nearing retirement are planning to move out of the state when they retire because it is not affordable to live here. Many people told me that they no longer go to Burlington because they consider it unsafe. And the most disturbing thing was from people in their prime working years with kids in school who told me that when their kids are out of school, they plan on leaving the state. This is the very demographic Vermont needs more of. Beyond keeping prime working-age Vermonters in the state, we need to encourage some of their children to stay in the state.

"As you know, I was a Democrat for many years and now I'm a Republican. That said, I am always a Vermonter first. I was not elected by a party, I was elected by Vermonters and I am here to do my very best to serve all Vermonters. My office will operate in a non-partisan fashion where all are welcome. It is the bridge I promised Vermonters during my campaign, and it is the bridge whose foundation I will continue to reinforce.

"I look forward to getting to know all of you better. It is important that we all know each other as people and not just as members of a party. With courage, honesty, and hard work, in freedom and in unity, I am confident that we can improve the lives of all Vermonters. Let's get to work!"

Appointment

The President announced the appointment of

ELIZABETH BROWN

of Waterbury, as Chief of Staff to the incoming President.

Recess

On motion of Senator Baruth the Senate recessed until 1:55 P.M.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Joint Assembly

At two o'clock in the afternoon, the hour having arrived for the meeting of the two Houses in Joint Assembly pursuant to:

J.R.S. 3. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the inaugural message of the Governor.

The Senate repaired to the hall of the House.

Having returned therefrom, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the President assumed the Chair.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Standing Committees Appointed

The President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, reported the appointment of the standing committees, as follows:

Agriculture

A.M.	Senator Ingalls, Chair Major, Vice-Chair Collamore Heffernan Plunkett	Room 28

Appropriations

P.M.	Senator Perchlik, Chair Brennan, Vice-Chair Westman Lyons Baruth Watson Norris	Room 5

Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs

A.M.	Senator Clarkson, Chair Brock, Vice-Chair Ram Hinsdale Chittenden Weeks	Room 27

Education

P.M.	Senator Bongartz, Chair Weeks, Vice-Chair Ram Hinsdale Hashim Williams Heffernan	Room 28

Finance

P.M.	Senator Cummings, Chair Chittenden, Vice-Chair Hardy Gulick Brock Beck Mattos	Room 6

Government Operations

P.M.	Senator Collamore, Chair Vyhovsky, Vice-Chair White Clarkson Hart	Room 4

Health and Welfare

A.M.	Senator Lyons, Chair Gulick, Vice-Chair Cummings Hart Douglass	Room 17

Institutions

P.M.	Senator Harrison, Chair Plunkett, Vice-Chair Ingalls Major Douglass	Room 7

Judiciary

A.M.	Senator Hashim, Chair Norris, Vice-Chair Vyhovsky Baruth Mattos	Room 1

Natural Resources and Energy

A.M.	Senator Watson, Chair Williams, Vice-Chair Hardy Bongartz Beck	Room 8

Transportation

A.M.	Senator Westman, Chair White, Vice-Chair Harrison Perchlik Brennan	Room 3

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the morning.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 1.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick, Watson and White,

An act relating to providing Medicaid-equivalent coverage to all Vermonters.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 2.

By Senator Lyons,

An act relating to establishing the Office of Health Equity within the Department of Health.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 3.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to the transfer of property to a trust.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 4.

By Senators Clarkson, Gulick, Hardy, Perchlik, Watson, Weeks and White,

An act relating to maintenance and use of legal trails.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 5.

By Senator Williams,

An act relating to guardianship proceedings.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 6.

By Senators Clarkson, Major and White,

An act relating to repealing the Commissioner of Labor's authority to recommend a subminimum wage for individuals with a disability.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 5.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Message from the House No. 4

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 5. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 10, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Message from the Governor
Appointments Referred

A message was received from the Governor, by Brittney L. Wilson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, submitting the following appointments, which were referred to committees as indicated:

Aiken, Katie of Bennington - Member of the Parole Board - from May 1, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Atherton, David J. of Brandon, VT - Member of the Transportation Board - from September 26, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Badgewick, Bonnie J. of Woodstock - Superior Court Judge - from January 6, 2025 to March 31, 2030.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Barquist, Jessica of Colchester - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Becher, Jeffrey of Vergennes - Member of the Electricians' Licensing Board - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Berry, Stuart of Belmont - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from May 29, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Boucher, Patricia of South Burlington - Member of the Parole Board - from April 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Boulanger, David of Hinesburg - Member of the State Labor Relations Board - from August 15, 2024 to June 30, 2030.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bourdon, Kevin of Vergennes - Member of the Electricians' Licensing Board - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bowden, Breck of Burlington - Member of the VT Citizens' Advisory Council on Lake Champlain's Future - from May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Burris, Laurey of Shelburne - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Cleveland, Richard of Northfield - Member of the Travel Information Council - from April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Craig, Richard of Morrisville - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - from December 10, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Crowley, Allison M. of South Burlington - Member of the State Police Advisory Commission - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2028.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Davenport, Amy Marie of Montpelier - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Dawson, Melissa of Putney - Member of the Community High School of Vermont Board - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Education.

Deimling, Beth of Grand Isle - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - from August 30, 2024 to February 28, 2030.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Di Sano, Dana Marianna of South Burlington - Superior Court Judge - from December 20, 2024 to March 31, 2030.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Dingledine, L. Brooke of Randolph - Member of the Land Use Review Board - from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Doherty, Timothy Charles, Jr. of Burlington - Superior Court Judge - from January 7, 2025 to March 31, 2030.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Drake, Samantha K. of Waterbury Center - Alternate Member of the Parole Board - from May 28, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Fischer, Bob of Barre - Member of the VT Citizens' Advisory Council on Lake Champlain's Future - from May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Foster, Owen of Jericho - Chair, Green Mountain Care Board - from October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2030.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Foster, Ted of Vergennes - Member of the Vermont Economic Development Authority - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2030.

To the Committee on Finance.

Greenwood, Caleb of Troy - Student Member of the State Board of Education - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026.

To the Committee on Education.

Groce, Paul of Chambly, Quebec - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Hadd, Sarah H. of St. Albans - Member of the Land Use Review Board - from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2029.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Hale, Karyn of Lyndonville - Member of the Vermont Economic Development Authority - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2030.

To the Committee on Finance.

Haskell, Sabina of Burlington - Executive Director of the Office of Workforce Strategy and Development - from January 6, 2025 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Hook, Linda of Brunswick - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - from August 30, 2024 to February 28, 2030.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Hurley, Janet M. of Manchester - Member of the Land Use Review Board - from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Hutchins, Donn of Dorset - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Ireland, Peter of Waitsfield - Member of the Board of Medical Practice - from May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2029.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Johnson, Kerrick L. of Middlesex - Commissioner, Public Service Department - from January 6, 2025 to January 31, 2025.

To the Committee on Finance.

Johnson, Linda of Montpelier - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Johnson, William J., IV of Isle La Motte - Member of the Electricians' Licensing Board - from April 15, 2024 to June 30, 2024.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Johnson, William J., IV of Isle La Motte - Member of the Electricians' Licensing Board - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Kennett, Elizabeth of Rochester - Member of the Travel Information Council - from April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Lenes, Joan of Shelburne - Member of the Community High School of Vermont Board - from May 29, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Education.

Loner, Michael of Hinesburg - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Mathieu, Corey of Westford - Member of the Board of Liquor and Lottery - from July 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

McLean, Joseph S. of South Burlington - Superior Court Judge - from July 29, 2024 to March 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Miller, Marilyn of Montpelier - Member of the Transportation Board - from May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

To the Committee on Transportation.

O'Day, Katherine of Barre - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 11, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Plant, Bryan, II of Bristol - Commissioner, Vermont State Housing Authority - from May 1, 2024 to February 29, 2028.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Pudvar, Tim of Shelburne - Member of the Transportation Board - from June 27, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Ranney, Hudson of Windsor - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from July 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Rowntree, Laura C. of South Burlington - Superior Court Judge - from December 20, 2024 to March 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Saarnijoki, Linda of Weston - Member of the Board of Libraries - from May 15, 2024 to February 29, 2028.

To the Committee on Education.

Saunders, James of Barre - Member of the Board of Libraries- from May 15, 2024 to February 29, 2028.

To the Committee on Education.

Saunders, Zoie of Shrewsbury - Secretary, Agency of the Education - from November 26, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Education.

Seman, Jessica of Reading - Magistrate, Family Division - from October 17, 2024 to March 31, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Shamp, Seth of Burlington - Member of the State Police Advisory Commission - from December 2, 2024 to June 30, 2028.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Shatney, Mandy of Barre - Member of the Travel Information Council - from April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Shippee, Rhonda of Morgan - Member of the Vermont Economic Development Authority - from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2030.

To the Committee on Finance.

Smith, Denise of St. Albans - Member of the VT Citizens' Advisory Council on Lake Champlain's Future - from May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Soloman, Hilary of Poultney - Member of the VT Citizens' Advisory Council on Lake Champlain's Future - from May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Souder, Zoe of Sunapee, NH - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from July 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Sparks, Henri of Colchester - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Sultan, Kirsten A. of Lyndonville - Member of the Land Use Review Board - from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Vastine, Karen of Burlington - Member of the Council for Equitable Youth Justice - from March 1, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Wadhams, Emily of Burlington - Member of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board - from April 9, 2024 to January 31, 2027.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Weinhagen, Alex of Burlington - Member of the Land Use Review Board - from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 6.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 6. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 17, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 17, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 7.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to automobile insurance.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 8.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick, Watson and White,

An act relating to eligibility for Dr. Dynasaur for young adults up to 26 years of age.

To the Committee on Finance.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, January 15, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 7.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Perchlik,

J.R.S. 7. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the budget message of the Governor.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the two Houses meet in Joint Assembly on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at one o'clock in the afternoon to receive the budget message of the Governor.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following titles was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 9.

By Senators Hardy, Gulick, Norris, Plunkett, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to after-hours access to orders against sexual assault.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Appointment of Senate Members to Joint Rules Committee

The President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Rules Committee for terms of two years pursuant to the provisions of Joint Rule No. 5:

Senator Baruth, *ex officio*
Senator Beck
Senator Ram Hinsdale
Senator Lyons

Appointment of Senate Members to Joint Fiscal Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 501, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Fiscal Committee for a term of two years:

Senator Cummings, *ex officio*
Senator Perchlik, *ex officio*
Senator Lyons
Senator Beck
Senator Westman

Appointment of Senate Members to the Joint Legislative Management Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 41(b)(2), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Legislative Management Committee during this biennium:

Senator Baruth, *ex officio*
Senator Clarkson
Senator Beck
Senator Lyons

Standing Committees Appointed

The President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, reported the appointment of the standing committees, as follows:

Ethics Panel

At Call	Senator Ram Hinsdale, Chair
	Hart
	Chittenden
	Brock
	Vyhovsky

Rules

At Call — Senator Baruth, Chair
Ram Hinsdale
Lyons
Beck
Collamore

Sexual Harassment Prevention Panel

At Call — Senator Clarkson, Chair
Watson
Bongartz
Weeks
White
Douglass

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, January 16, 2025.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Richard Crawley of Rutland.

Message from the House No. 5

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 6. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 17, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Ms. Brittney L. Wilson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the 15th day of January, 2025, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 2002(b), I am herewith enclosing the following Executive Order:

01-25 Creation of the Agency of Public Safety

Executive Order Referred

The President laid before the Senate 01-25 Executive Order relating to changes in the organization of the executive branch of the government of Vermont pursuant to the provision of 3 V.S.A. § 2002, which was read by the Secretary and is as follows:

STATE OF VERMONT

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 01-25

[Creation of the Agency of Public Safety]

WHEREAS, the Governor, pursuant to Vermont Constitution Chapter II, Section 3 and Section 20, and 3 V.S.A. Section 2001 and Section 2002, subject to the Vermont Constitution Chapter II, Section 6, may make such changes in the organization of the Executive Branch or in the assignment of functions among its units as he considers necessary for efficient administration; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Vermont, Chapter II, Section 6 provides that no bill, resolution or other thing which shall have been passed by one house of the General Assembly shall have the effect of or be declared to be a law without the concurrence of the other, ensuring no action by a single house, committee or agent of the General Assembly may be binding on the Executive Branch; and

WHEREAS, any organizational changes made by the Governor, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. Section 2001 and Section 2002, shall be subject to disapproval by both houses of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable to reorganize the agencies, departments and divisions of government to better coordinate certain activities and improve the coordination and effectiveness of services to the public; and

WHEREAS, the workload and responsibilities of the Department of Public Safety have been ever increasing over time including:

- Statewide law enforcement provided by the Vermont State Police.
- The response capabilities for the entirety of Vermont offered by special teams from both the Vermont State Police and the Division of Fire Safety.
- The Division of Emergency Management (VEM) is responsible for disaster response, recovery, and mitigation as well as management of the State Emergency Operations Center; VEM's responsibilities will only increase as Vermont faces the dynamic impacts of climate change.
- Broad responsibilities of the Division of Fire Safety.
- Numerous support services including Radio Technology and Crime Information, as well as management of Vermont's only accredited forensic lab.
- Animal welfare.

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety has demonstrated strong leadership in expanding alternative crisis response methodologies such as field mental health workers; providing enhanced statewide model policies in key areas, including use of force; leading efforts to reduce violent crime in Vermont communities; and communication and public safety information and technology systems that support every community in the state; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety's leadership serves as the State's designated Homeland Security Advisors to the Governor and is tasked with monitoring intelligence, coordinating planning and response to all hazard threats to the State, its populace and its Critical Infrastructure sectors; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety has established, together with the Agency of Education, the Vermont School Safety Center; and

WHEREAS, a new division of Animal Welfare was statutorily added to the Department of Public Safety in 2024; and

WHEREAS, the expansion of responsibilities accruing to the Department of Public Safety in service to the Governor's Constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws and the public health and safety needs of Vermonters statewide, necessitate the elevation of the Department of Public Safety to a cabinet-level agency.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Philip B. Scott, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of Vermont by the Constitution of the State of Vermont, Chapter II, Section 3 and Section 20, 3 V.S.A. § 209, 3 V.S.A. Chapter 41 and 32 V.S.A. § 704a, do hereby create an Agency of Public Safety which shall be successor to the Department of Public Safety as follows:

1. All duties, obligations, responsibilities and authority, including all contracts, grant agreements, service level agreements and MOUs of the Department of Public Safety are hereby transferred to the Agency of Public Safety.

2. All financial assets and liabilities, including all appropriations associated with the positions transferred pursuant to paragraph 3 below, of the Department of Public Safety are hereby transferred to the Agency of Public Safety.

3. All authorized positions, functions, equipment, supplies and inventory of the Department of Public Safety are transferred to the Agency of Public Safety.

4. The positions of Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety and Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety are abolished and all the duties, responsibilities, and authority, including board, committee and council memberships, of the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner are hereby transferred to the Secretary of the Agency of Public Safety and the Deputy Secretary of the Agency of Public Safety, respectively.

5. The Secretary shall be directly responsible to the Governor and shall plan, coordinate and direct the functions vested in the Agency. The Secretary shall prepare and submit to the Governor an annual budget for the Agency.

6. Effective April 16, 2025, the Agency of Public Safety shall be headed by the Secretary appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

7. Effective April 16, 2025, the Secretary of the Agency of Public Safety may appoint a Deputy Secretary, with the approval of the Governor, who shall be exempt from the classified service.

8. Effective April 16, 2025, the Agency of Public Safety shall consist of a Division Fire Safety, a Division of Law Enforcement and Homeland Security, a Division of Emergency Management, a Division of Administration and Finance, a Division of Animal Welfare, a Division of the Forensic Laboratory, a Division of Radio Technology Services and a Division of the Vermont Crime Information Center, as follows:

    A. The Division of Fire Safety shall be headed by an Executive Director and organized into four offices, each reporting to the Executive Director of Fire Safety through a program manager:

1) Administration – (Plan Review, Permitting, Code Inspection and Public Fire Education)

2) Licensing, Certification and Rule Making Office

3) Special Team

a) HazMat Team

b) USAR/Swiftwater Team

c) Fire and Explosive Investigation Unit

4) Training Office – Vermont Fire Academy

B. The Division of Law Enforcement and Homeland Security shall be headed by the Colonel who shall be the senior commander of the Vermont State Police.

C. The Division of Emergency Management shall be headed by a Director and organized into the following five sections:

1) Planning

2) Engagement

3) Operations and Logistics

4) Recovery

5) Mitigation

D. The Division of Administration and Finance shall be headed by a Director and organized into the following offices:

1) Accounting

2) Budgeting

3) Grant Management

4) Procurement

5) Audit and Payroll

E. The Division of Animal Welfare shall be headed by a Director.

F. The Division of the Vermont Forensic Laboratory shall be headed by a Director and shall be organized into the following sections:

1) Chemistry

2) Biology

3) Toxicology

4) Physical Comparison

5) Quality Control and Accreditation

6) Evidence Management and Control

G. The Division of Radio Technology Services shall be headed by a Director.

H. The Division of the VT Crime Information Center, including the Sex Offender Registry, shall be headed by a Director.

The Colonel and all Executive Directors and Directors shall be appointed by the Secretary with the approval of the Governor. The Director of the Division of Fire Safety and the Director of Emergency Management shall be exempt from the classified service. The Colonel shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

The Secretary of the Agency of Public Safety shall be a member of the Governor's Cabinet which consists of the Secretaries of the agencies as are created by law, as well as such Commissioners of the departments created by law as the Governor determines shall appoint to be members of the Cabinet.

This Executive Order shall be submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 2002, subject to the Vermont Constitution Chapter II, Section 6, and shall take effect on April 16, 2025, unless disapproved by both houses of the General Assembly.

WITNESS my name hereunto subscribed
and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont
hereunto affixed at Montpelier this 15th day
of January 2025.

/s/Philip B. Scott

Philip B. Scott
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 01-25

Thereupon, pursuant to the rules of the Senate, Executive Order No. 01-25 was referred to the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 10.

By Senators Hardy and Lyons,

An act relating to modifying requirements for obtaining a certificate of need.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, January 17, 2025.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Rick Swanson of Stowe.

Message from the House No. 6

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 7. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the budget message of the Governor.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Message from the House No. 7

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 1. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Richford Junior-Senior High School Falcons Division IV championship boys' track and field team.

H.C.R. 2. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Missisquoi Valley Union High School Thunderbirds Division I championship softball team.

H.C.R. 3. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Enosburg Falls High School Hornets Division II championship softball team.

H.C.R. 4. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Richford Junior-Senior High School Division IV championship girls' soccer team.

H.C.R. 5. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Richford Junior-Senior High School Rockets Division IV championship softball team.

H.C.R. 6. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Milton High School Yellowjackets girls' soccer team on winning a second consecutive Division II championship.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered concurrent resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

S.C.R. 1. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Brattleboro Memorial Hospital on its 120th anniversary.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following title were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 11.

By Senator Chittenden,

An act relating to stewardship trusts.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 12.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to sealing criminal history records.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 13.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to termination of parental rights in an adoption proceeding.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 14.

By Senators Hardy, Cummings, Gulick, Lyons, Vyhovsky, Watson and White,

An act relating to expanding Dr. Dynasaur income eligibility for pregnant individuals and exploring eligibility expansions for other populations.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 15.

By Senator Gulick,

An act relating to providing supplemental reading instruction in all schools.

To the Committee on Education.

S. 16.

By Senators White, Clarkson, Gulick, Hardy and Mattos,

An act relating to infant changing stations in restrooms in public buildings and places of public accommodation.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 17.

By Senators Collamore, Beck, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Douglass, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Weeks, Westman, White and Williams,

An act relating to exempting military retirement and survivor benefit income from Vermont income tax.

To the Committee on Finance.

Senate Concurrent Resolution

The following joint concurrent resolution, having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, was adopted on the part of the Senate:

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

Offered by Reps. Burke and others,

S.C.R. 1.

Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Brattleboro Memorial Hospital on its 120th anniversary.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Hango and others,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 1.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Richford Junior-Senior High School Falcons Division IV championship boys' track and field team.

Offered by Reps. Hango and others,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 2.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Missisquoi Valley Union High School Thunderbirds Division I championship softball team.

Offered by Reps. Demar and others,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 3.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Enosburg Falls High School Hornets Division II championship softball team.

Offered by Reps. Hango and others,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 4.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Richford Junior-Senior High School Division IV championship girls' soccer team.

Offered by Reps. Hango and others,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 5.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Richford Junior-Senior High School Rockets Division IV championship softball team.

Offered by Reps. Morgan and others,

Offered by Senator Mattos,

H.C.R. 6.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Milton High School Yellowjackets girls' soccer team on winning a second consecutive Division II championship.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 6.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Pat Forman of Montpelier.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed in honor of the U.S. Border Patrol Agent who died in the line of duty on January 20, 2025.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Ingalls addressed the chair, and on motion of Senator Ram Hinsdale, his remarks were ordered entered in the Journal, and are as follows:

"Mr. President:

"We are having a really rough day in the Kingdom, and I just want to put a name to the face of the officer that was killed yesterday, his name is David Maland. I thank you very much for the moment of silence."

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 8.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 8. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 24, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 24, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, January 28, 2025.

Senate Resolution Placed on Calendar

S.R. 6.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by the Committee on Rules,

S.R. 6. Senate resolution relating to a temporary rule for short form bills.

Whereas, all students in the State ought to be provided with a K-12 education that allows them to reach their full potential, and

Whereas, in the past decade, the cost of providing education to students in the state of Vermont has increased and has therefore led to an increase in the rate of taxes paid by residents of the state, and

Whereas, all Senators should be welcome to submit their proposals to strike a balance between the duty to educate the students of the state with the need to keep Vermont an affordable place for their families to live, to the Senate, in bill format, and

Whereas*,* in order to draft each bill in standard form, Legislative Counsel conducts extensive research, numerous drafts, and must work out the details of the proposal before introducing the bill, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That a temporary rule, to be designated by Rule 40A, be adopted to read as follows:

Rule 40A. Temporary Rule Regarding Short Form Bills in the Senate

(a) Senators may request short form bills relating only to education reform and finance.
(b) Short form bills shall consist only of the name of the introducer, the subject, the title, and a general statement of purpose.
(c) Short form bills shall appear two legislative days for notice on the Senate Calendar before they can be read a Second Time.
(d) This rule shall be in effect through May 1, 2025.

Thereupon, under Rule 34, the resolution was placed on the Calendar for notice.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, January 22, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the Governor
Appointments Referred

A message was received from the Governor, by Brittney L. Wilson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, submitting the following appointments, which were referred to committees as indicated:

Clark, Sarah of Waterbury - Secretary, Agency of Administration - from November 17, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Collier, Andrew of Westford - Commissioner, Department of the Motor Vehicles - from December 9, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Heald, Francis of Rutland - Member of the Travel Information Council - from April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 18.

By Senators Gulick, Clarkson, Hardy, Harrison, Plunkett, Watson, Weeks, White and Williams,

An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 19.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 20.

By Senators Gulick, Beck, Chittenden, Clarkson, Hart, Major, Mattos, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks and White,

An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 21.

By Senators Williams, Brennan, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Hart, Ingalls, Lyons, Norris, Perchlik and White,

An act relating to cell phone-free schools.

To the Committee on Education.

S. 22.

By Senator Perchlik,

An act relating to prohibiting discharge of firearms within 500 feet of a child care facility or school.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 23.

By Senators Hardy, Clarkson, Collamore, Norris, Vyhovsky, Watson and White,

An act relating to the use of synthetic media in elections.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, January 23, 2025.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 8

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 8. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 24, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 24.

By Senator Chittenden,

An act relating to stormwater management.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Senate Resolution Adopted

S.R. 6.

Senate resolution of the following title was taken up and adopted.

Senate resolution relating to a temporary rule for short form bills.

Appointment of Senate Member to the Access Board

Pursuant to the provisions of 20 V.S.A. § 2901, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Access Board during this biennium:

Senator Harrison, *ex officio*

Appointment of Senate Member to the Adult Education and Literacy HSCP Student Access Study Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of Act No. 78. § E.504(c)(2) (Acts of 2023), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Adult Education and Literacy HSCP Student Access Study Committee:

Senator Gulick

Appointment of Senate Member to the Art in State Buildings Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 29 V.S.A. § 47, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Art in State Buildings Advisory Committee during this biennium:

Senator Harrison *ex officio*

Appointment of Senate Members to the Barre Granite and Ethnic Culture Museum Steering Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of Act No. 233 § 6 (a)(7) (Acts of 1993) (Adj. Sess.), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Barre Granite and Ethnic Culture Museum Steering Committee during this biennium:

Senator Perchlik, *ex officio*
Senator Cummings, *ex officio*
Senator Watson, *ex officio*
Senator Harrison, *ex officio*

Appointment of Senate Member to the Building Bright Futures Council

Pursuant to the provisions of 33 V.S.A. § 4602(a)(8), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Building Bright Futures Council during this biennium:

Senator Gulick

Appointment of Senate Member to the Commission on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders

Pursuant to the provisions of 3 V.S.A. § 3085b, the President announced the appointment by the President of the following Senator to serve on the Commission on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders during this biennium:

Senator Brock

Appointment of Senate Member to the Commission on International Trade and State Sovereignty

Pursuant to the provisions of 3 V.S.A. §23(b)(2), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Commission on International Trade and State Sovereignty during this biennium:

Senator Clarkson, *ex officio*

Appointment of Senate Members to the County and Regional Governance Study Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of Sec. 1 of No. 228 of the Acts of 2024, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the County and Regional Governance Study Committee during this biennium:

Senator Collamore
Senator Harrison
Senator Norris

Appointment of Senate Members to the Emergency Board

Pursuant to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 131, the President announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Emergency Board during this biennium:

Senator Cummings, *ex officio*
Senator Perchlik, *ex officio*

Appointment of Senate Members to the Green Mountain Care Board Nominating Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 18 V.S.A. § 9390, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Green Mountain Care Board Nominating Committee, for a term of two years:

Senator Gulick
Senator Westman

Appointment of Senate Members to the Health Reform Oversight Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 691, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Health Reform Oversight Committee during this biennium:

Senator Perchlik, *ex officio*
Senator Cummings, *ex officio*
Senator Lyons, *ex officio*
Senator Westman

Appointment of Senate Members to the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 614(b)(2), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee during this biennium:

Senator Plunkett
Senator Brock
Senator Weeks

Appointment of Senate Members to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 801(b), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee during this biennium:

Senator Lyons
Senator Norris
Senator Hashim
Senator Plunkett
Senator Ram Hinsdale

Appointment of Senate Members to the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 19 V.S.A. § 12b, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee during this biennium:

Senator Perchlik*, ex officio*
Senator Cummings, *ex officio*
Senator Westman, *ex officio*

Appointment of Senate Members to the Joint Committee on Judicial Retention

Pursuant to the provisions of 4 V.S.A. § 607, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Joint Committee on Judicial Retention during this biennium:

Senator Hardy
Senator Collamore
Senator Gulick
Senator Williams

Appointment of Senate Member to the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 18 V.S.A. § 4772, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee for a term of four years:

Senator Hardy

Appointment of Senate Member to Public Transit Advisory Council

Pursuant to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 5084, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Public Transit Advisory Council during this biennium:

Senator Harrison

Appointment of Senate Member to the Vermont Economic Progress Council

Pursuant to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 3325, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Vermont Economic Progress Council for a term of two years:

Senator Harrison

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, January 24, 2025.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 9

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 7. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters Division II championship boys' football team.

H.C.R. 8. House concurrent resolution designating January 29, 2025 as Mental Health Advocacy Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 9. House concurrent resolution honoring the Vermonters who created the Tony-Award winning musical Hadestown and the Vermont theatrical youth ensembles now staging exhilarating teen performances.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 25.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Clarkson, Gulick, Hardy, Perchlik, Watson and White,

An act relating to hospital salaries and administrative staffing ratios.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Appointment of Senate Members of the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules

Pursuant to the provisions of 3 V.S.A. § 817, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules for terms of two years beginning February 1, 2025 and ending February 1, 2027:

Senator Beck
Senator Bongartz
Senator Plunkett
Senator Weeks

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Canfield and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Hardy, Heffernan, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 7.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters Division II championship boys' football team.

Offered by Reps. Cina and others,

H.C.R. 8.

House concurrent resolution designating January 29, 2025 as Mental Health Advocacy Day at the State House.

Offered by Reps. Chapin and others,

Offered by Senators Hardy, Perchlik and Watson,

H.C.R. 9.

House concurrent resolution honoring the Vermonters who created the Tony-Award winning musical Hadestown and the Vermont theatrical youth ensembles now staging exhilarating teen performances.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 8.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 9.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 9. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 31, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, January 31, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 4, 2025.

Senate Resolution Placed on Calendar

S.R. 7.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 7. Senate resolution relating to adoption of a temporary Rule 44A.

Resolved by the Senate:

That a temporary rule, to be designated Rule 44A, be adopted by the Senate, to read as follows:

Rule 44A. (a) Any bill failing to make the crossover dates of March 14, 2025 and March 21, 2025 shall be referred to the Committee on Rules. This provision shall not apply to the following measures:

(1) The transportation capital bill;

(2) The capital construction bill;

(3) The general appropriations bill ("The Big Bill");

(4) The fee bill; and

(5) The tax/revenue bills.

(b) The Committee on Rules may release any bills referred to it for reference to another committee of jurisdiction pursuant to Senate Rule 24 or to the Notice Calendar, as applicable.

(c) All bills referred to the Committee on Rules pursuant to this temporary Rule 44A and still in the Committee on Rules on the convening of the 2026 adjourned session shall be referred to another committee of jurisdiction pursuant to Senate Rule 24 or placed on the Notice Calendar, as applicable.

(d) This Temporary Rule 44A shall expire on the convening of the 2026 adjourned session.

Thereupon, under Rule 34, the resolution was placed on the Calendar for notice.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 26.

By Senators Lyons, Clarkson, Collamore, Gulick, Harrison, Hashim, Perchlik, Watson, Westman and White,

An act relating to prohibiting certain artificial dyes in foods and beverages served or sold at school.

To the Committee on Education.

Adjourn

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until 12:50 P.M.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Joint Assembly

At one o'clock in the afternoon, the hour having arrived for the meeting of the two Houses in Joint Assembly pursuant to:

J.R.S. 7. Joint resolution to provide for a Joint Assembly to hear the budget message of the Governor.

The Senate repaired to the hall of the House.

Having returned therefrom, at two o'clock in the afternoon, the President assumed the Chair.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o’clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Jay Voorhees of Northfield.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 27.

By Senators Lyons, Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Major, Norris, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Westman and White,

An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 28.

By Senators Hardy, Lyons, Clarkson, Gulick, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to access to certain legally protected health care services.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 29.

By Senators Watson, Beck, Bongartz, Hardy, Perchlik, White and Williams,

An act relating to establishing the Chloride Contamination Reduction Program at the Agency of Natural Resources.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 30.

By Senators Lyons and Cummings,

An act relating to updating and reorganizing the health insurance statutes in 8 V.S.A. chapter 107.

To the Committee on Finance.

S. 31.

By Senators Chittenden and Ingalls,

An act relating to a temporary suspension of the ambulance agency provider tax.

To the Committee on Finance.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o’clock in the afternoon on Thursday, January 30, 2025.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Christie Leary of Windsor.

Message from the House No. 10

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 78. An act relating to the use of the Australian ballot system in local elections.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Message from the House No. 11

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

J.R.S. 9. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on January 31, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 32.

By Senators Hardy, Beck, Heffernan, Watson and Williams,

An act relating to providing a free fishing license to persons with developmental disabilities.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 33.

By Senators White, Clarkson, Gulick, Hardy, Major, Plunkett and Vyhovsky,

An act relating to establishing a pilot for community nurse programs serving aging Vermonters.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 34.

By Senators White, Clarkson and Major,

An act relating to lowering the rate of increase for mobile home lot rents.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 35.

By Senators Gulick, Beck, Chittenden, Cummings, Douglass, Hardy, Hart, Lyons and Mattos,

An act relating to automated traffic law enforcement systems.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 36.

By Senators Lyons and Gulick,

An act relating to Medicaid coverage of long-term residential treatment for co-occurring substance use disorder and mental health condition.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 37.

By Senators Clarkson, Ram Hinsdale and White,

An act relating to unemployment insurance eligibility and benefits.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 78.

An act relating to the use of the Australian ballot system in local elections.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Senate Resolution Adopted

S.R. 7.

Senate resolution of the following title was taken up and adopted.

Senate resolution relating to adoption of a temporary Rule 44A.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, January 31, 2025.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Arnold Thomas of Jericho.

Committee Relieved of Further Consideration; Bill Referred

S. 27

On motion of Senator Hashim, the Committee on Judiciary was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 38.

By Senator White,

An act relating to conserving habitat corridors and wildlife crossings.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 39.

By Senators Gulick, Norris and Weeks,

An act relating to the State Aid for School Construction Program.

To the Committee on Education.

Appointments Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed separately by the Senate, upon full reports given by the Committees to which they were referred:

The nomination of

Badgewick, Bonnie J. of Woodstock - Superior Court Judge - January 6, 2025 to March 31, 2030.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

The nomination of

McLean, Joseph S. of South Burlington - Superior Court Judge - July 29, 2024 to March 31, 2028.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

The nomination of

Doherty, Timothy Charles, Jr. of Burlington - Superior Court Judge - January 7, 2025 to March 31, 2030.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

The nomination of

Seman, Jessica of Reading - Magistrate - October 17, 2024 to March 31, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

The nomination of

DiSano, Dana Marianna of South Burlington - Superior Court Judge - December 20, 2024 to March 31, 2030.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons,

Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

The nomination of

Rowntree, Laura C. of South Burlington - Superior Court Judge - December 20, 2024 to March 31, 2028.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

Message from the House No. 12

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 27. An act relating to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission.

H. 35. An act relating to unmerging the individual and small group health insurance markets.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following title:

H.C.R. 10. House concurrent resolution designating February 6, 2025 as 3SquaresVT Awareness Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 11. House concurrent resolution in memory of extraordinary Bennington K-9 Police Officer Gracie.

H.C.R. 12. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 University of Vermont Catamounts on winning their school's first NCAA Division I men's soccer championship (College Cup).

H.C.R. 13. House concurrent resolution in memory of the former esteemed Clerk of the Vermont House of Representatives Robert Louis Picher of Winooski.

H.C.R. 14. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Putney Library on the 20th anniversary of its current home.

H.C.R. 15. House concurrent resolution congratulating former Bennington Acting Police Chief Wally Mattison on his centennial birthday.

H.C.R. 16. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Bennington Select Board Chair, Representative, and Assistant Judge James H. Colvin.

H.C.R. 17. House concurrent resolution honoring the Green Mountain Hometown Heroes Banner Program and its recognized members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

H.C.R. 18. House concurrent resolution honoring Vermont's communications union districts for their visionary leadership and effective efforts in bringing world class fiber optic service to rural communities.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Rep. McGill,

H.C.R. 10.

House concurrent resolution designating February 6, 2025 as 3SquaresVT Awareness Day at the State House.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 11.

House concurrent resolution in memory of extraordinary Bennington K-9 Police Officer Gracie.

Offered by All Members of the House,

Offered by All Members of the Senate,

H.C.R. 12.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 University of Vermont Catamounts on winning their school's first NCAA Division I men's soccer championship (College Cup).

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 13.

House concurrent resolution in memory of the former esteemed Clerk of the Vermont House of Representatives Robert Louis Picher of Winooski.

Offered by Rep. Mrowicki,

H.C.R. 14.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Putney Library on the 20th anniversary of its current home.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 15.

House concurrent resolution congratulating former Bennington Acting Police Chief Wally Mattison on his centennial birthday.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 16.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Bennington Select Board Chair, Representative, and Assistant Judge James H. Colvin.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 17.

House concurrent resolution honoring the Green Mountain Hometown Heroes Banner Program and its recognized members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Offered by Reps. Sibilia and others,

H.C.R. 18.

House concurrent resolution honoring Vermont's communications union districts for their visionary leadership and effective efforts in bringing world class fiber optic service to rural communities.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 9, which was agreed to on a division of the Senate, Yeas 25, Nays 4.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Pursuant to the Senate Rules, in the absence of the President, the Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore*.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 10.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 10. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 7, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, February 7, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 11, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 40.

By Senator Westman,

An act relating to authorizing drawdown of dams during emergency flood events.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 41.

By Senator Westman,

An act relating to authorizing the use of State waters by hydroelectric generation facilities.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 42.

By Senators Hardy, Clarkson, Gulick, Major, Plunkett, Vyhovsky, Watson and White,

An act relating to implementing the Restaurant Meals Program.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 43.

By Senators White, Chittenden, Clarkson, Gulick, Vyhovsky and Watson,

An act relating to reference-based pricing and cost-containment in the State employees' health plan.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 44.

By Senators White, Clarkson, Gulick, Harrison, Hashim and Major,

An act relating to requiring legislative approval prior to entering into certain immigration agreements.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 45.

By Senators Douglass, Beck, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Harrison, Hart, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White and Williams,

An act relating to protection from nuisance suits for agricultural activities.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 46.

By Senators White, Beck, Brennan, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Mattos, Perchlik and Weeks,

An act relating to the taxation of vehicles used for forestry operations.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 47.

By Senator Lyons,

An act relating to cancellation of motor vehicle purchases.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 27.

An act relating to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 35.

An act relating to unmerging the individual and small group health insurance markets.

To the Committee on Finance.

Third Reading Ordered

S. 7.

Senator Vyhovsky, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to automobile insurance.

Reported that the bill ought to pass.

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

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Ram Hinsdale, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, February 5, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Amy Spagna of Woodstock.

Committee Relieved of Further Consideration; Bills Committed

S. 43.

On motion of Senator Collamore, the Committee on Government Operations was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to reference-based pricing and cost-containment in the State employees' health plan,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 44.

On motion of Senator Collamore, the Committee on Government Operations was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to requiring legislative approval prior to entering into certain immigration agreements,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Judiciary.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 48.

By Senator Clarkson,

An act relating to workforce leadership in Vermont.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 49.

By Senators Gulick, Hardy, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to protecting the privacy of individuals seeking reproductive health care services.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 50.

By Senators Watson, Beck, Bongartz, Hardy and Williams,

An act relating to increasing the size of solar net metering projects that qualify for expedited registration.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Bill Passed

S. 7.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to automobile insurance.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, February 6, 2025.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Walter Brownridge of Montpelier.

Message from the House No. 13

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 31. An act relating to claim edit standards and prior authorization requirements.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 51.

By Senators Hardy, Clarkson, Gulick, Harrison, Major, Norris, Vyhovsky, Weeks and White,

An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit.

To the Committee on Finance.

S. 52.

By Senator Watson,

An act relating to consolidation pathways.

To the Committee on Education.

S. 53.

By Senators Gulick, Clarkson, Hardy, Vyhovsky, Watson and White,

An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 54.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick, Harrison, Hart and White,

An act relating to voluntary engagement in sex work.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 31.

An act relating to claim edit standards and prior authorization requirements.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Third Reading Ordered; Rules Suspended; Bill Passed in Concurrence; Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

H. 78.

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

An act relating to the use of the Australian ballot system in local elections.

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.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was placed on all remaining stages of its passage.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, February 7, 2025.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 14

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 10. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 7, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 55.

By Senators Hardy and Gulick,

An act relating to reference-based pricing for hospital services.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 56.

By Senators Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Vyhovsky, Weeks and White,

An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 57.

By Senators Watson, Bongartz, Lyons and White,

An act relating to the Standard Offer Program.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 9.

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to after-hours access to orders against sexual assault.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 12 V.S.A. § 5136(b) is amended to read:

(b)(1) The Court Administrator is authorized to contract with public or private agencies to assist plaintiffs to seek relief and to gain access to Superior Court. Law enforcement agencies shall assist in carrying out the intent of this section.

(2) The Court Administrator shall establish procedures to ensure access to orders against sexual assault after regular court hours or on weekends and holidays in accordance with subdivisions (A)–(D) of this subdivision.

(A) The court shall designate an authorized person to receive requests for ex parte emergency relief orders against sexual assault submitted after regular court hours pursuant to section 5134 of this title, including requests made by reliable electronic means according to the procedures in this subdivision (2).

(B) If a secure setting is not available for processing an ex parte emergency relief order against sexual assault submitted after regular court hours, or if the authorized person determines that electronic submission is appropriate under the circumstances, the authorized person shall inform the applicant that a complaint and affidavit may be submitted electronically.

(C) The affidavit shall be sworn to or affirmed by administration of the oath over the telephone to the applicant by the authorized person and shall conclude with the following statement: "I declare under the penalty of perjury pursuant to the laws of the State of Vermont that the foregoing is true and accurate. I understand that making false statements is a crime subject to a term of imprisonment or a fine, or both, as provided by 13 V.S.A. § 2904." The authorized person shall note on the affidavit the date and time that the oath was administered.

(D) The authorized person shall communicate the contents of the complaint and affidavit to a judicial officer telephonically or by reliable electronic means. The judicial officer shall decide whether to grant or deny the complaint and issue the order solely on the basis of the contents of the affidavit or affidavits provided. The judicial officer shall communicate the decision to the authorized person, who shall communicate it to the applicant. If the order is issued, it shall be delivered to the appropriate law enforcement agency for service and to the holding station.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on September 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Message from the House No. 15

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 34. An act relating to workforce leadership in Vermont.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 19. House concurrent resolution congratulating Vermonter Noah Dines on establishing a new one-year world vertical skiing record of 3,590,097 feet.

H.C.R. 20. House concurrent resolution honoring the Vermonters who created the Tony Award-winning musical Hadestown and Montpelier High

School's role in the Washington County teen performances.

H.C.R. 21. House concurrent resolution expressing strong appreciation for the essential role of Vermont's school board members in the State's public education system and designating February as School Board Recognition Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 22. House concurrent resolution designating February 12, 2025 as Farm to School and Child Awareness Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 23. House concurrent resolution designating February 13, 2025 as Youth Mentoring Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 24. House concurrent resolution designating February 12, 2025, as Vermont Outdoor Recreation Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 25. House concurrent resolution recognizing the vital role of Vermont 211 on its 20th anniversary and recognizing February 11, 2025 as National 211 Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 26. House concurrent resolution congratulating Ilona Delsing Rosa Maher on her 2024 Paris Olympics rugby sevens bronze medal.

H.C.R. 27. House concurrent resolution honoring Joan W. Coursier for her exemplary community service devising and leading the Halifax senior meal program.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Lipsky and others,

H.C.R. 19.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Vermonter Noah Dines on establishing a new one-year world vertical skiing record of 3,590,097 feet.

Offered by Reps. McCann and others,

Offered by Senators Watson, Cummings and Perchlik,

H.C.R. 20.

House concurrent resolution honoring the Vermonters who created the Tony Award-winning musical Hadestown and Montpelier High School's role in the Washington County teen performances.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 21.

House concurrent resolution expressing strong appreciation for the essential role of Vermont's school board members in the State's public education system and designating February as School Board Recognition Month in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Cole and others,

H.C.R. 22.

House concurrent resolution designating February 12, 2025 as Farm to School and Child Awareness Day at the State House.

Offered by Rep. Cordes,

H.C.R. 23.

House concurrent resolution designating February 13, 2025 as Youth Mentoring Day at the State House.

Offered by Rep. White,

H.C.R. 24.

House concurrent resolution designating February 12, 2025, as Vermont Outdoor Recreation Day at the State House.

Offered by House Committee on Human Services,

H.C.R. 25.

House concurrent resolution recognizing the vital role of Vermont 211 on its 20th anniversary and recognizing February 11, 2025 as National 211 Day in Vermont.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 26.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Ilona Delsing Rosa Maher on her 2024 Paris Olympics rugby sevens bronze medal.

Offered by Rep. Carris-Duncan,

H.C.R. 27.

House concurrent resolution honoring Joan W. Coursier for her exemplary community service devising and leading the Halifax senior meal program.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 10.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Katelyn Macrae of Richmond.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 11.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 11. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 14, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, February 14, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 18, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 58.

By Senator Brennan,

An act relating to requirements for the pay plans of certain law enforcement officers and firefighters employed by the State.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 59.

By Senator Hardy,

An act relating to amendments to Vermont's Open Meeting Law.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 60.

By Senators Hardy, Heffernan, Major and Plunkett,

An act relating to establishing the Farm Security Special Fund to provide grants for farm losses due to weather conditions.

To the Committee on Agriculture.

S. 61.

By Senator Brennan,

An act relating to automatic opening knives.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 62.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Clarkson, Gulick, Harrison, Lyons, Perchlik, Watson and White,

An act relating to privatization contracts.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 63.

By Senators Lyons, Cummings and Gulick,

An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 64.

By Senators White, Baruth, Beck, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Douglass, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Major, Mattos, Norris, Plunkett, Vyhovsky, Weeks and Williams,

An act relating to amendments to the scope of practice for optometrists.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 65.

By Senators Watson, Clarkson and White,

An act relating to energy efficiency utility jurisdiction.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 66.

By Senators White, Clarkson, Gulick, Major and Watson,

An act relating to motor vehicle noise, exhaust modifications, and engine compression brakes.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 34.

An act relating to workforce leadership in Vermont.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Message from the Governor
Appointments Referred

A message was received from the Governor, by Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, submitting the following appointments, which were referred to committees as indicated:

Johnson, Kerrick L. of Middlesex - Commissioner, Department of Public Service - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027.

To the Committee on Finance.

Fallar, Gail of Tinmouth - Member of the Current Use Advisory Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Howrigan, Harold of Sheldon - Member of the Current Use Advisory Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Lagerquist, Josh of Montpelier - Member of the Current Use Advisory Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Hogan, Michael of Marshfield - Member of the Current Use Advisory Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Foster, Ted of Vergennes - Member of the Current Use Advisory Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Hastings, Walter of South Royalton - Member of the Current Use Advisory Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Richardson, Amy of Northfield - Member of the Vermont Housing Conservation Board - from February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2028.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bill Passed

S. 9.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to after-hours access to orders against sexual assault.

Third Reading Ordered

S. 30.

Senator Hardy, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to updating and reorganizing the health insurance statutes in 8 V.S.A. chapter 107.

Reported that the bill ought to pass.

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

Third Reading Ordered

H. 35.

Senator Cummings, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to unmerging the individual and small group health insurance markets.

Reported that the bill ought to passage 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.

Message from the House No. 16

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 141. An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, February 12, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Joint Senate Resolutions Adopted on the Part of the Senate

Joint Senate resolutions of the following titles were offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and are as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 12. Joint resolution providing for the election of a Sergeant at Arms, and three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the two Houses meet in Joint Assembly on Thursday, February 20, 2025, at ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon to elect a Sergeant at Arms, and three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College. In case election of all such officers shall not be made on that day, the two Houses shall meet in Joint Assembly at ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, on each succeeding day, Saturdays and Sundays excepted, and proceed in such election, until all such officers are elected.

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 13. Joint resolution establishing a procedure for the conduct of the election of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College trustees by plurality vote by the General Assembly in 2025.

Whereas, in 1997 the election of three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was decided by plurality vote, which required one ballot only, and

Whereas, in 1999 the election of three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was decided by majority vote, which required a total of eight ballots, and

Whereas, in 2001 and subsequent bienniums the elections of three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College were decided by plurality vote, each of which required one ballot only, and

Whereas, if an election for multiple vacancies is to be decided by a plurality vote, then a great savings of time can be effectuated, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That, notwithstanding the current provisions of Joint Rule 10, and for this election only, the election of three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College at a Joint Assembly to be held on February 20, 2025, shall be governed by the following procedure:

(1) All candidates for the office of trustee shall be voted upon and decided on the same ballot; members may vote for any number of candidates up to and including the maximum number of vacancies to be filled, which in this case shall be three.

(2) The three candidates receiving the most votes shall be declared elected to fill the three vacancies.

(3) In the event that the first balloting for the trustee vacancies results in a tie vote for one or more of the three vacant positions, then voting shall continue on successive ballots until the vacancies have been filled, again by election declared of those candidates receiving the most votes.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 141.

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

To the Committee on Appropriations.

Bill Passed

S. 30.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to updating and reorganizing the health insurance statutes in 8 V.S.A. chapter 107.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 35.

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

An act relating to unmerging the individual and small group health insurance markets.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, February 13, 2025.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 17

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 118. An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 67.

By Senators Clarkson, Gulick, Watson and White,

An act relating to increasing the State minimum wage based on the livable wage.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 68.

By Senator Williams,

An act relating to repealing the Affordable Heat Act.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 69.

By Senators Harrison, Bongartz, Brennan, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Perchlik, Plunkett, Watson, Weeks and White,

An act relating to an age-appropriate design code.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 118.

An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Election of Senate Members to the Judicial Nominating Board

The President announced that the next order of business was the election of three members of the Senate to serve on the Judicial Nominating Board pursuant to 4 V.S.A. § 601.

Senator Baruth, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, placed in nomination the names of the following Senators to serve on the Board:

JOSEPH D. MAJOR

of Windsor District, as the majority party member of the Board.

ROBERT W. NORRIS

of Franklin District, as the minority party member of the Board.

NADER A. HASHIM

of Windham District, as the third member of the Board.

Senator Lyons of Chittenden-Southeast District seconded these nominations.

There being no further nominations, on motion of Senator Baruth, the nominations were closed, and the Secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for

JOSEPH D. MAJOR

of Windsor District, as the majority party member of the Board, for a term of two years or until his successor is elected and has qualified.

ROBERT W. NORRIS

of Franklin District, as the minority party member of the Board, for a term of two years or until his successor is elected and has qualified.

NADER A. HASHIM

of Windham District, as the third member of the Board, for a term of two years or until his successor is elected and has qualified.

Appointment of Senate Member to the Governor's Snowmobile Council

Pursuant to the provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 3216, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Governor's Snowmobile Council during this biennium:

Senator Brennan

Appointment of Senate Members to the Legislative Committee on Judicial Rules

Pursuant to the provisions of 12 V.S.A. § 3, the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Legislative Committee on Judicial Rules for terms of two years:

Senator Brock
Senator Clarkson
Senator Hashim
Senator Vyhovsky

Appointment of Senate Member to the Agriculture Fairs and Field Days Capital Program Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 5608(b), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Agriculture Fairs and Field Days Capital Program Advisory Committee during this biennium:

Senator Norris

Appointment of Senate Members to the Legislative Advisory Committee on the State House

Pursuant to the provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 651(b)(2), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Legislative Advisory Committee on the State House during this biennium:

Senator Hardy
Senator Harrison
Senator Clarkson

Appointment of Senate Members to the Cannabis Control Board Nominating Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 7 V.S.A. § 842 (2)(b)(3), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senators to serve on the Cannabis Control Board Nominating Committee during this biennium:

Senator Ram Hinsdale
Senator Vyhovsky

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, February 14, 2025.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Rick Swanson of Stowe.

Message from the House No. 18

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 11. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 14, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Message from the House No. 19

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 41. An act relating to abuse of the dead body of a person.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolutions originating in the Senate of the following titles:

J.R.S. 12. Joint resolution providing for the election of a Sergeant at Arms, and three trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College.

J.R.S. 13. Joint resolution establishing a procedure for the conduct of the election of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College trustees by plurality vote by the General Assembly in 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 28. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Bellows Free Academy-Fairfax High School Bullets Division III championship baseball team.

H.C.R. 29. House concurrent resolution congratulating Montgomery runner Elinor Purrier St. Pierre on her outstanding athletic achievement at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

H.C.R. 30. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative, House Republican Leader, and Milton Town Manager Donald H. Turner Jr..

H.C.R. 31. House concurrent resolution in memory of former University of Vermont associate professor, poet, and community leader Mary Jane Dickerson.

H.C.R. 32. House concurrent resolution honoring former Killington Town Clerk and Treasurer Lucrecia Wonsor for her insightful municipal government leadership.

H.C.R. 33. House concurrent resolution honoring criminal defense and personal injury attorney and Thetford Academy indoor track coach Charles Buttrey of Thetford.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered concurrent resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

S.C.R. 2. Senate concurrent resolution honoring the Vermont Old Cemetery Association.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Pages Honored

In appreciation of their many services to the members of the General Assembly, the President recognized the following-named pages who are completing their services today and presented them with letters of appreciation.

Peter Burkholder of Barnard
Salvador Doyle of Montpelier
Lucy Hakim of Shelburne
Daphne Krohn of South Burlington
Dean Roy of Stowe
Hayley Sherman of East Montpelier
Henry Smith of Shelburne

Committee Relieved of Further Consideration; Bill Committed

S. 64.

On motion of Senator Lyons, the Committee on Health and Welfare was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to amendments to the scope of practice for optometrists,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 41.

An act relating to abuse of the dead body of a person.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Appointment Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, upon a full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nomination of

Johnson, Kerrick L. of Middlesex - Commissioner, Department of Public Service - January 6, 2025 to January 31, 2025.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Senate Concurrent Resolution

The following joint concurrent resolution, having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, was adopted on the part of the Senate:

Offered by Senators Weeks, Collamore, Williams, Baruth, Bongartz, Chittenden, Clarkson, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Hashim, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Norris, Perchlik and Watson,

Offered by All Members of the House,

S.C.R. 2.

Senate concurrent resolution honoring the Vermont Old Cemetery Association.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Bartley and Branagan,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 28.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Bellows Free Academy-Fairfax High School Bullets Division III championship baseball team.

Offered by All Members of the House,

Offered by Senators Brock and Norris,

H.C.R. 29.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Montgomery runner Elinor Purrier St. Pierre on her outstanding athletic achievement at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Offered by All Members of the House,

Offered by All Members of the Senate,

H.C.R. 30.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative, House Republican Leader, and Milton Town Manager Donald H. Turner Jr.

Offered by Reps. Graning and Squirrell,

H.C.R. 31.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former University of Vermont associate professor, poet, and community leader Mary Jane Dickerson.

Offered by Rep. Harrison,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 32.

House concurrent resolution honoring former Killington Town Clerk and Treasurer Lucrecia Wonsor for her insightful municipal government leadership.

Offered by Reps. Masland and Holcombe,

H.C.R. 33.

House concurrent resolution honoring criminal defense and personal injury attorney and Thetford Academy indoor track coach Charles Buttrey of Thetford.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 11.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Kenzan of East Calais.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 14.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 14. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 21, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, February 21, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bill of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 70.

By Senators Clarkson, Harrison, Hashim, Major, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to data brokers and personal information.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 71.

By Senators Clarkson, Harrison, Hashim, Major, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to consumer data privacy and online surveillance.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 72.

By Senators Perchlik, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Harrison, Major, Vyhovsky, Watson and White,

An act relating to divestment of State pension funds of investments in the fossil fuel industry.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 73.

By Senator Weeks,

An act relating to requiring notice of an adverse possession claim to the record property owner.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, February 19, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Rules Suspended; Bill Not Referred to Committee on Finance

H. 141

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, and, pending referral of the bill to the Committee on Finance pursuant to Senate Rule 31, Senator Cummings moved that the rules be suspended and House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Not be referred to the Committee on Finance pursuant to Senate Rule 31 (and thereby remain on the Calendar for notice),

Which was agreed to.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 74.

By Senators Lyons, Gulick and Harrison,

An act relating to the collection, sharing, and selling of consumer health data.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 75.

By Senators White, Clarkson, Gulick, Major and Watson,

An act relating to transportation initiatives to improve equity and infrastructure, increase resiliency, and reduce emissions.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 76.

By Senator Lyons,

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

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 77.

By Senators Lyons, Gulick and Harrison,

An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 78.

By Senators Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Harrison, Hashim, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Watson, Weeks, White and Williams,

An act relating to the creation of the Vermont-Ireland Trade Commission.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 31.

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

An act relating to claim edit standards and prior authorization requirements.

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.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Thursday, February 20, 2025.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

Pursuant to Rule 8 of the Senate Rules, in the absence of the President (who was acting Governor) and the President *pro tempore*, the Senate was called to order by unanimous consent by John H. Bloomer, Jr., Secretary of the Senate at 10:25 A.M for the sole purpose of electing a temporary President *pro tempore* to preside in the Joint Assembly.

There being a quorum, the Secretary proceeded to explain the reason and process for which the Senate had been called to order by unanimous consent of the 29 Senators present. The Senate adjourned on the previous legislative day to Friday, February 21, 2025. Because the President was acting Governor and the President *pro tempore* was unavailable, neither were able to preside over the Joint Assembly per Joint Rule 8 and the Senate needed to elect a temporary President *pro tempore* to preside over the Joint Assembly today. As the Senate was being called to order by unanimous consent, if a Senator objected, the Senate would instead proceed to the Joint Assembly pursuant to J.R.S. 12, and elect a temporary President *pro tempore* at the beginning of the Joint Assembly in the Hall of Representatives. There being no objection to the election of a temporary President *pro tempore* for the sole purpose of presiding over the Joint Assembly, the Secretary then opened the floor for nominations.

The Senator from Washington District, Senator Perchlik, nominated Senator Virginia Lyons of Chittenden-Southeast District for the position of temporary President *pro tempore* of the Vermont Senate for the limited purpose of presiding over the Joint Assembly. The Senator from Franklin District, Senator Norris, seconded the nomination. Thereupon, the Senate elected Senator Lyons, of Chittenden-Southeast District to the position of temporary President *pro tempore* of the Vermont Senate for purposes of presiding over the Joint Assembly.

Senator Lyons then assumed the Chair and lead the Senate to the Hall of the Representatives for purposes of convening the Joint Assembly, pursuant to J.R.S. 12.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2025

Pursuant to Rule 8 of the Senate Rules, in the absence of the President and the President *pro tempore*, the time for convening of the Senate having arrived, the Senate was called to order by John H. Bloomer, Jr., Secretary of the Senate.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 20

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Mx. Nigel Hicks-Tibbles, its First Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 13. An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for home- and community-based service providers.

H. 44. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 14. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on February 21, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The Governor has informed the House that on February 13, 2025, he approved and signed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 78. An act relating to the use of the Australian ballot system in local elections.

The Governor has informed the House that on February 19, 2025, he approved and signed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 35. An act relating to unmerging the individual and small group health insurance markets.

Message from the House No. 21

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 98. An act relating to confirmatory adoptions.

H. 154. An act relating to designating November as the Vermont Month of the Veteran.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 34. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Green Mountain Union High School Chieftains Division III championship boys soccer team.

H.C.R. 35. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the March 13, 1775 Westminster Massacre.

H.C.R. 36. House concurrent resolution honoring Charlotte Board of Civil Authority Chair, and Ski and Ride Program Coordinator Michael Krasnow.

H.C.R. 37. House concurrent resolution congratulating Meara Seery of Brattleboro on being named Miss Vermont 2024.

H.C.R. 38. House concurrent resolution honoring dedicated Jamaica community leader and volunteer Clara Robinson.

H.C.R. 39. House concurrent resolution designating February 19, 2025 as Recovery Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 40. House concurrent resolution designating February 20, 2025 as NEK Day at the State House.

Adjournment

At 11:45 A.M. and no quorum of the Senate having assembled, pursuant to Rule 9 of the Senate Rules, the Senate adjourned until nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Tuesday, February 25, 2025 pursuant to J.R.S. 14.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Recess

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate recessed until 10:00 A.M.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Recess

On motion of Senator Perchlik, the Senate recessed until the fall of the gavel.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Rules Suspended; Bill Committed

S. 53.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Collamore, the rules were suspended and Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Thereupon, pending the reading of the report of the Committee on Government Operations, Senator Collamore moved that Senate Rule 49 be suspended in order to commit the bill to the Committee on Health and Welfare with the report of the Committee on Government Operations *intact*,

Which was agreed to.

Motions Refused; Committee Not Relieved

Senator Williams moved that the Committee on Natural Resources be relieved of Senate bill entitled:

S. 68. An act relating to repealing the Affordable Heat Act.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Committee on Natural Resources be relieved of the bill?, Senator Brock moved that the question on the motion of Senator Williams be postponed until Friday, February 28, 2025.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the motion of Senator Williams be postponed until Friday, February 28, 2025?, was disagreed to on a roll call, Yeas 12, Nays 18.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Brennan, Brock, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks,

Westman, Williams.

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

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the Committee on Natural Resources be relieved of the bill?, was disagreed to on a roll call, Yeas 13, Nays 17.

Senator Perchlik 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, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

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

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 79.

By Senators Douglass, Beck, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Harrison, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Plunkett and Williams,

An act relating to establishing the Recreational Trails Compensation Study Committee.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 80.

By Senators Douglass, Cummings, Gulick, Harrison, Hart, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Norris, Westman and White,

An act relating to establishing Vermont Digital Addictions Awareness Day.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 81.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Baruth, Chittenden, Clarkson, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Lyons, Major, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson and White,

An act relating to prohibiting municipal regulation of the use of hygienic face masks.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 82.

By Senator Brennan,

An act relating to traffic cameras and traffic violations for illegally passing a school bus.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 83.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to protections against medical debt.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 84.

By Senators Perchlik, Chittenden, Clarkson, Hardy, Harrison, Watson, Westman and White,

An act relating to State contracting standards for advertising.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 85.

By Senator Harrison,

An act relating to approval of railroad lease extensions.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 86.

By Senators Hardy, Clarkson and Vyhovsky,

An act relating to establishing penalties for the failure of a candidate to file campaign finance disclosures.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 87.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to extradition procedures.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 88.

By Senators Harrison, Brock, Clarkson, Major, Plunkett, Watson and White,

An act relating to creating an enhanced growth incentive for employee-owned businesses.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 89.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to expanding survivor benefits.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 13.

An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for home- and community-based service providers.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 44.

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 98.

An act relating to confirmatory adoptions.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 154.

An act relating to designating November as the Vermont Month of the Veteran.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 31.

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

An act relating to claim edit standards and prior authorization requirements.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 141.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.105 is amended to read:

Sec. B.105 Agency of digital services - communications and information technology

Personal services	82,994,362	82,994,362
Operating expenses	~~62,547,212~~	61,761,212
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574
Source of funds		
General fund	209,808	209,808
Special funds	511,723	511,723
Internal service funds	~~144,820,043~~	144,034,043
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574

Sec. 2. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.145 is amended to read:

Sec. B.145 Total general government

Source of funds		
General fund	117,405,610	117,405,610
Transportation fund	4,292,149	4,292,149
Special funds	31,882,209	31,882,209
Federal funds	1,467,374	1,467,374
Internal service funds	~~214,635,950~~	213,849,950
Interdepartmental transfers	7,053,789	7,053,789
Enterprise funds	4,298	4,298
Pension trust funds	4,800,305	4,800,305
Private purpose trust funds	1,329,205	1,329,205
Total	~~382,870,889~~	382,084,889

Sec. 3. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.200 is amended to read:

Sec. B.200 Attorney general

Personal services	~~14,435,517~~	14,485,517
Operating expenses	2,015,028	2,015,028
Grants	20,000	20,000
Total	~~16,470,545~~	16,520,545

Source of funds		
General fund	~~7,391,661~~	7,441,661
Special funds	2,355,424	2,355,424
Tobacco fund	422,000	422,000
Federal funds	1,743,215	1,743,215
Interdepartmental transfers	4,558,245	4,558,245
Total	~~16,470,545~~	16,520,545

Sec. 4. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.204 is amended to read:

Sec. B.204 Judiciary

Personal services	~~58,439,095~~	58,827,799
Operating expenses	~~12,479,384~~	14,640,960
Grants	121,030	121,030
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789
Source of funds		
General fund	~~63,414,698~~	65,964,978
Special funds	4,503,401	4,503,401
Federal funds	953,928	953,928
Interdepartmental transfers	2,167,482	2,167,482
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789

Sec. 5. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.205 is amended to read:

Sec. B.205 State's attorneys

Personal services	~~17,309,679~~	17,548,979
Operating expenses	~~2,034,016~~	2,202,516
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495
Source of funds		
General fund	~~18,734,634~~	19,142,434
Federal funds	31,000	31,000
Interdepartmental transfers	578,061	578,061
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495

Sec. 6. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.206.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.206.1 Crime Victims Advocates

Personal services	3,016,156	3,016,156
Operating expenses	~~104,396~~	142,396
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552

Sec. 7. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.208 is amended to read:

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	~~4,620,756~~	5,397,783
Operating expenses	6,022,923	6,022,923
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,179,193~~	8,092,770
Special funds	4,105	4,105
Federal funds	396,362	396,362
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,064,019~~	2,927,469
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706

Sec. 8. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.210 is amended to read:

Sec. B.210 Public safety - criminal justice services

Personal services	~~5,387,100~~	4,705,897
Operating expenses	2,152,467	2,152,467
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364
Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,829,099~~	2,172,295
Special funds	~~4,975,847~~	3,951,448
Federal funds	734,621	734,621
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364

Sec. 9. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.236 is amended to read:

Sec. B.236 Human rights commission

Personal services	~~927,697~~	1,014,559
Operating expenses	~~115,103~~	125,378
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,139,937
Source of funds		
General fund	~~953,800~~	1,050,937
Federal funds	89,000	89,000
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,139,937

Sec. 10. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.241 is amended to read:

Sec. B.241 Total protection to persons and property

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,238,448~~	233,638,438
Transportation fund	20,250,000	20,250,000
Special funds	~~119,824,272~~	118,799,873
Tobacco fund	672,579	672,579

Federal funds	162,959,452	162,959,452
Interdepartmental transfers	~~16,031,869~~	14,895,319
Enterprise funds	15,070,107	15,070,107
Total	~~563,046,727~~	566,285,768

Sec. 11. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.300 is amended to read:

Sec. B.300 Human services - agency of human services - secretary's office

Personal services	~~16,219,746~~	18,219,746
Operating expenses	~~7,220,486~~	6,062,286
Grants	3,795,202	3,795,202
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,913,202~~	11,923,905
Special funds	135,517	135,517
Federal funds	~~13,565,080~~	11,606,177
Global Commitment fund	~~0~~	4,300,000
Interdepartmental transfers	~~621,635~~	111,635
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234

Sec. 12. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.301 is amended to read:

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Source of funds		
General fund	~~668,380,623~~	716,109,638
Special funds	32,047,905	32,047,905
Tobacco fund	21,049,373	21,049,373
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
Federal funds	~~1,285,494,243~~	1,363,223,270
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,487,210~~	4,124,245
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988

Sec. 13. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.305 is amended to read:

Sec. B.305 AHS - administrative fund

Personal services	330,000	330,000
Operating expenses	~~13,170,000~~	16,870,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Source of funds		
Interdepartmental transfers	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000

Sec. 14. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.306 is amended to read:

Sec. B.306 Department of Vermont health access - administration

Personal services	~~134,929,148~~	136,693,560
Operating expenses	~~44,171,193~~	39,250,661
Grants	3,112,301	3,112,301
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,872,315~~	42,023,781
Special funds	4,733,015	4,733,015
Federal funds	~~128,790,580~~	124,836,223
Global Commitment fund	4,308,574	4,308,574
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,508,158~~	3,154,929
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522

Sec. 15. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.307 is amended to read:

Sec. B.307 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – global commitment

Personal services	547,983	547,983
Grants	~~899,550,794~~	964,407,046
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029

Sec. 16. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.309 is amended to read:

Sec. B.309 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – state only

Grants	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Source of funds		
General fund	~~62,151,546~~	62,308,757
Global Commitment fund	~~882,402~~	5,471,838
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595

Sec. 17. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.310 is amended to read:

Sec. B.310 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid non-waiver matched

Grants	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,511,405~~	13,459,034
Federal funds	~~22,483,483~~	24,773,397
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431

Sec. 18. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.311 is amended to read:

Sec. B.311 Health - administration and support

Personal services	8,373,168	8,373,168
Operating expenses	~~7,519,722~~	8,166,662
Grants	7,985,727	7,985,727
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,189,843~~	3,513,313
Special funds	2,308,186	2,308,186
Federal funds	~~11,040,433~~	11,363,903
Global Commitment fund	7,173,924	7,173,924
Interdepartmental transfers	166,231	166,231
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557

Sec. 19. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.312 is amended to read:

Sec. B.312 Health - public health

Personal services	67,812,371	67,812,371
Operating expenses	11,025,497	11,025,497
Grants	~~46,766,832~~	46,866,832
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,908,892~~	13,008,892
Special funds	24,906,804	24,906,804
Tobacco fund	1,088,918	1,088,918
Federal funds	64,038,301	64,038,301
Global Commitment fund	17,036,150	17,036,150
Interdepartmental transfers	5,600,635	5,600,635
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700

Sec. 20. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.313 is amended to read:

Sec. B.313 Health - substance use programs

Personal services	6,570,967	6,570,967
Operating expenses	511,500	511,500
Grants	~~58,215,510~~	59,240,635
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,672,061~~	7,697,186
Special funds	2,413,678	2,413,678
Tobacco fund	949,917	949,917
Federal funds	15,456,754	15,456,754
Global Commitment fund	39,805,567	39,805,567
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102

Sec. 21. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.314 is amended to read:

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	50,191,086	50,191,086
Operating expenses	~~5,517,999~~	5,709,973
Grants	~~270,625,138~~	272,536,080
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139
Source of funds		
General fund	~~25,555,311~~	26,279,270
Special funds	1,718,092	1,718,092
Federal funds	~~11,436,913~~	12,661,803
Global Commitment fund	~~287,609,767~~	287,763,834
Interdepartmental transfers	14,140	14,140
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139

Sec. 22. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.316 is amended to read:

Sec. B.316 Department for children and families - administration & support services

Personal services	~~46,644,080~~	44,844,080
Operating expenses	~~17,560,755~~	19,402,705
Grants	5,627,175	5,627,175
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,722,724~~	40,113,958
Special funds	2,781,912	2,781,912
Federal funds	~~24,448,223~~	24,098,939
Global Commitment fund	2,417,024	2,417,024
Interdepartmental transfers	462,127	462,127
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960

Sec. 23. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.317 is amended to read:

Sec. B.317 Department for children and families - family services

Personal services	~~45,197,694~~	45,286,553
Operating expenses	5,315,309	5,315,309
Grants	~~98,251,027~~	97,732,465
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327
Source of funds		
General fund	~~58,838,741~~	59,984,059
Special funds	729,587	729,587
Federal funds	~~34,666,196~~	36,180,206
Global Commitment fund	~~54,514,506~~	51,425,475
Interdepartmental transfers	15,000	15,000
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327

Sec. 24. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.318 is amended to read:

Sec. B.318 Department for children and families - child development

Personal services	5,908,038	5,908,038
Operating expenses	813,321	813,321
Grants	~~223,329,336~~	211,815,836
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195
Source of funds		
General fund	~~76,723,518~~	51,443,165
Special funds	~~96,312,000~~	109,512,000
Federal funds	~~43,511,414~~	42,902,383
Global Commitment fund	~~13,503,763~~	14,679,647
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195

Sec. 25. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.319 is amended to read:

Sec. B.319 Department for children and families - office of child support

Personal services	~~13,157,660~~	13,061,794
Operating expenses	3,759,992	3,759,992
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786
Source of funds		
General fund	~~5,200,064~~	5,163,429
Special funds	455,719	455,719
Federal funds	~~10,874,269~~	10,815,038
Interdepartmental transfers	387,600	387,600
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786

Sec. 26. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.320 is amended to read:

Sec. B.320 Department for children and families - aid to aged, blind and disabled

Personal services	~~2,252,206~~	2,481,741
Grants	~~10,717,444~~	10,369,155
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896
Source of funds		
General fund	~~7,376,133~~	7,368,843
Global Commitment fund	~~5,593,517~~	5,482,053
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896

Sec. 27. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.321 is amended to read:

Sec. B.321 Department for children and families - general assistance

Personal services	15,000	15,000
Grants	~~11,054,252~~	10,702,625
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625

Source of funds		
General fund	~~10,811,345~~	10,486,987
Federal funds	~~11,320~~	11,070
Global Commitment fund	~~246,587~~	219,568
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625

Sec. 28. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.322 is amended to read:

Sec. B.322 Department for children and families - 3SquaresVT

Grants	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Source of funds		
Federal funds	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812

Sec. 29. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.323 is amended to read:

Sec. B.323 Department for children and families - reach up

Operating expenses	23,821	23,821
Grants	~~37,230,488~~	36,730,493
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314
Source of funds		
General fund	~~24,733,042~~	24,233,047
Special funds	5,970,229	5,970,229
Federal funds	2,806,330	2,806,330
Global Commitment fund	3,744,708	3,744,708
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314

Sec. 30. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.325 is amended to read:

Sec. B.325 Department for children and families - office of economic opportunity

Personal services	~~817,029~~	1,042,639
Operating expenses	100,407	100,407
Grants	~~35,466,283~~	35,812,536
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582
Source of funds		
General fund	~~28,178,010~~	28,687,068
Special funds	83,135	83,135
Federal funds	~~4,935,273~~	4,998,078
Global Commitment fund	3,187,301	3,187,301
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582

Sec. 31. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.329 is amended to read:

Sec. B.329 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - administration & support

Personal services	~~45,217,977~~	46,217,977
Operating expenses	~~6,472,558~~	6,714,680
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657
Source of funds		
General fund	~~22,916,281~~	24,037,342
Special funds	1,390,457	1,390,457
Federal funds	~~26,063,097~~	26,184,158
Global Commitment fund	35,000	35,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,285,700	1,285,700
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657

Sec. 32. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.330 is amended to read:

Sec. B.330 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - advocacy and independent living grants

Grants	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Source of funds		
General fund	~~8,392,303~~	8,504,605
Federal funds	7,321,114	7,321,114
Global Commitment fund	~~8,857,643~~	8,956,079
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798

Sec. 33. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.332 is amended to read:

Sec. B.332 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - vocational rehabilitation

Grants	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,371,845~~	371,845
Federal funds	7,558,000	7,558,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,250,000	1,250,000
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845

Sec. 34. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.333 is amended to read:

Sec. B.333 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - developmental services

Grants	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271

Source of funds		
General fund	132,732	132,732
Special funds	15,463	15,463
Federal funds	403,573	403,573
Global Commitment fund	~~328,697,576~~	330,660,503
Interdepartmental transfers	50,000	50,000
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271

Sec. 35. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - TBI home and community based waiver

Grants	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520

Sec. 36. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334.1 Disabilities, aging and independent living - Long Term Care

Grants	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Source of funds		
General fund	498,579	498,579
Federal funds	2,450,000	2,450,000
Global Commitment fund	~~290,635,966~~	344,427,543
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122

Sec. 37. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.338 is amended to read:

Sec. B.338 Corrections - correctional services

Personal services	~~147,472,104~~	148,472,104
Operating expenses	~~24,914,205~~	25,249,795
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899
Source of funds		
General fund	~~162,807,888~~	163,643,478
Special funds	935,963	935,963
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~499,888~~	999,888
Global Commitment fund	2,746,255	2,746,255
Interdepartmental transfers	396,315	396,315
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899

Sec. 38. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.342 is amended to read:

Sec. B.342 Vermont veterans' home - care and support services

Personal services	~~17,631,222~~	17,595,290
Operating expenses	~~5,013,462~~	13,247,462
Grants	0	1,583,157
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909
Source of funds		
General fund	~~4,320,687~~	11,224,018
Special funds	~~10,051,903~~	12,450,095
Federal funds	~~8,272,094~~	8,751,796
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909

Sec. 39. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.347 is amended to read:

Sec. B.347 Total human services

Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,328,118,806~~	1,364,156,647
Special funds	~~202,800,452~~	218,398,644
Tobacco fund	23,088,208	23,088,208
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~1,803,398,922~~	1,882,012,745
Global Commitment fund	~~1,980,839,553~~	2,108,560,133
Internal service funds	490,853	490,853
Interdepartmental transfers	~~32,893,535~~	34,367,341
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~5,404,708,886~~	5,664,153,128

Sec. 40. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.501 is amended to read:

Sec. B.501 Education - education services

Personal services	~~28,237,700~~	28,312,700
Operating expenses	1,134,912	1,134,912
Grants	322,345,763	322,345,763
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,387,955~~	6,462,955
Special funds	3,033,144	3,033,144
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Federal funds	340,584,414	340,584,414
Interdepartmental transfers	962,474	962,474
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375

Sec. 41. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.503 is amended to read:

Sec. B.503 Education - state-placed students

Grants	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000

Sec. 42. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504 Education - adult education and literacy

Grants	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,778,133~~	4,081,770
Federal funds	916,050	916,050
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820

Sec. 43. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504.1 Education - Flexible Pathways

Grants	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Source of funds		
General fund	921,500	921,500
Education fund	~~10,440,255~~	10,642,679
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179

Sec. 44. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.505 is amended to read:

Sec. B.505 Education - adjusted education payment

Grants	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394

Sec. 45. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.508 is amended to read:

Sec. B.508 Education - nutrition

Grants	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000

Sec. 46. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.516 is amended to read:

Sec. B.516 Total general education

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,890,519~~	229,269,156
Special funds	23,651,687	23,651,687
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Education fund	~~2,323,283,242~~	2,308,585,666
Federal funds	354,654,849	354,654,849
Global Commitment fund	260,000	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,467,771	1,467,771
Pension trust funds	3,572,780	3,572,780
Total	~~2,936,531,236~~	2,922,212,297

Sec. 47. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.704 is amended to read:

Sec. B.704 Forests, parks and recreation - forestry

Personal services	~~7,880,566~~	7,913,766
Operating expenses	1,005,046	1,005,046
Grants	~~1,712,423~~	1,713,923
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,299,512~~	6,334,212
Special funds	547,215	547,215
Federal funds	3,394,931	3,394,931
Interdepartmental transfers	356,377	356,377
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735

Sec. 48. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.710 is amended to read:

Sec. B.710 Environmental conservation - air and waste management

Personal services	27,995,328	27,995,328
Operating expenses	~~10,788,954~~	10,816,954
Grants	4,943,000	4,943,000
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282
Source of funds		
General fund	~~199,372~~	227,372
Special funds	24,643,580	24,643,580
Federal funds	18,800,064	18,800,064
Interdepartmental transfers	84,266	84,266
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282

Sec. 49. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.711 is amended to read:

Sec. B.711 Environmental conservation - office of water programs

Personal services	50,153,806	50,153,806
Operating expenses	~~8,362,915~~	8,370,915
Grants	92,365,140	92,365,140
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861
Source of funds		
General fund	~~11,887,629~~	11,895,629
Special funds	30,967,150	30,967,150
Federal funds	107,154,542	107,154,542
Interdepartmental transfers	872,540	872,540
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861

Sec. 50. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.714 is amended to read:

Sec. B.714 Total natural resources

Source of funds		
General fund	~~42,792,800~~	42,863,500
Special funds	81,275,829	81,275,829
Fish and wildlife fund	10,418,331	10,418,331
Federal funds	152,068,301	152,068,301
Interdepartmental transfers	14,131,324	14,131,324
Total	~~300,686,585~~	300,757,285

Sec. 51. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100 is amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2025 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

* * *

(d) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(8) $835,073 General Fund for the Bridges to Health Program; ~~and~~

(9) ~~$400,000~~ $550,000 General Fund for the Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey; and

(10) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity.

(e) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$16,500,000~~ $18,340,304 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing program;

(2) $1,034,065 General Fund to extend 10 Economic Services Division limited service positions, including associated operating costs, in support of the General Assistance Emergency Housing program; ~~and~~

(3) $332,000 General Fund for a 2-1-1 service line contract to operate 24 hours seven days per week;

(4) $340,000 General Fund and $660,000 federal funds for the Office of Child Support mainframe transition planning. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 703, unless otherwise reverted by a future act of the General Assembly, these appropriations shall carry forward until fully expended; and

(5) $1,800,000 General Fund shall be added to the appropriation made in Sec. B.1102(b)(4) of this act for the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

* * *

(n) Agency of Human Services Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$3,913,200~~ $5,586,324 General Fund and ~~$5,366,383~~ $7,713,259 federal funds to be used for Global Commitment match for the Medicaid Global Payment Program. To the extent that at a future date the Global Payment Program ceases to operate as a program or changes methodology to a retrospective payment program, any resulting one-time General Fund spending authority remaining at that time shall be reverted. If the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b has not been replenished in accordance with subdivision (b)(21) of Sec. B.1102 of this act, the remaining unallocated General Fund balance shall be reserved in the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b up to the amount appropriated in this subdivision.

(o) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$9,279,583~~ $13,299,583 Global Commitment for the Medicaid Global Payment Program;

(2) $150,000 General Fund to conduct a technical analysis of Vermont's health insurance markets; ~~and~~

(3) $100,000 General Fund to implement the expansion of Medicare Savings Programs eligibility;

(4) $10,000,000 General Fund for Provider Stabilization Grants; and

(5) $11,000,000 General Fund for an alternative payment model reconciliation payment to Brattleboro Retreat. All or a portion of these funds

may also be used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match. If funds are used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match, the commensurate amount of Global Commitment Fund spending authority may be requested during the Global Commitment Transfer process pursuant to Sec. E.301.1 of this act.

* * *

(v) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$200,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities that were impacted by the August and December 2023 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT and DR-4762-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of the August and December 2023 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on Federal Emergency Management Agency related projects~~

$1,800,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4810-VT and DR-4744-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of 2023 and 2024 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on FEMA-related projects.

(A) The funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) for local economic damage grants shall be distributed as follows:

(i) $75,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has at least $5,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(ii) $50,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $5,000,000 and at least $2,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iii) $30,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $2,000,000 and at least $1,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iv) $20,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $1,000,000 and at least $250,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(v) $10,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $250,000 and at least $100,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(B) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) have not been granted on or before June 30, 2025, they shall revert to the General Fund and be transferred to the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund.

(C) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) are insufficient to distribute grants to all eligible municipalities in their full amount, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511, utilize excess receipt authority to expend funds from the PILOT Special Fund for this purpose.

(w) Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $8,600,000 General Fund to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of: affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units including improvements to manufactured homes and communities; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness; recovery residences; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home- and community-based services; and

(2) $2,800,000 General Fund to complete pilot projects identified pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 186.

Sec. 52. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.100 is amended to read:

Sec. D.100 ALLOCATIONS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

(a) This act contains the following amounts allocated to special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. These allocations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of $575,662 is allocated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of $575,662 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(2) Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 from the property transfer tax and surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of $2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 314 shall be offset by the reduction of $1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and $1,000,000 from the surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2025 appropriation of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the $1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, the $1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall be restored.

(3) Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), amounts in excess of ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. The ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 shall be allocated as follows:

(A) ~~$6,404,540~~ $7,300,358 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) ~~$931,773~~ $1,187,721 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) ~~$436,060~~ $564,034 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. 53. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.101 is amended to read:

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following amounts are transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): ~~$73,212,880~~ $78,235,088.34.

* * *

(J) Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (#21555): ~~$830,000~~ $6,500,000.

(K) Education Fund (#20205): $25,000,000.

(L) Medical Insurance Fund (#55100): $18,500,000.

(M) Correctional Industries Fund (#59100): $3,135,443.

(N) Act 250 Permit Fund (#21260): $900,000.

(O) State Liability Self-Insurance Fund (#56200): $3,000,000.

(P) Emergency Personnel Survivor's Benefit Fund (#21884): $220,000.

(2) From the Transportation Fund to the:

(A) ~~Vermont Recreational Trails Fund (#21455): $370,000.~~

~~(B)~~ Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvements Fund (#21575): $523,966.

~~(C)~~(B) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $316,745.

~~(D)~~(C) Notwithstanding 19 V.S.A. § 13(c), the Transportation Fund transfer to the Central Garage fund in fiscal year 2025 shall be $0.

* * *

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025:

(1) The following amounts shall be transferred to the General Fund from the funds indicated:

(A) Cannabis Regulation Fund (#21998): ~~$12,000,000~~ $15,417,084.32.

(B) AHS Central Office Earned Federal Receipts (#22005): $4,641,960.

(C) Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund (#50250): ~~$7,000,000~~ $6,139,162.

(D) Liquor Control Fund (#50300): ~~$21,100,000~~ $9,543,353.

(E) ~~Tobacco Litigation Settlement Fund (#21370): $3,000,000.~~

~~(F)~~ Financial Institutions Supervision Fund (#21065): $1,100,000.

(F) Workforce Education and Training Fund (#21913): $2,598,921.75.

(G) Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund (#21994): the balance of the fund at the close of fiscal year 2025.

(2) The following estimated amounts, which may be all or a portion of unencumbered fund balances, shall be transferred from the following funds to the General Fund. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July meeting the final amounts transferred from each fund and certify that such transfers will not impair the agency, office, or department reliant upon each fund from meeting its statutory requirements.

(A) AG-Fees & Reimbursements-Court Order Fund (#21638): $2,000,000.

(B) Unclaimed Property Fund (#62100): ~~$6,500,000~~ $10,995,595.

(3) ~~$66,935,000~~ $63,560,450.50 of the net unencumbered fund balances in the Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21075), the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085), and the Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21080) shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(c)(1) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.3 of the Rules for State Matching Funds under the Federal Public Assistance Program, in fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may provide funding from the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund that was transferred pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(J) of this section to subgrantees prior to the completion of a project. In fiscal ~~year~~ years 2025 and 2026, up to 70 percent of the State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project for municipalities that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT may be advanced at the request of a municipality.

(2) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.1 of the Rules for State Matching Funds Under the Federal Public Assistance Program, the Secretary of Administration shall increase the standard State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project to the highest percentage possible given available funding for municipalities in counties that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events and are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT.

Sec. 54. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.102 is amended to read:

Sec. D.102 REVERSIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

* * *

3150892104 MH – Case Management Serv	~~$350,000.00~~	$350,199.34

* * *

1100892208 AOA – VT Housing Finance Agency	$3,000,000.00
1100892403 AOA – Health Equity Community Grants	$500,000.00
1120020000 Tuition Assistance Program	$133,877.86
1120892401 DHR – New Position in DHR Ops	$477,769.00
1120892402 DHR – New Position in VTHR Ops	$40,726.07
1140010000 Tax Operation Costs	$1,267,062.22
1140060000 Reappraisal and Listing Payments	$35,270.75
1140070000 Use Tax Reimbursement Program	$37,864.25
1140330000 Renter Rebates	$2,186,940.33
1140892403 Tax – Child Care Contr Positions	$3,591,823.02
1260892201 TRE – Bond Redemption	$6,000,000.00
1260980000 Debt Service	$235,445.15
1266892401 VPIC – Pension System Assets	$5,000.00
2100892201 AG – Racial Disparities	$48,465.00
2130400000 SIUS Parent Account	$395,749.64
2150010000 Mil Admin/TAGO	$142,789.80
2150050000 Mil Vet Affairs Office	$100,000.00
2160892201 CCVS – VT Forensic Nursing	$246.43
2160892304 CCVS – Kurn Hattin Survivor	$250.00
2200010000 Administration Division	$167,222.00
3310000000 Commission on Women	$25,390.43
3330892401 GMCB – VHCURES Database Implemen	$545,782.90
3400892111 Supp New Americans Refugee	$23,431.00
3400892301 AHSCO – Refugee Resettlement	$1,293.00
3420892405 HD – Regional Emergency Med	$8,295.01

3440050000 DCFS – AABD	$35,310.73
3440892110 DCF – Grants to Reachup	$5.10
3440892203 DCF – Parent Child Ctrs Cap Imp	$20,708.22
3440892214 DCF – Child Care Provider Workfor	$294.79
4100500000 VT Department of Labor	$8,000,000.00
5100070000 Education Services	$100,000.00
5100892101 AOE – VSC Committee Per Diem	$16,295.33
5100892102 AOA – Advisory Group Per Diem	$9,018.00
5100892103 AOE – ESESAG Per Diems	$8,960.00
5100892201 AOE – Comm Pub Sch Emp Hlth Ben	$29,050.00
5100892202 AOE – Task Force Equit Inclusive	$6,150.00
5100892302 AOE – Ethnic&Social Equity Per D	$14,386.24
6100010000 Administration Management and Planning	$402,052.99
6100040000 Property Tax Assessment Approp	$11,692.11
6140880005 152/00 State Asst Munic Poll Cont	$126.26
7100892301 Everyone Eats	$144,565.43
7120892304 DED – Relocated and Remote Worker	$127,314.33
8100002100 Department of Motor Vehicles	$2,482.81

* * *

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the Education Fund from the accounts indicated:

5100010000 Administration	$301,041.03
5100050000 State-Placed Students	$13,687,528.41
5100090000 Education Grant	$359,570.31
5100110000 Small School Grant	$593,700.00
5100200000 Education – Technical Education	$1,802,347.44
5100210000 Education – Flexible Pathways	$1,312,334.72
5100892405 AOE – Universal School Meals	$6,201,479.69

Sec. 55. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.103 is amended to read:

Sec. D.103 RESERVES

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following reserve transactions shall be implemented for the funds provided:

(1) General Fund.

(A) Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 308, an estimated amount of ~~$15,168,663~~ $15,168,660.85 shall be added to the General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve.

(B) $5,480,000 shall be added to the 27/53 reserve in fiscal year 2025. This action is the fiscal year 2025 contribution to the reserve for the 53rd week of Medicaid as required by 32 V.S.A. § 308e and the 27th payroll reserve as required by 32 V.S.A. § 308e.

(C) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 308b, $3,913,200 shall be unreserved from the Human Services Caseload Reserve established within the General Fund in 32 V.S.A. § 308b.

* * *

Sec. 56. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.100 is amended to read:

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of ~~43~~ 47 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2025 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

* * *

(H) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Court Diversion Assistant Director.

* * *

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

* * *

(G) Human Rights Commission:

(i) one Intake Specialist; and

(ii) one Staff Attorney Investigator.

(H) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Assistant Attorney General.

* * *

(d) The conversion of eight limited service positions to exempt permanent status is authorized in fiscal year 2025 as follows:

(1) Office of the Defender General:

(A) one Administrative Services Tech;

(B) two DG IT Specialist II's;

(C) one ODG Legal Assistant I;

(D) two Staff Attorney I's;

(E) one Financial Specialist III; and

(F) one Admin Secretary.

* * *

Sec. 57 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 56, is further amended to read:

Sec. E.100 EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 75 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 for the following:

* * *

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

* * *

(F) Office of the State Treasurer:

(i) one Director – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division; and

(ii) one Communications and Outreach Manager – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division;

* * *

Sec. 58. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.301 is amended to read:

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE; GLOBAL COMMITMENT

* * *

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of ~~$24,301,185~~ $28,307,335 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds under Global Commitment as follows:

(1) ~~$21,295,850~~ $25,302,000 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid

services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with ~~$29,204,150~~ $34,698,000 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of ~~$50,500,000~~ $60,000,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund created in 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) $3,005,335 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to ~~$4,487,210~~ $3,614,245 is transferred from the Agency of Human Services Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act.

Sec. 59. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.109 is amended to read:

Sec. G.109 PAY ACT APPROPRIATIONS; FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

(a) Executive Branch. The first and second years of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association for the Defender General, Non-Management, Supervisory, and Corrections bargaining units, and, for the purpose of appropriation, the State's Attorneys' offices bargaining unit, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; the collective bargaining agreement with the Vermont Troopers' Association for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; and salary increases for employees in the Executive Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows:

(1) Fiscal year 2025.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

(2) Fiscal year 2026.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

Sec. 60. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 7 is amended to read:

Sec. 7. TELEPHONE TAX; REPEAL; TRANSITION

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 8521 (telephone personal property tax) is repealed on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. The final monthly installment payment of the telephone personal property tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8521 levied on the net book value of the taxpayer's personal property as of December 31, ~~2024~~ 2025 shall be due on or before July 25, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(b) 32 V.S.A. § 8522 (alternative telephone gross revenues tax) is repealed on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027. The final quarterly payment of the alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due on or before January 25, ~~2026~~ 2027.

(c) Any taxpayer who paid the alternative tax imposed by 32 V.S.A. § 8522 prior to the repeal of the tax on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027 shall become subject to the income tax imposed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 151 beginning with the taxpayer's first income tax year starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. No alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due for any period included in the taxpayer's income tax filing for tax years starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(d) In fiscal year ~~2025~~ 2026, the Division of Property Valuation and Review of the Department of Taxes and all communications service providers with taxable communications property in Vermont shall be subject to the inventory and valuation provisions prescribed in 32 V.S.A. § 4452, as applicable.

Sec. 61. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

* * *

(3) Secs. 8–12 (communications property tax) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 and shall apply to grand lists lodged on or after April 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

Sec. 62. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 166, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. TRANSFER AND APPROPRIATION

Notwithstanding 7 V.S.A. § 845(c), in fiscal year 2025:

(1) $500,000.00 is transferred from the Cannabis Regulation Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 845 to the Cannabis Business Development Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987; and

(2) $500,000.00 is appropriated from the Cannabis Business ~~19~~ Development Fund to the ~~Agency of Commerce and Community Development~~ Department of Economic Development to fund technical assistance and provide loans and grants pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987.

Sec. 63. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 78 is amended to read:

Sec. 78. ~~TRANSFERS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX~~

~~Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), or any other provision of law to the contrary, amounts in excess of $32,954,775.00 from the property transfer tax shall be transferred into the General Fund. Of this amount:~~

~~(1) $6,106,335.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~

~~(2) $1,279,740.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. 64. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 96 is amended to read:

Sec. 96. APPROPRIATION; RENT ARREARS ASSISTANCE FUND

The sum of $2,500,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Vermont State Housing Authority~~ Department of Housing and Community Development in fiscal year 2025 for the Rent Arrears Assistance Fund established by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 45.

Sec. 65. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 3, as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 75, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.119, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 106, is further amended to read:

Sec. 3. MANUFACTURED HOME IMPROVEMENT AND REPAIR PROGRAM

(a) ~~Amounts~~ Of the amounts available from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery funds, $4,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Manufactured Home Improvement and Repair Program and shall be used for one or more of the following purposes:

* * *

Sec. 66. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 113b is amended to read:

Sec. 113b. APPROPRIATION; ~~NATURAL RESOURCES~~ LAND USE REVIEW BOARD

The sum of ~~$1,300,000.00~~ $400,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Natural Resources~~ Land Use Review Board in fiscal year 2025.

Sec. 67. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 24a is amended to read:

Sec. 24a. COMPENSATION FOR OVERPAYMENT

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, ~~the sum of $29,224.00~~ a $29,224 credit shall be ~~transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of~~ applied to the Canaan Town School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the ~~Town of~~ Canaan Town School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. ~~The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Canaan.~~

~~(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $5,924.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Bloomfield in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Bloomfield for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Bloomfield.~~

~~(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,575.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Brunswick in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Brunswick for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Brunswick.~~

~~(d) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $6,145.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of East Haven in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of East Haven for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of East Haven.~~

~~(e) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,046.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Granby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Granby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Granby.~~

~~(f) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $10,034.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Guildhall in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Guildhall for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Guildhall.~~

~~(g) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $20,536.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Kirby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Kirby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Kirby.~~

~~(h) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,402.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Lemington in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Lemington for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Lemington.~~

~~(i) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $11,464.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Maidstone in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Maidstone for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Maidstone.~~

~~(j) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $4,349.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Norton in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Norton for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating~~

~~average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Norton.~~

~~(k) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,657.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Victory in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Victory for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Victory.~~

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a $68,132 credit shall be applied to the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership.

Sec. 68. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 40 and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. C.101, is further amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,300,000 General Fund to create, implement, and oversee a comprehensive statewide language access plan~~;~~.

(2) $15,000,000 General Fund to be used to offset the cost of denied claims for ~~Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)~~ federal reimbursement related to presidentially declared disasters in fiscal year 2024 or 2025, or to fund unanticipated statewide costs related to recovery efforts from declared disasters or administering programs created by funds from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery Fund, including the costs of related limited-service positions, and contracting for programs and services.

(3) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity. These funds shall not be released until the recommendation and report required by Sec. E.100.1 of this act, regarding the permanent administrative location for the Office of Health Equity, is provided to the committees of jurisdiction listed in Sec. E.100.1 of this act and the positions in the Office of Health Equity created by this act are filled.

* * *

(l) Agency of Human Services Central Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(2) $8,834,000 General Fund and $11,483,302 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program. Funds shall be used to expand the substances covered by the program, include mental health and pediatric screenings, and make strategic investments with community partners; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(m) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $366,066 General Fund and $372,048 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

(2) $15,583,352 Global Commitment Fund #20405 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose; and

* * *

(n) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $4,595,448 Global Commitment Fund #20405 to the Division of Substance Use Programs for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(x) Judiciary. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1)(A) $4,680,000 General Fund for the Judiciary network replacement project.

(B) Judiciary shall update the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee on the status of this project on or before December 1, 2023.

(2) $300,000 General Fund for the Essex County Courthouse renovation planning. Of this amount, $50,000 may be used to construct bathrooms compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act in the Essex Meeting House.

* * *

(ee) Joint Fiscal Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $250,000 for ~~per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Task Force on Economic Development Incentives and for consulting services approved by the Task Force~~ consulting services related to legislative needs identified in the 2025–2026 biennium, including analysis of legislative staff compensation and organizational structure and implementation of adjustments in accordance with policies adopted by the Joint Legislative Management Committee.

* * *

Sec. 69. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1102, as added by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 47, is amended to read:

Sec. B.1102 FISCAL YEAR 2023 ONE-TIME TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2023, funds are appropriated from the Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951) for new and ongoing initiatives as follows:

(1) $40,010,000 to the Agency of Digital Services to be used as follows:

(A) $11,800,000 for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system upgrade of Human Capital Management and core statewide financial accounting system and integration with the Department of Labor and Agency of Transportation financial systems;

* * *

Sec. 70. 3 V.S.A. § 3306 is amended to read:

§ 3306. TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND

* * *

(b) Funds. The Fund shall consist of:

(1) any amounts transferred ~~or appropriated~~ to it by the General Assembly; and

(2) any interest earned by the Fund.

* * *

Sec. 71. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND; REPEAL

(a) 10 V.S.A. § 543 (Workforce Education and Training Fund) is repealed.

Sec. 72. 18 V.S.A. § 9502 is amended to read:

§ 9502. TOBACCO TRUST FUND

(a)(1) The Tobacco Trust Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the purposes of creating a self-sustaining, perpetual fund for tobacco cessation and prevention that is not dependent upon tobacco sales volume.

(2) The Trust Fund shall ~~comprise~~ be composed of:

(A) ~~appropriations~~ transfers made by the General Assembly; and

(B) ~~transfers from the Litigation Settlement Fund pursuant to subdivision (b) of this section; and~~

~~(C)~~ contributions from any other source.

(3) The State Treasurer shall not disburse monies from the Trust Fund, except upon appropriation by the General Assembly. In any fiscal year, total appropriations from the Trust Fund shall not exceed seven percent of the fair market value of the Fund at the end of the prior fiscal year.

(4) The Trust Fund shall be administered by the State Treasurer. The Treasurer may invest monies in the Fund in accordance with the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 434. All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain in the Fund. The Treasurer's annual financial report to the Governor and the General Assembly shall contain an accounting of receipts, disbursements, and earnings of the Fund.

(b) ~~Unless otherwise authorized by the General Assembly on or before June 30, 2000, and on June 30 of each subsequent fiscal year, any unencumbered balance in the Litigation Settlement Fund shall be transferred to the Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. 73. 30 V.S.A. chapter 86 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 86. UNDERGROUND UTILITY DAMAGE PREVENTION SYSTEM

* * *

§ 7006. MARKING OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITIES

A company notified in accordance with section 7005 of this title shall, within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, of the

receipt of the notice, mark the approximate location of its underground utility facilities in the area of the proposed excavation activities; provided, however, if the company advises the person that the proposed excavation area is of such length or size that the company cannot reasonably mark all of the underground utility facilities within ~~48~~ 72 hours, the person shall notify the company of the specific locations in which the excavation activities will first occur and the company shall mark facilities in those locations within ~~48~~ 72 hours and the remaining facilities within a reasonable time thereafter. A company and an excavator may by agreement fix a later time for the company's marking of the facilities, provided the marking is made prior to excavation activities. For the purposes of this chapter, the approximate location of underground facilities shall be marked with stakes, paint, or other physical means as designated by the Commission.

§ 7006a. MAINTENANCE OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITY MARKINGS

After a company has marked its underground facilities in accordance with section 7006 of this title, the excavator shall be responsible for maintenance of the designated markings. In the event said markings are obliterated, destroyed, or removed, the person engaged in excavation activities shall notify the System referred to in section 7002 of this title that remarking is needed. The System shall then notify all member companies whose facilities may be affected. The company shall within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, following receipt of the notice, remark the location of its underground utility facilities.

* * *

Sec. 74. 32 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Loan" means a loan that is interest free or below market value.

(2) "State agency" means an Executive Branch agency, department, commission, office, or board.

* * *

Sec. 75. 32 V.S.A. § 706 is amended to read:

§ 706. TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS

Notwithstanding any authority granted elsewhere, all transfers of appropriations shall be made pursuant to this section upon the initiative of the Governor or upon the request of a secretary or commissioner.

(1) With the approval of the Governor, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may transfer balances of appropriations not to exceed ~~$50,000.00~~ $100,000.00 made under any appropriation act for the support of the government from one component of an agency, department, or other unit of State government to any component of the same agency, department, or unit.

(2) Except as specified in ~~subdivisions~~ subdivision (1) ~~and (4)~~ of this section, the transfer of balances of appropriations may be made only with the approval of the Emergency Board.

(3) For the specific purpose of balancing and closing out fund accounts at the end of a fiscal year, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may adjust a balance within an account of an agency or department in an amount not to exceed ~~$100.00~~ $200.00.

* * *

Sec. 76. 32 V.S.A. § 902 is amended to read:

§ 902. AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW MONEY

* * *

(b) The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of and expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing of such notes as the same fall due without further order or authority from the ~~General Fund or from the Transportation or other applicable funds or from the proceeds of bonds or notes~~ governmental debt service funds established in section 951a of this chapter. The authority hereby granted is in addition to and not in limitation of any other authority. Such notes shall be sold at public or private sale with or without published notice, as the State Treasurer may determine to be in the best interests of the State.

Sec. 77. 32 V.S.A. § 951a is amended to read:

§ 951a. DEBT SERVICE FUNDS

(a) Three governmental debt service funds are hereby established:

* * *

(b) Financial resources in each fund shall consist of ~~appropriations by the General Assembly to fulfill debt service obligations,~~ the transfer of funding sources by the General Assembly to fulfill future debt service obligations, bond proceeds raised to fund a permanent reserve required by a trust agreement entered into to secure bonds, transfers of appropriations effected pursuant to section 706 of this title, investment income earned on balances held in trust agreement accounts as required by a trust agreement, and such

other amounts as directed by the General Assembly or that are specifically authorized by provisions of this title. Each debt service fund shall account for the accumulation of resources and the fulfillment of debt service obligations within the current fiscal year and the accumulation of resources for debt service obligations maturing in future fiscal years.

* * *

Sec. 78. 32 V.S.A. § 954 is amended to read:

§ 954. PROCEEDS

(a) The proceeds arising from the sale of bonds, inclusive of any premiums, shall be applied to the purposes for which they were authorized, and the purposes ~~shall~~ may be considered to include ~~the expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing the bonds and any notes issued under section 955 of this title, and~~ underwriters' fees and amounts for reserves, but no purchasers of the bonds shall be in any way bound to see to the proper application of the proceeds. The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of, investment return on, and maturity value of the bonds and notes as the same fall due or accrue without further order or authority. The State Treasurer, with the approval of the Governor, may establish sinking funds, reserve funds, or other special funds of the State as the State Treasurer may deem for the best interests of the State. To the extent not otherwise provided, the amount necessary each year to fulfill the maturing principal and interest of, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on all the bonds then outstanding shall be included in and made a part of the annual appropriation bill for the expense of State government, and the principal and interest on, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on the bonds as may come due before appropriations for their fulfillment have been made shall be fulfilled from the applicable debt service fund.

(b) The ~~State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the~~ estimated cost of bond issuance or issuances ~~to the entities to which funds are appropriated by a capital construction act and for which bonding is required as the source of funds. If estimated receipts are insufficient, the State Treasurer shall allocate additional costs to the entities. Any remaining receipts shall not be expended, but carried forward to be available for future capital construction acts. If the source of funds appropriated by a capital construction act is other than by issuance of bonds, the State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the estimated cost of ongoing debt management services to the entities to which those funds are appropriated~~ shall be appropriated annually from the funds from which transfers are made to fund debt service costs.

* * *

Sec. 79. VERMONT TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY FUND; REPEAL

(a) 33 V.S.A. chapter 78 (Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund) is repealed.

Sec. 80 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 38 is amended to read:

Sec. 38. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

(a) Creation; administration. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall design and implement a Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program and shall create and administer a revolving loan fund to provide subsidized loans for rental housing developments that serve middle-income households.

(b) Loans; eligibility; criteria.

* * *

(7) The Agency shall use one or more legal mechanisms to ensure that:

(A) a subsidized unit remains affordable to a household earning the applicable percent of area median income for the longer of:

(i) seven years; or

(ii) full repayment of the loan plus three years; and

(B) during the affordability period determined pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (7), the annual increase in rent for a subsidized unit does not exceed three percent or an amount otherwise authorized by the Agency.

* * *

Sec. 81. 32 V.S.A. § 308b is amended to read:

§ 308b. HUMAN SERVICES CASELOAD RESERVE

(a) There is created within the General Fund a Human Services Caseload Reserve. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be subject to an appropriation by the General Assembly or approval by the Emergency Board. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be limited to Agency of Human Services caseload-related needs primarily in the Departments for Children and Families, of Health, of Mental Health, of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, of Vermont Health Access, and settlement costs associated with managing the Global Commitment waiver.

(b) The Secretary of Administration may transfer to the Human Services Caseload Reserve any General Fund ~~carry-forward~~ carryforward directly attributable to Agency of Human Services caseload reductions and the effective management of related federal receipts, with the exclusion of the Department of Corrections.

(c) The Human Services Caseload Reserve shall contain two ~~sub-accounts~~ subaccounts:

(1) A ~~sub-account~~ subaccount for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses. Each fiscal year ~~beginning with fiscal year 2020~~, the Department of Finance and Management shall adjust the amount reserved for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses to equal the amount specified in the ~~Comprehensive~~ Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year occurring two years prior for the estimated amount of incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses associated with the current Medicaid Global Commitment waiver.

* * *

Sec. 82. CHILD CARE CONTRIBUTION SPECIAL FUND; UNALLOCATED AND UNRESERVED BALANCE

(a) In fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration shall unreserve and transfer funds from the Human Services Caseload Reserve to the Child Care Contribution Special Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 10554 as necessary to maintain a balance that appropriately supports the State's statutory obligations under the Child Care Financial Assistance Program established in 33 V.S.A. §§ 3512 and 3513.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that any unreserved and unallocated balance in the Child Care Contribution Special Fund shall remain in the Fund to support the future establishment of a reserve for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program.

Sec. 83. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; FACILITY WORK PROGRAMS; STRATEGIC PLAN

(a) Findings and intent.

(1) The General Assembly finds that a significant budget deficit has developed within previously existing programs despite a wage structure that pays incarcerated individuals in Vermont at rates ranging from $0.25 to $1.35 per hour, significantly below the federal minimum wage.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly that all Department of Corrections facility work programs operate in a manner that is fiscally sustainable to the extent possible within current statutory limitations and effective in preparing offenders for meaningful employment upon release.

(b) Strategic plan. On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Corrections shall, in consultation with the Department of Labor, submit a strategic plan with proposed benchmarks for improvement to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary. The strategic plan shall include:

(1) A business plan to improve program efficiency and self-sustainability to ensure all facility work programs, including Vermont Correctional Industries, vocational training programs, and other paid facility duties, operate without recurring deficits or to clearly identify funding sources to address the deficits.

(2) A comprehensive evaluation of the skills provided through facility work programs to determine if those skills are transferable to employment opportunities post-incarceration. The evaluation shall include consideration of expanding technical training and certification opportunities that carry recognized value in the labor market.

(3) An analysis of facility work programs to determine if each program serves a sufficient portion of the incarcerated population to justify its administration. The analysis shall also consider whether participants gain meaningful and valuable work experiences.

(4) A review of wages paid to facility work program participants, the implications of wage structures on program outcomes, and the appropriate use of funds in relation to program objectives.

(c) In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, the Department of Corrections shall submit timely reports to the to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary, or the Joint Fiscal Committee and the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee when the General Assembly is not in session, on the development of facility work program deficits. The Department shall include in these reports any financial or operational actions taken to address deficits, increase oversight, and prevent future deficits.

Sec. 84. MEDICAID PROVIDERS WITH STABILIZATION NEEDS; GRANT ELIGIBILITY

(a) All Vermont Medicaid participating providers with demonstrated stabilization needs and a plan to achieve sustainability shall be eligible to apply for funds appropriated pursuant to 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), including substance use residential treatment facilities, federally qualified health centers, residential mental health providers, and other providers of health care and human services.

(b) On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall submit a report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations. The report shall include:

(1) A detailed account of grants distributed pursuant to the appropriation made in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), as added by this act. This shall include the dollar amount and recipient of each grant.

(2) A description of each grant recipient's financial status prior to receipt of the grant, a summary of the impact of the grant for each recipient, and a summary of a revised long-term sustainability plan for each grant recipient.

(3) An analysis of grant outcomes and any recommendations for enhancing the financial stability of Vermont Medicaid providers.

Sec. 84a. ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM AND HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAM TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 945 and any other provision of law to the contrary, a high school may award a high school diploma to any student who meets the following criteria:

(1) Prior to July 1, 2024, the student was participating in the High School Completion Program as the program existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

(2) The student has met the requirements of the student's individual graduation plan and would have been eligible to receive a diploma pursuant to the High School Completion Program as it existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

(b) This section is repealed on July 1, 2025.

Sec. 85. SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; DISCRETIONARY EXEMPTIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2025, the Department for Children and Families shall fully utilize the State's allocation of discretionary exemptions in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to the extent permitted by federal regulation for the purpose of proactively extending benefits to individuals who would otherwise experience a disruption of benefits.

Sec. 86. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 19, Secs. 5 and 6 are amended to read:

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 4 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

(b) ~~Sec. 5 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.~~

~~(c)~~ All other sections shall take effect 30 calendar days after passage.

Sec. 87. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 53, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.102 is further amended to read:

Sec. 53. FISCAL YEAR 2022 UNALLOCATED RESERVE

* * *

(b) After meeting the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, but prior to satisfying the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308c, the remaining unreserved and undesignated funds at the close of fiscal year 2022 shall be allocated to the extent available as follows:

* * *

(7) $9,600,000 is appropriated to the Judiciary, of which $3,880,000 is for the reopening of the courts ~~and $5,720,000~~, $4,920,000 is to replace HVAC in county court houses, and $800,000 is to upgrade the network wiring and security systems in county court houses.

* * *

Sec. 88. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15b, as added by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, is amended to read:

Sec. 15b. SERGEANT AT ARMS

(a) The sum of ~~$100,000.00~~ $100,000 is appropriated in ~~FY~~ fiscal year 2025 to the Sergeant at Arms for the following projects:

(1) the replacement of State House cafeteria furnishings; and

(2) the purchase and installation at the State House of an X-ray machine designed to screen baggage.

Sec. 89. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.321 is amended to read:

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY HOUSING

* * *

(b)(1) General Assistance Emergency Housing shall be provided in a community-based shelter whenever possible. If there is inadequate community-based shelter space available within the Agency of Human Services district in which the household presents itself, the household shall be provided emergency housing in a hotel or motel within the district, if available, until adequate community-based shelter space becomes available in the district. The utilization of hotel and motel rooms pursuant to this subdivision shall be capped at 1,100 rooms per night between September 15, 2024 through November 30, 2024 ~~and between April 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025~~.

* * *

(3) The Department shall provide emergency winter housing to households meeting the eligibility criteria in subsection (a) of this section between December 1, 2024 and ~~March 31,~~ June 30, 2025. Emergency housing in a hotel or motel provided pursuant to this subdivision shall not count toward the maximum days of eligibility per 12-month period provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. 90. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 82, Sec. 1, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 108, Sec. 3, is further amended to read:

Sec. 1. REIMBURSEMENT TO MUNICIPALITIES OF STATE EDUCATION PROPERTY TAXES THAT WERE ABATED DUE TO FLOODING

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Taxes may approve an application by a municipality for reimbursement of State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426. To be eligible for reimbursement under this section, prior to November 15, ~~2024~~ 2025, a municipality must have abated, in proportion to the abated municipal tax, under 24 V.S.A. § 1535 the State education property taxes that were assessed on eligible property, after application of any property tax credit allowed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 154.

(2) As used in this subsection, "eligible property" means property lost or destroyed due directly or indirectly to severe storms and flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, provided the loss or destruction resulted in one or more of the following:

(A) a 50 percent or greater loss in value to the primary structure on the property;

(B) loss of use by the property owner of the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more;

(C) loss of access by the property owner to utilities for the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more; or

(D) condemnation of the primary structure on the property under federal, State, or municipal law, as applicable.

(b) If a municipality demonstrates that, due to disruption to tax collections resulting from flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, the municipality incurred unanticipated interest expenses on funds borrowed to make State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426, the municipality may be reimbursed by an amount equal to its reasonable interest expenses under this subsection, provided the amount of reimbursed interest expenses shall not exceed eight percent.

* * *

Sec. 91. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106 is amended to read:

Sec. E.106 CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND APPROPRIATIONS; REVERSION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SPENDING AUTHORITY

* * *

(b) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall revert all unobligated American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority prior to December 31, 2024. The total amount of American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority reverted in accordance with this subsection shall equal the amount of new spending authority established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511 for the following purposes in the following order:

* * *

(3) $30,000,000 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of: affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units~~,~~ including improvements to manufactured homes and communities~~,~~; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness~~,~~; recovery residences~~,~~; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home and community based services.

Sec. 92. CARRYFORWARD AUTHORITY

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law and subject to the approval of the Secretary of Administration, General Fund, Transportation Fund, Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund, Education Fund, Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951), Clean Water Fund (21932), and Agricultural Water Quality Fund (21933) appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Executive Branch shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, General Fund appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Legislative and Judicial Branches shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

Sec. 93. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This act shall take effect on passage, except that, notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214:

(1) Sec. 67 shall take effect retroactively on July 1, 2024; and

(2) Sec. 90 shall take effect retroactively on November 15, 2024.

And by renumbering all of the sections of the bill to be numerically correct (including internal references) and adjusting all of the totals to be arithmetically correct.

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, and the pending question, Shall the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations?,was agreed to, on a roll call, Yeas 18, Nays, 12.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Bongartz, Brock, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Beck, Brennan, Chittenden, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, Senator Vyhovsky moved that the Senate proposal of amendment be amended by adding 10 new sections to be Secs. 93–102 to read as follows:

Sec. 93. LEGISLATIVE INTENT; STATEWIDE SERVICE COORDINATOR

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly:

(1) to reduce for the remainder of fiscal year 2025 and for fiscal year 2026 the salaries of all employees in the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative Branches whose salaries exceed $100,000.00 and who are not covered by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements to fiscal year 2024 levels;

(2) that the estimated $742,500 in savings in fiscal year 2025 be used for General Assistance Emergency Housing and that the estimated $6,688,000 in fiscal year 2026 savings be reserved for General Assistance Emergency Housing in fiscal year 2026;

(3) that funds appropriated for General Assistance Emergency Housing in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 may be used to convert State buildings to provide shelter or housing for those experiencing homelessness; and

(4) that one new exempt, limited service position is authorized in the Agency of Administration to coordinate services statewide for those experiencing homelessness, which position shall be transferred and converted from an existing vacant position in the Executive Branch and shall not increase the total number of authorized positions.

Sec. 94. 32 V.S.A. § 1003 is amended to read:

§ 1003. STATE OFFICERS

(a) Each elective officer of the Executive Department is entitled to an annual salary as follows:

	Annual Salary as of ~~July 14, 2024~~ April 6, 2025	Annual Salary as of July 13, 2025
(1) Governor	~~$222,371~~ $208,995	~~$234,379~~ $208,995
(2) Lieutenant Governor	$94,392	$99,489
(3) Secretary of State	~~$141,003~~ $132,522	~~$148,617~~ $132,522
(4) State Treasurer	~~$141,003~~ $132,522	~~$148,617~~ $132,522
(5) Auditor of Accounts	~~$141,003~~ $132,522	~~$148,617~~ $132,522
(6) Attorney General	~~$168,837~~ $158,681	~~$177,954~~ $158,681

(b) The Governor may appoint each officer of the Executive Branch listed in this subsection at a starting salary ranging from the base salary stated for that position to a salary that does not exceed the maximum salary unless otherwise authorized by this subsection. The maximum salary for each appointive officer shall be 50 percent above the base salary. Annually, the Governor may grant to each of those officers an annual salary adjustment subject to the maximum salary. The annual salary adjustment granted to officers under this subsection shall not exceed the average rate of adjustment available to most classified employees under the collective bargaining agreement then in effect. In addition to the annual salary adjustment specified in this subsection, the Governor may grant a special salary increase subject to the maximum salary, or a bonus, to any officer listed in this subsection whose job duties have significantly increased, or whose contributions to the State in the preceding year are deemed especially significant. Special salary increases or bonuses granted to any individual shall not exceed the average rate of adjustment available to most classified employees under the collective bargaining agreement then in effect.

(1) Heads of the following Departments and Agencies:

	Base Salary as of ~~July 14, 2024~~ April 6, 2025	Base Salary as of July 13, 2025
(A) Administration	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378
(B) Agriculture, Food and markets	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378
(C) Financial Regulation	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145

(D) Buildings and General Services	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(E) Children and Families	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(F) Commerce and Community Development	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378
(G) Corrections	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(H) Defender General	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(I) Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(J) Economic Development	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(K) Education	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378
(L) Environmental Conservation	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(M) Finance and Management	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(N) Fish and Wildlife	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(O) Forests, Parks and Recreation	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(P) Health	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(Q) Housing and Community Development	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(R) Human Resources	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(S) Human Services	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378
(T) Digital Services	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378
(U) Labor	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(V) Libraries	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(W) Liquor and Lottery	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(X) [Repealed.]		
(Y) Mental Health	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(Z) Military	~~$125,706~~ $118,145	~~$132,494~~ $118,145
(AA) Motor Vehicles	~~$114,031~~ $107,172	~~$120,189~~ $107,172
(BB) Natural Resources	~~$134,466~~ $126,378	~~$141,727~~ $126,378

(CC) Land Use Review Board Chair	~~$114,031~~	$107,172	~~$120,189~~	$107,172
(DD) Public Safety	~~$125,706~~	$118,145	~~$132,494~~	$118,145
(EE) Public Service	~~$125,706~~	$118,145	~~$132,494~~	$118,145
(FF) Taxes	~~$125,706~~	$118,145	~~$132,494~~	$118,145
(GG) Tourism and Marketing	~~$114,031~~	$107,172	~~$120,189~~	$107,172
(HH) Transportation	~~$134,466~~	$126,378	~~$141,727~~	$126,378
(II) Vermont Health Access	~~$125,706~~	$118,145	~~$132,494~~	$118,145
(JJ) Veterans' Home	~~$125,706~~	$118,145	~~$132,494~~	$118,145

(2) [Repealed.]

(3) If the Chair of the Land Use Review Board is employed on less than a full-time basis, the hiring and salary maximums for that position shall be reduced proportionately.

(4) When a permanent employee is appointed to an exempt position, the Governor may authorize such employee to retain the present salary even though it is in excess of any salary maximum provided in statute.

(c) The officers of the Judicial Branch named in this subsection shall be entitled to annual salaries as follows:

	~~July 14, 2024~~ Annual Salary as of April 6, 2025		Annual Salary as of July 13, 2025	
(1) Chief Justice of Supreme Court	~~$214,024~~	$201,150	~~$225,581~~	$201,150
(2) Each Associate Justice	~~$204,264~~	$191,977	~~$215,294~~	$191,977
(3) Administrative Judge	~~$204,264~~	$191,977	~~$215,294~~	$191,977
(4) Each Superior Judge	~~$194,185~~	$182,505	~~$204,671~~	$182,505
(5) [Repealed.]				
(6) Each Magistrate	~~$146,413~~	$137,606	~~$154,319~~	$137,606
(7) Each Judicial Bureau hearing officer	~~$146,413~~	$137,606	~~$154,319~~	$137,606

(d) Notwithstanding the maximum salary established in subsection (b) of this section, the Defender General shall not receive compensation in excess of the compensation established for the Attorney General in this section.

(e) Notwithstanding the maximum salary established in subsection (b) of this section, the maximum salary for the Commissioner of Health shall not exceed 100 percent above the base salary for this position.

Sec. 95. 32 V.S.A. § 1142 is amended to read:

§ 1142. PROBATE JUDGES

(a) The Probate judges in the several Probate Districts shall be entitled to receive the following annual salaries, which shall be paid by the State in lieu of all fees or other compensation:

	Annual Salary as of ~~July 14, 2024~~ April 6, 2025	Annual Salary as of July 13, 2025
(1) Addison	$76,555	$80,689
(2) Bennington	$96,776	~~102,002~~ $96,776
(3) Caledonia	$67,891	$71,557
(4) Chittenden	~~$161,506~~ $151,791	~~$170,227~~ $151,791
(5) Essex	$18,966	$19,990
(6) Franklin	$76,555	$80,689
(7) Grand Isle	$18,966	$19,990
(8) Lamoille	$53,443	$56,329
(9) Orange	$63,554	$66,986
(10) Orleans	$62,110	$65,464
(11) Rutland	~~$137,221~~ $128,967	~~$144,631~~ $128,967
(12) Washington	~~$105,441~~ $99,099	~~$111,135~~ $99,099
(13) Windham	$85,221	$89,823
(14) Windsor	~~$115,555~~ $108,604	~~$121,795~~ $108,604

(b) Probate judges shall be entitled to be paid by the State for their actual and necessary expenses under the rules pertaining to classified State employees. The compensation for the Probate judge of the Chittenden District shall be for full-time service.

(c) All Probate judges, regardless of the number of hours worked annually, shall be eligible to participate in all employee benefits that are available to exempt employees of the Judicial Department.

Sec. 96. 32 V.S.A. § 1182 is amended to read:

§ 1182. SHERIFFS

(a) The sheriffs of all counties except Chittenden shall be entitled to receive salaries in the amount of ~~$104,010.00~~ $94,085.00 as of ~~July 14, 2024~~ April 6, 2025 and ~~$109,627.00~~ $94,085.00 as of July 13, 2025. The Sheriff of Chittenden County shall be entitled to an annual salary in the amount of ~~$110,070.00~~ $99,566.00 as of ~~July 14, 2024~~ April 6, 2025 and ~~$116,014.00~~ $99,566.00 as of July 13, 2025.

(b) Compensation under subsection (a) of this section shall be reduced by 10 percent for any sheriff who has Level II but not obtained Level III law enforcement officer certification under 20 V.S.A. § 2358.

(c) Compensation under subsection (a) of this section shall be reduced by 20 percent for any sheriff who has Level I but not obtained Level II law enforcement officer certification under 20 V.S.A. § 2358.

(d) Compensation under subsection (a) of this section shall be reduced by 30 percent for any sheriff who does not possess a law enforcement officer certification under 20 V.S.A. § 2358.

Sec. 97. 32 V.S.A. § 1183 is amended to read:

§ 1183. STATE'S ATTORNEYS

(a) The State's Attorneys shall be entitled to receive annual salaries as follows:

	~~July 14, 2024~~ Annual Salary as of April 6, 2025	Annual Salary as of July 13, 2025
(1) Addison County	~~$140,691~~ $132,228	~~$148,288~~ $132,228
(2) Bennington County	~~$140,691~~ $132,228	~~$148,288~~ $132,228
(3) Caledonia County	~~$140,691~~ $132,228	~~$148,288~~ $132,228
(4) Chittenden County	~~$147,087~~ $138,240	~~$155,030~~ $138,240
(5) Essex County	~~$105,521~~ $99,174	~~$111,219~~ $99,174
(6) Franklin County	~~$140,691~~ $132,228	~~$148,288~~ $132,228
(7) Grand Isle County	~~$105,521~~ $99,174	~~$111,219~~ $99,174

(8) Lamoille County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228
(9) Orange County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228
(10) Orleans County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228
(11) Rutland County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228
(12) Washington County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228
(13) Windham County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228
(14) Windsor County	~~$140,691~~	$132,228	~~$148,288~~	$132,228

(b) In settlement of their accounts, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall allow the State's Attorneys the expense of printing briefs in cases in which the State's Attorney has represented the State and their necessary and actual expenses under the rules pertaining to classified State employees.

Sec. 98. STATE OFFICERS; SALARY INCREASES

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, between April 6, 2025 and July 1, 2026, the Governor shall not grant any annual salary adjustment or special salary increases to officers whose salary is set in 32 V.S.A. § 1003.

Sec. 99. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(e) is amended to read:

(e) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$16,500,000~~ $19,082,804 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing program;

* * *

Sec. 100. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.101 is amended to read:

Sec. G.101 EXEMPT EMPLOYEES; PERMITTED SALARY INCREASES; FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

(a) Fiscal year 2025. ~~The~~ Except as set forth in 32 V.S.A. §§ 1003, 1142, 1182, and 1183, the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative Branches may extend the fiscal year 2025 provisions of the collective bargaining agreements that are funded by this act to employees not covered by the bargaining agreements as they determine to be appropriate and in accordance with the appropriations provided to each branch, provided that, effective April 6, 2025, the salary of any such employee whose salary exceeds $100,000.00 shall be reduced to the amount of salary the employee earned in fiscal year 2024. For any such employee who was not employed by the State in fiscal year 2024 or who held

a different position in State government at that time, the employee's fiscal year 2025 salary shall be reduced by 6.4%, effective April 6, 2025.

(b) Fiscal year 2026. ~~The~~ Except as set forth in 32 V.S.A. §§ 1003, 1142, 1182, and 1183, the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative Branches may extend the fiscal year 2026 provisions of the collective bargaining agreements that are funded by this act to employees not covered by the bargaining agreements as they determine to be appropriate and in accordance with the appropriations provided to each branch, provided that, effective July 13, 2025, the salary of any such employee whose salary exceeds $100,000.00 shall not be increased.

Sec. 101. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.102 is amended to read:

Sec. G.102 EXECUTIVE BRANCH; EXEMPT AGENCY AND DEPARTMENT HEADS, DEPUTIES, AND EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS; ANNUAL SALARY ADJUSTMENT AND SPECIAL SALARY INCREASE OR BONUS

(a) Fiscal year 2025. For purposes of determining annual salary adjustments, special salary increases, and bonuses under 32 V.S.A. ~~§§ 1003(b) and~~ § 1020(b), "the average rate of adjustment available to most classified employees under the collective bargaining agreement" shall be, in fiscal year 2025, 6.4 percent; provided, however, that notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 1020 to the contrary, no salary adjustment or special salary increase shall be made available to any employee who earns more than $100,000.00 and any salary adjustment or salary increase that would cause an employee's salary to exceed $100,000.00 shall be reduced in order to maintain the employee's salary at or below $100,000.00.

(b) Fiscal year 2026. For purposes of determining annual salary adjustments, special salary increases, and bonuses under 32 V.S.A. ~~§§ 1003(b) and~~ § 1020(b), "the average rate of adjustment available to most classified employees under the collective bargaining agreement" shall be, in fiscal year 2026, 5.4 percent; provided, however, that notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 1020 to the contrary, no salary adjustment, special salary increase, or bonus shall be made available to any employee earning more than $100,000.00 and any salary adjustment, salary increase, or bonus that would cause an employee's wages to exceed $100,000.00 shall be reduced in order to maintain the employee's salary at or below $100,000.00.

Sec. 102. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.109 is amended to read:

Sec. G.109 PAY ACT APPROPRIATIONS; FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

(a) Executive Branch. The first and second years of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees'

Association for the Defender General, Non-Management, Supervisory, and Corrections bargaining units, and, for the purpose of appropriation, the State's Attorneys' offices bargaining unit, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; the collective bargaining agreement with the Vermont Troopers' Association for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; and salary increases for employees in the Executive Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows:

(1) Fiscal year 2025.

(A) General Fund. The amount of ~~$27,279,337.00~~ $26,702,837.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Secretary of Administration for distribution to departments to fund the fiscal year 2025 collective bargaining agreements and the requirements of this act.

* * *

(2) Fiscal year 2026.

(A) General Fund. The amount of ~~$24,644,442.00~~ $19,394,442.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Secretary of Administration for distribution to departments to fund the fiscal year 2026 collective bargaining agreements and the requirements of this act.

* * *

(b) Judicial Branch.

(1) Extension to noncovered employees. The Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court may extend the provisions of the Judiciary's collective bargaining agreement to Judiciary employees who are not covered by the bargaining agreement.

(2) Fiscal year 2025. The first year of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association for the judicial bargaining unit for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 and salary increases for employees in the Judicial Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows: the amount of ~~$2,470,963.00~~ $2,356,963.00 is appropriated from the General Fund and the amount of $185,986.00 is provided from other sources to the Judiciary to fund the fiscal year 2025 collective bargaining agreement and the requirements of this act.

(3) Fiscal year 2026. The second year of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association for the judicial bargaining unit for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 and salary increases for employees in the Judicial Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows: the amount of

~~$2,388,783.00~~ $1,399,783.00 is appropriated from the General Fund and the amount of $179,801.00 is provided from other sources to the Judiciary to fund the fiscal year 2026 collective bargaining agreement and the requirements of this act.

(c) Legislative Branch.

(1) For the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, the General Assembly, including all Legislative Branch employees, shall be funded as follows: the amount of ~~$884,808.00~~ $832,808.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Legislative Branch.

(2) For the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, the General Assembly, including all Legislative Branch employees, shall be funded as follows: the amount of ~~$758,613.00~~ $309,613.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Legislative Branch.

* * *

and by renumbering Sec. 93, effective dates, to be Sec. 103.

Which was disagreed to.

Thereupon, the recurring question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, was decided in the affirmative.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Charlton and others,

Offered by Senators Clarkson, Major and White,

H.C.R. 34.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Green Mountain Union High School Chieftains Division III championship boys soccer team.

Offered by Reps. Bos-Lun and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 35.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the March 13, 1775 Westminster Massacre.

Offered by Reps. Waters Evans and Krasnow,

H.C.R. 36.

House concurrent resolution honoring Charlotte Board of Civil Authority Chair, and Ski and Ride Program Coordinator Michael Krasnow.

Offered by Reps. Burke and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 37.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Meara Seery of Brattleboro on being named Miss Vermont 2024.

Offered by Rep. Sibilia,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 38.

House concurrent resolution honoring dedicated Jamaica community leader and volunteer Clara Robinson.

Offered by Reps. Berbeco and Maguire,

H.C.R. 39.

House concurrent resolution designating February 19, 2025 as Recovery Day at the State House.

Offered by Rep. Kascenska,

Offered by Senators Beck, Douglass and Ingalls,

H.C.R. 40.

House concurrent resolution designating February 20, 2025 as NEK Day at the State House.

Cosponsor of Bill Withdrawn

S. 54.

An act relating to voluntary engagement in sex work.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, pursuant to Rule 50, Senator Hart was removed as a cosponsor.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, February 26, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Leon Dunkley of Woodstock.

Committee Relieved of Further Consideration; Bill Committed

S. 71.

On motion of Senator Clarkson, the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to consumer data privacy and online surveillance,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Institutions.

Senate Resolution Referred

J.R.S. 15.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senators Hardy, Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, White and Williams,

J.R.S. 15. Joint resolution supporting Vermont's transgender and non-binary community and declaring Vermont's commitment to fighting discrimination and treating all citizens with respect and dignity.

Whereas, Vermont is deeply committed to the principles of equity and inclusion and values the transgender and non-binary individuals in our community, and

Whereas, Vermont has been a leader in establishing policies that prohibit discrimination based on gender identity, enacting broad protections in law in the areas of employment, housing, education, banking, and public accommodations, and

Whereas, Vermont enacted legislation permitting individuals to amend their vital records to accurately reflect and affirm their gender identities, and

Whereas, Vermont recently enacted comprehensive legislation to affirm the right of individuals to obtain essential gender-affirming medical care and to protect those individuals, their families, and their health care providers from legal attacks initiated outside our State, and

Whereas, Vermont unequivocally rejects any attempt to stigmatize, devalue, and discriminate against individuals based on their gender identity and is committed to ensuring that transgender and non-binary individuals living in, working in, or visiting our State receive equal protection under the laws of our State, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recommits to the principle that all individuals are welcome here and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and that Vermont will continue to stand with our transgender and non-binary family, friends, and neighbors against discrimination, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Pride Center of Vermont and Outright Vermont.

Thereupon, the President, in his discretion, treated the joint resolution as a bill and referred it to the Committee on Judiciary.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 90.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to employee privacy protections.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 91.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to tenant rights.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 92.

By Senators Perchlik and Watson,

An act relating to the retirement allowance for interim educators.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment; Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

H. 141.

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

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 3.

Senator Hashim, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the transfer of property to a trust.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 14A V.S.A. § 505 is amended to read:

§ 505. CREDITOR'S CLAIM AGAINST SETTLOR

(a) Whether or not the terms of a trust contain a spendthrift provision, the following rules apply:

(1) During the lifetime of the settlor, the property of a revocable trust is subject to claims of the settlor's creditors.

(2) With respect to an irrevocable trust, a creditor or assignee of the settlor may reach the maximum amount that can be distributed to or for the settlor's benefit. If a trust has more than one settlor, the amount the creditor or assignee of a particular settlor may reach shall not exceed the settlor's interest in the portion of the trust attributable to that settlor's contribution. This subdivision shall not apply to an irrevocable "special needs trust" established for a disabled person as described in 42 U.S.C. § 1396p(d)(4) or similar federal law governing the transfer to such a trust.

(3) After the death of a settlor, and subject to the settlor's right to direct the source from which liabilities will be paid, the property of a trust that was revocable at the settlor's death is subject to claims of the settlor's creditors, costs of administration of the settlor's estate, the expenses of the settlor's funeral and disposal of remains, and statutory allowances to a surviving spouse and children to the extent the settlor's probate estate is inadequate to satisfy those claims, costs, expenses, and allowances.

* * *

(c)(1) Property held by spouses as tenants by the entirety that is conveyed to the spouses' jointly or separately held revocable or irrevocable trusts, and any proceeds of the sale or disposition of the property, shall be immune from the claims of the spouses' separate creditors to the same extent as the property would have been if it had remained held by the spouses as tenants by the entirety if the following apply:

(A) the spouses are married to each other;

(B) the property is held in the trust or trusts or has been deeded out of the trust to the spouses as tenants by the entirety;

(C) if the trust is a joint trust, the trust may be revoked by either spouse acting alone but may be amended only by action of both spouses; and

(D) the property is the spouses' property; and

(E)(i) both spouses are current beneficiaries of one joint trust that holds the entire property; or

(ii) each spouse is a current beneficiary of a separate trust and the two separate trusts, together, hold the entire property, whether or not other persons are also current or future beneficiaries of the trust or trusts.

(2)(A) Property at any time held in a tenants by the entirety trust shall have the same immunity from the claims of a separate creditor of either settlor as the property would have if it were held outside the trust by the settlors as tenants by the entirety unless otherwise provided in writing by the settlor or settlors who transferred the property to the trust. The property shall be treated in all respects as tenants by the entirety property, including for purposes of federal and state bankruptcy laws.

(B) Property held in a tenants by the entirety trust shall cease to receive immunity from the claims of creditors upon the dissolution of the settlors' marriage by a court.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this title, on the effective date of this subsection:

(A) notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, this subsection (c) applies to all trusts created before, on, or after the effective date of this subsection and to property held by spouses as tenants by the entirety that is conveyed before, on, or after the effective date of this subsection;

(B) this subsection (c) applies to all judicial proceedings concerning trusts commenced on or after the effective date of this subsection.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Recess

On motion of Senator Baruth the Senate recessed until 4:00 P.M.

Message from the House No. 22

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

H. 141. An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

And has refused to concur therein and asks for a Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses;

The Speaker appointed as members of such Committee on the part of the House:

Rep. Scheu of Middlebury
Rep. Bluemle of Burlington
Rep. Squirrell of Underhill.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Committee of Conference Appointed

H. 141.

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Was taken up. Pursuant to the request of the House, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Perchlik
Senator Lyons
Senator Brock

as members of the Committee of Conference on the part of the Senate to

consider the disagreeing votes of the two Houses.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, February 27, 2025.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Rules Suspended; Bill Committed

S. 64.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Collamore, the rules were suspended and Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to amendments to the scope of practice for optometrists.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Thereupon, pending the reading of the report of the Committee on Government Operations, Senator Collamore moved that Senate Rule 49 be suspended in order to commit the bill to the Committee on Health and Welfare with the report of the Committee on Government Operations *intact*,

Which was agreed to.

Senate Resolution Placed on Calendar

S.R. 8.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 8. Senate resolution relating to concurrently conducted electronic committee meetings.

Resolved by the Senate:

Notwithstanding the language in Permanent Senate Rule 32A limiting the applicability of Senate Rule 32A to Declarations of Emergency, the provisions of Permanent Senate Rule 32A regarding committee meetings shall be in effect until Wednesday, January 7, 2026.

Thereupon, under Rule 34, the resolution was placed on the Calendar for notice.

Senate Resolution Placed on Calendar

S.R. 9.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

S.R. 9. Senate resolution relating to electronic participation in Senate Sessions.

Resolved by the Senate:

That temporary Rule 9B(b), be amended as follows:

Rule 9B. Temporary Rule Regarding Electronic Participation in Senate Sessions

* * *

(b) This temporary rule shall remain in effect through ~~Friday, March 11, 2025~~Wednesday, January 7, 2026.

Thereupon, under Rule 34, the resolution was placed on the Calendar for notice.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 93.

By Senators Chittenden, Beck, Cummings, Mattos and Ram Hinsdale,

An act relating to consumer data privacy.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

S. 94.

By Senators Vyhovsky and Plunkett,

An act relating to the duty of the Attorney General to enforce certain criminal offenses.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 95.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to standby guardianships for children whose parents have been subject to adverse immigration actions.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Bill Passed

S. 3.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to the transfer of property to a trust.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, February 28, 2025.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Ellen Ravelin of Winooski.

Message from the House No. 23

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 41. House concurrent resolution congratulating Keeler's Bay Variety Store of South Hero on the 50th anniversary of the Horne family's ownership.

H.C.R. 42. House concurrent resolution honoring Oxbow Union High School CoPrincipal and Gather author Kenneth M. Cadow of Norwich.

H.C.R. 43. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Thetford Academy Panthers Division II boys' championship indoor track and field team.

H.C.R. 44. House concurrent resolution recognizing July 2025 as Park and Recreation Month in Vermont and designating July 18, 2025 as Vermont Park and Recreation Professionals Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 45. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets Division I boys' indoor track and field team on winning a second consecutive Division I championship.

H.C.R. 46. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Essex High School Hornets girls' volleyball program on winning a fourth consecutive State championship.

H.C.R. 47. House concurrent resolution recognizing March 2025 as National Senior Nutrition Program Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 48. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative Curt McCormack of Burlington.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Joint Resolution Placed on Calendar

J.R.S. 16.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Collamore,

J.R.S. 16 Joint resolution providing for a Joint Assembly to vote on the retention of seven Superior Court Judges and one Magistrate.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the two Houses meet in Joint Assembly on Thursday, March 20, 2025, at ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon to vote on the retention of seven Superior Court Judges and one Magistrate. In case the vote to retain said Judges and Magistrate shall not be made on that day, the two Houses shall meet in Joint Assembly at ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, on each succeeding day, Saturdays and Sundays excepted, and proceed until the above is completed.

Thereupon, in the discretion of the President, under Rule 51, the joint resolution was placed on the Calendar for action the next legislative day.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 96.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to the calculation of recidivism and other related criminology measures.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 97.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to creating municipal and regional civilian oversight of law enforcement.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 98.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to miscellaneous changes to election law.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 99.

By Senators Douglass and Beck,

An act relating to analyzing benefits cliffs within Vermont's public assistance benefits' structure.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 100.

By Senators Hardy, Brennan, Chittenden and Norris,

An act relating to administration of the concentrated animal feeding operation water quality permit.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 101.

By Senators Beck, Brennan, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman and Williams,

An act relating to revoking Vermont's use of California's Clean Air Act waiver.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 102.

By Senator Beck,

An act relating to land use and housing development.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 103.

By Senators Douglass, Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Chittenden, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Hart, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett and Williams,

An act relating to updating the Periodic Inspection Manual.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 104.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to income based education funding.

To the Committee on Finance.

Appointments Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed together as a group by the Senate, without reports given by the Committees to which they were referred and without debate:

Crowley, Allison M. of South Burlington - Member of the State Police Advisory Commission - July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2028.

Shamp, Seth of Burlington - Member of the State Police Advisory Commission - December 2, 2024 to June 30, 2028.

Adjourned

On motion of Senator Baruth the Senate adjourned until 1:00 P.M.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Rules Suspended; Immediate Consideration; Report of Committee of Conference Accepted and Adopted on the Part of the Senate; Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

H. 141.

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the report of the Committee of Conference on House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee of Conference, submitted the following report:

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The Committee of Conference to which were referred the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon House Bill entitled:

H.141 An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Respectfully reports that it has met and considered the same and recommends that the Senate recede from its proposal of amendment and that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.105 is amended to read:

Sec. B.105 Agency of digital services - communications and information technology		
Personal services	82,994,362	82,994,362
Operating expenses	~~62,547,212~~	61,761,212
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574
Source of funds		
General fund	209,808	209,808
Special funds	511,723	511,723
Internal service funds	~~144,820,043~~	144,034,043
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574

Sec. 2. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.145 is amended to read:

Sec. B.145 Total general government		
Source of funds		
General fund	117,405,610	117,405,610
Transportation fund	4,292,149	4,292,149
Special funds	31,882,209	31,882,209
Federal funds	1,467,374	1,467,374
Internal service funds	~~214,635,950~~	213,849,950
Interdepartmental transfers	7,053,789	7,053,789
Enterprise funds	4,298	4,298
Pension trust funds	4,800,305	4,800,305
Private purpose trust funds	1,329,205	1,329,205
Total	~~382,870,889~~	382,084,889

Sec. 3. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.200 is amended to read:

Sec. B.200 Attorney general		
Personal services	~~14,435,517~~	14,463,317
Operating expenses	2,015,028	2,015,028
Grants	20,000	20,000
Total	~~16,470,545~~	16,498,345
Source of funds		
General fund	~~7,391,661~~	7,419,461
Special funds	2,355,424	2,355,424
Tobacco fund	422,000	422,000
Federal funds	1,743,215	1,743,215
Interdepartmental transfers	4,558,245	4,558,245
Total	~~16,470,545~~	16,498,345

Sec. 4. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.204 is amended to read:

Sec. B.204 Judiciary

Personal services	~~58,439,095~~	58,827,799
Operating expenses	~~12,479,384~~	14,640,960
Grants	121,030	121,030
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789
Source of funds		
General fund	~~63,414,698~~	65,964,978
Special funds	4,503,401	4,503,401
Federal funds	953,928	953,928
Interdepartmental transfers	2,167,482	2,167,482
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789

Sec. 5. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.205 is amended to read:

Sec. B.205 State's attorneys

Personal services	~~17,309,679~~	17,548,979
Operating expenses	~~2,034,016~~	2,202,516
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495
Source of funds		
General fund	~~18,734,634~~	19,142,434
Federal funds	31,000	31,000
Interdepartmental transfers	578,061	578,061
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495

Sec. 6. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.206.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.206.1 Crime Victims Advocates

Personal services	3,016,156	3,016,156
Operating expenses	~~104,396~~	142,396
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552

Sec. 7. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.208 is amended to read:

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	~~4,620,756~~	5,397,783
Operating expenses	6,022,923	6,022,923
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706

Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,179,193~~	8,092,770
Special funds	4,105	4,105
Federal funds	396,362	396,362
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,064,019~~	2,927,469
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706

Sec. 8. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.210 is amended to read:

Sec. B.210 Public safety - criminal justice services

Personal services	~~5,387,100~~	4,705,897
Operating expenses	2,152,467	2,152,467
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364
Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,829,099~~	2,172,295
Special funds	~~4,975,847~~	3,951,448
Federal funds	734,621	734,621
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364

Sec. 9. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.236 is amended to read:

Sec. B.236 Human rights commission

Personal services	~~927,697~~	992,259
Operating expenses	~~115,103~~	125,378
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,117,637
Source of funds		
General fund	~~953,800~~	1,028,637
Federal funds	89,000	89,000
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,117,637

Sec. 10. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.241 is amended to read:

Sec. B.241 Total protection to persons and property

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,238,448~~	233,593,938
Transportation fund	20,250,000	20,250,000
Special funds	~~119,824,272~~	118,799,873
Tobacco fund	672,579	672,579
Federal funds	162,959,452	162,959,452
Interdepartmental transfers	~~16,031,869~~	14,895,319
Enterprise funds	15,070,107	15,070,107
Total	~~563,046,727~~	566,241,268

Sec. 11. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.300 is amended to read:

Sec. B.300 Human services - agency of human services - secretary's office

Personal services	~~16,219,746~~	18,219,746
Operating expenses	~~7,220,486~~	6,062,286
Grants	3,795,202	3,795,202
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,913,202~~	11,923,905
Special funds	135,517	135,517
Federal funds	~~13,565,080~~	11,606,177
Global Commitment fund	~~0~~	4,300,000
Interdepartmental transfers	~~621,635~~	111,635
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234

Sec. 12. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.301 is amended to read:

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Source of funds		
General fund	~~668,380,623~~	716,109,638
Special funds	32,047,905	32,047,905
Tobacco fund	21,049,373	21,049,373
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
Federal funds	~~1,285,494,243~~	1,363,223,270
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,487,210~~	4,124,245
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988

Sec. 13. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.305 is amended to read:

Sec. B.305 AHS - administrative fund

Personal services	330,000	330,000
Operating expenses	~~13,170,000~~	16,870,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Source of funds		
Interdepartmental transfers	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000

Sec. 14. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.306 is amended to read:

Sec. B.306 Department of Vermont health access - administration

Personal services	~~134,929,148~~	136,693,560
Operating expenses	~~44,171,193~~	39,250,661
Grants	3,112,301	3,112,301
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522

Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,872,315~~	42,023,781
Special funds	4,733,015	4,733,015
Federal funds	~~128,790,580~~	124,836,223
Global Commitment fund	4,308,574	4,308,574
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,508,158~~	3,154,929
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522

Sec. 15. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.307 is amended to read:

Sec. B.307 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – global commitment

Personal services	547,983	547,983
Grants	~~899,550,794~~	964,407,046
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029

Sec. 16. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.309 is amended to read:

Sec. B.309 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – state only

Grants	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Source of funds		
General fund	~~62,151,546~~	62,308,757
Global Commitment fund	~~882,402~~	5,471,838
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595

Sec. 17. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.310 is amended to read:

Sec. B.310 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid non-waiver matched

Grants	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,511,405~~	13,459,034
Federal funds	~~22,483,483~~	24,773,397
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431

Sec. 18. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.311 is amended to read:

Sec. B.311 Health - administration and support

Personal services	8,373,168	8,373,168
Operating expenses	~~7,519,722~~	8,166,662
Grants	7,985,727	7,985,727
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557

Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,189,843~~	3,513,313
Special funds	2,308,186	2,308,186
Federal funds	~~11,040,433~~	11,363,903
Global Commitment fund	7,173,924	7,173,924
Interdepartmental transfers	166,231	166,231
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557

Sec. 19. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.312 is amended to read:

Sec. B.312 Health - public health

Personal services	67,812,371	67,812,371
Operating expenses	11,025,497	11,025,497
Grants	~~46,766,832~~	46,866,832
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,908,892~~	13,008,892
Special funds	24,906,804	24,906,804
Tobacco fund	1,088,918	1,088,918
Federal funds	64,038,301	64,038,301
Global Commitment fund	17,036,150	17,036,150
Interdepartmental transfers	5,600,635	5,600,635
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700

Sec. 20. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.313 is amended to read:

Sec. B.313 Health - substance use programs

Personal services	6,570,967	6,570,967
Operating expenses	511,500	511,500
Grants	~~58,215,510~~	59,240,635
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,672,061~~	7,697,186
Special funds	2,413,678	2,413,678
Tobacco fund	949,917	949,917
Federal funds	15,456,754	15,456,754
Global Commitment fund	39,805,567	39,805,567
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102

Sec. 21. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.314 is amended to read:

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	50,191,086	50,191,086
Operating expenses	~~5,517,999~~	5,709,973
Grants	~~270,625,138~~	272,536,080
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139
Source of funds		
General fund	~~25,555,311~~	26,279,270
Special funds	1,718,092	1,718,092
Federal funds	~~11,436,913~~	12,661,803
Global Commitment fund	~~287,609,767~~	287,763,834
Interdepartmental transfers	14,140	14,140
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139

Sec. 22. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.316 is amended to read:

Sec. B.316 Department for children and families - administration & support services

Personal services	~~46,644,080~~	44,844,080
Operating expenses	~~17,560,755~~	19,402,705
Grants	5,627,175	5,627,175
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,722,724~~	40,113,958
Special funds	2,781,912	2,781,912
Federal funds	~~24,448,223~~	24,098,939
Global Commitment fund	2,417,024	2,417,024
Interdepartmental transfers	462,127	462,127
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960

Sec. 23. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.317 is amended to read:

Sec. B.317 Department for children and families - family services

Personal services	~~45,197,694~~	45,286,553
Operating expenses	5,315,309	5,315,309
Grants	~~98,251,027~~	97,732,465
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327
Source of funds		
General fund	~~58,838,741~~	59,984,059
Special funds	729,587	729,587
Federal funds	~~34,666,196~~	36,180,206
Global Commitment fund	~~54,514,506~~	51,425,475
Interdepartmental transfers	15,000	15,000
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327

Sec. 24. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.318 is amended to read:

Sec. B.318 Department for children and families - child development

Personal services	5,908,038	5,908,038
Operating expenses	813,321	813,321
Grants	~~223,329,336~~	211,815,836
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195
Source of funds		
General fund	~~76,723,518~~	51,443,165
Special funds	~~96,312,000~~	109,512,000
Federal funds	~~43,511,414~~	42,902,383
Global Commitment fund	~~13,503,763~~	14,679,647
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195

Sec. 25. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.319 is amended to read:

Sec. B.319 Department for children and families - office of child support

Personal services	~~13,157,660~~	13,061,794
Operating expenses	3,759,992	3,759,992
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786
Source of funds		
General fund	~~5,200,064~~	5,163,429
Special funds	455,719	455,719
Federal funds	~~10,874,269~~	10,815,038
Interdepartmental transfers	387,600	387,600
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786

Sec. 26. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.320 is amended to read:

Sec. B.320 Department for children and families - aid to aged, blind and disabled

Personal services	~~2,252,206~~	2,481,741
Grants	~~10,717,444~~	10,369,155
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896
Source of funds		
General fund	~~7,376,133~~	7,368,843
Global Commitment fund	~~5,593,517~~	5,482,053
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896

Sec. 27. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.321 is amended to read:

Sec. B.321 Department for children and families - general assistance

Personal services	15,000	15,000
Grants	~~11,054,252~~	10,702,625
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625

Source of funds		
General fund	~~10,811,345~~	10,486,987
Federal funds	~~11,320~~	11,070
Global Commitment fund	~~246,587~~	219,568
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625

Sec. 28. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.322 is amended to read:

Sec. B.322 Department for children and families - 3SquaresVT

Grants	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Source of funds		
Federal funds	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812

Sec. 29. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.323 is amended to read:

Sec. B.323 Department for children and families - reach up

Operating expenses	23,821	23,821
Grants	~~37,230,488~~	36,730,493
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314
Source of funds		
General fund	~~24,733,042~~	24,233,047
Special funds	5,970,229	5,970,229
Federal funds	2,806,330	2,806,330
Global Commitment fund	3,744,708	3,744,708
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314

Sec. 30. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.325 is amended to read:

Sec. B.325 Department for children and families - office of economic opportunity

Personal services	~~817,029~~	1,042,639
Operating expenses	100,407	100,407
Grants	~~35,466,283~~	35,812,536
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582
Source of funds		
General fund	~~28,178,010~~	28,687,068
Special funds	83,135	83,135
Federal funds	~~4,935,273~~	4,998,078
Global Commitment fund	3,187,301	3,187,301
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582

Sec. 31. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.329 is amended to read:

Sec. B.329 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - administration & support

Personal services	~~45,217,977~~	46,217,977
Operating expenses	~~6,472,558~~	6,714,680
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657
Source of funds		
General fund	~~22,916,281~~	24,037,342
Special funds	1,390,457	1,390,457
Federal funds	~~26,063,097~~	26,184,158
Global Commitment fund	35,000	35,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,285,700	1,285,700
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657

Sec. 32. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.330 is amended to read:

Sec. B.330 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - advocacy and independent living grants

Grants	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Source of funds		
General fund	~~8,392,303~~	8,504,605
Federal funds	7,321,114	7,321,114
Global Commitment fund	~~8,857,643~~	8,956,079
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798

Sec. 33. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.332 is amended to read:

Sec. B.332 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - vocational rehabilitation

Grants	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,371,845~~	371,845
Federal funds	7,558,000	7,558,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,250,000	1,250,000
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845

Sec. 34. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.333 is amended to read:

Sec. B.333 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - developmental services

Grants	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Source of funds		
General fund	132,732	132,732
Special funds	15,463	15,463
Federal funds	403,573	403,573
Global Commitment fund	~~328,697,576~~	330,660,503
Interdepartmental transfers	50,000	50,000
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271

Sec. 35. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - TBI home and community based waiver

Grants	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520

Sec. 36. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334.1 Disabilities, aging and independent living - Long Term Care

Grants	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Source of funds		
General fund	498,579	498,579
Federal funds	2,450,000	2,450,000
Global Commitment fund	~~290,635,966~~	344,427,543
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122

Sec. 37. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.338 is amended to read:

Sec. B.338 Corrections - correctional services

Personal services	~~147,472,104~~	148,472,104
Operating expenses	~~24,914,205~~	25,249,795
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899
Source of funds		
General fund	~~162,807,888~~	163,643,478
Special funds	935,963	935,963
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~499,888~~	999,888
Global Commitment fund	2,746,255	2,746,255
Interdepartmental transfers	396,315	396,315
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899

Sec. 38. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.342 is amended to read:

Sec. B.342 Vermont veterans' home - care and support services

Personal services	~~17,631,222~~	17,595,290
Operating expenses	~~5,013,462~~	13,247,462
Grants	0	1,583,157
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909
Source of funds		
General fund	~~4,320,687~~	11,224,018
Special funds	~~10,051,903~~	12,450,095
Federal funds	~~8,272,094~~	8,751,796
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909

Sec. 39. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.347 is amended to read:

Sec. B.347 Total human services

Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,328,118,806~~	1,364,156,647
Special funds	~~202,800,452~~	218,398,644
Tobacco fund	23,088,208	23,088,208
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~1,803,398,922~~	1,882,012,745
Global Commitment fund	~~1,980,839,553~~	2,108,560,133
Internal service funds	490,853	490,853
Interdepartmental transfers	~~32,893,535~~	34,367,341
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~5,404,708,886~~	5,664,153,128

Sec. 40. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.501 is amended to read:

Sec. B.501 Education - education services

Personal services	~~28,237,700~~	28,312,700
Operating expenses	1,134,912	1,134,912
Grants	322,345,763	322,345,763
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,387,955~~	6,462,955
Special funds	3,033,144	3,033,144
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Federal funds	340,584,414	340,584,414
Interdepartmental transfers	962,474	962,474
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375

Sec. 41. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.503 is amended to read:

Sec. B.503 Education - state-placed students

Grants	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000

Sec. 42. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504 Education - adult education and literacy

Grants	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,778,133~~	4,081,770
Federal funds	916,050	916,050
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820

Sec. 43. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504.1 Education - Flexible Pathways

Grants	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Source of funds		
General fund	921,500	921,500
Education fund	~~10,440,255~~	10,642,679
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179

Sec. 44. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.505 is amended to read:

Sec. B.505 Education - adjusted education payment

Grants	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394

Sec. 45. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.508 is amended to read:

Sec. B.508 Education - nutrition

Grants	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000

Sec. 46. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.516 is amended to read:

Sec. B.516 Total general education

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,890,519~~	229,269,156
Special funds	23,651,687	23,651,687
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Education fund	~~2,323,283,242~~	2,308,585,666
Federal funds	354,654,849	354,654,849
Global Commitment fund	260,000	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,467,771	1,467,771
Pension trust funds	3,572,780	3,572,780
Total	~~2,936,531,236~~	2,922,212,297

Sec. 47. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.704 is amended to read:

Sec. B.704 Forests, parks and recreation - forestry

Personal services	~~7,880,566~~	7,913,766
Operating expenses	1,005,046	1,005,046
Grants	~~1,712,423~~	1,713,923
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,299,512~~	6,334,212
Special funds	547,215	547,215
Federal funds	3,394,931	3,394,931
Interdepartmental transfers	356,377	356,377
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735

Sec. 48. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.710 is amended to read:

Sec. B.710 Environmental conservation - air and waste management

Personal services	27,995,328	27,995,328
Operating expenses	~~10,788,954~~	10,816,954
Grants	4,943,000	4,943,000
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282
Source of funds		
General fund	~~199,372~~	227,372
Special funds	24,643,580	24,643,580
Federal funds	18,800,064	18,800,064
Interdepartmental transfers	84,266	84,266
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282

Sec. 49. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.711 is amended to read:

Sec. B.711 Environmental conservation - office of water programs

Personal services	50,153,806	50,153,806
Operating expenses	~~8,362,915~~	8,370,915
Grants	92,365,140	92,365,140
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861
Source of funds		
General fund	~~11,887,629~~	11,895,629
Special funds	30,967,150	30,967,150
Federal funds	107,154,542	107,154,542
Interdepartmental transfers	872,540	872,540
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861

Sec. 50. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.714 is amended to read:

Sec. B.714 Total natural resources

Source of funds		
General fund	~~42,792,800~~	42,863,500
Special funds	81,275,829	81,275,829
Fish and wildlife fund	10,418,331	10,418,331
Federal funds	152,068,301	152,068,301
Interdepartmental transfers	14,131,324	14,131,324
Total	~~300,686,585~~	300,757,285

Sec. 51. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100 is amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2025 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

* * *

(d) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(8) $835,073 General Fund for the Bridges to Health Program; ~~and~~

(9) ~~$400,000~~ $550,000 General Fund for the Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey; and

(10) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity.

(e) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$16,500,000~~ $18,340,304 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing program;

(2) $1,034,065 General Fund to extend 10 Economic Services Division limited service positions, including associated operating costs, in support of the General Assistance Emergency Housing program; ~~and~~

(3) $332,000 General Fund for a 2-1-1 service line contract to operate 24 hours seven days per week;

(4) $340,000 General Fund and $660,000 federal funds for the Office of Child Support mainframe transition planning. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 703, unless otherwise reverted by a future act of the General Assembly, these appropriations shall carry forward until fully expended; and

(5) $1,800,000 General Fund shall be added to the appropriation made in Sec. B.1102(b)(4) of this act for the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

* * *

(n) Agency of Human Services Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$3,913,200~~ $5,586,324 General Fund and ~~$5,366,383~~ $7,713,259 federal funds to be used for Global Commitment match for the Medicaid Global Payment Program. To the extent that at a future date the Global Payment Program ceases to operate as a program or changes methodology to a retrospective payment program, any resulting one-time General Fund spending authority remaining at that time shall be reverted. If the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b has not been replenished in accordance with subdivision (b)(21) of Sec. B.1102 of this act, the remaining unallocated General Fund balance shall be reserved in the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b up to the amount appropriated in this subdivision.

(o) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$9,279,583~~ $13,299,583 Global Commitment for the Medicaid Global Payment Program;

(2) $150,000 General Fund to conduct a technical analysis of Vermont's health insurance markets; ~~and~~

(3) $100,000 General Fund to implement the expansion of Medicare Savings Programs eligibility;

(4) $10,000,000 General Fund for Provider Stabilization Grants; and

(5) $11,000,000 General Fund for an alternative payment model reconciliation payment to Brattleboro Retreat. All or a portion of these funds may also be used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match. If funds are used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to

provide State match, the commensurate amount of Global Commitment Fund spending authority may be requested during the Global Commitment Transfer process pursuant to Sec. E.301.1 of this act.

* * *

(v) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$200,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities that were impacted by the August and December 2023 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT and DR-4762-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of the August and December 2023 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on Federal Emergency Management Agency related projects~~

$1,800,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4810-VT and DR-4744-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of 2023 and 2024 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on FEMA-related projects.

(A) The funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) for local economic damage grants shall be distributed as follows:

(i) $75,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has at least $5,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(ii) $50,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $5,000,000 and at least $2,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iii) $30,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $2,000,000 and at least $1,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iv) $20,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $1,000,000 and at least $250,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(v) $10,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $250,000 and at least $100,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(B) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) have not been granted on or before June 30, 2025, they shall revert to the General Fund and be transferred to the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund.

(C) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) are insufficient to distribute grants to all eligible municipalities in their full amount, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511, utilize excess receipt authority to expend funds from the PILOT Special Fund for this purpose.

(w) Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $8,600,000 General Fund to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of: affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units including improvements to manufactured homes and communities; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness; recovery residences; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home- and community-based services; and

(2) $2,800,000 General Fund to complete pilot projects identified pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 186.

Sec. 52. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.100 is amended to read:

Sec. D.100 ALLOCATIONS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

(a) This act contains the following amounts allocated to special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. These allocations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of $575,662 is allocated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of $575,662 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(2) Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 from the property transfer tax and surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of $2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 314 shall be offset by the reduction of $1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and $1,000,000 from the surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2025 appropriation of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the $1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, the $1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall be restored.

(3) Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), amounts in excess of ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. The ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 shall be allocated as follows:

(A) ~~$6,404,540~~ $7,300,358 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) ~~$931,773~~ $1,187,721 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) ~~$436,060~~ $564,034 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. 53. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.101 is amended to read:

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following amounts are transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): ~~$73,212,880~~ $78,235,088.34.

* * *

(J) Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (#21555): ~~$830,000~~ $6,500,000.

(K) Education Fund (#20205): $25,000,000.

(L) Medical Insurance Fund (#55100): $18,500,000.

(M) Correctional Industries Fund (#59100): $3,135,443.

(N) Act 250 Permit Fund (#21260): $900,000.

(O) State Liability Self-Insurance Fund (#56200): $3,000,000.

(P) Emergency Personnel Survivor's Benefit Fund (#21884): $220,000.

(Q) Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves Fund (#21953): $133,700,000.

(2) From the Transportation Fund to the:

(A) ~~Vermont Recreational Trails Fund (#21455): $370,000.~~

~~(B)~~ Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvements Fund (#21575): $523,966.

~~(C)~~(B) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $316,745.

~~(D)~~(C) Notwithstanding 19 V.S.A. § 13(c), the Transportation Fund transfer to the Central Garage fund in fiscal year 2025 shall be $0.

* * *

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025:

(1) The following amounts shall be transferred to the General Fund from the funds indicated:

(A) Cannabis Regulation Fund (#21998): ~~$12,000,000~~ $15,417,084.32.

(B) AHS Central Office Earned Federal Receipts (#22005): $4,641,960.

(C) Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund (#50250): ~~$7,000,000~~ $6,139,162.

(D) Liquor Control Fund (#50300): ~~$21,100,000~~ $9,543,353.

(E) ~~Tobacco Litigation Settlement Fund (#21370): $3,000,000.~~

~~(F)~~ Financial Institutions Supervision Fund (#21065): $1,100,000.

(F) Workforce Education and Training Fund (#21913): $2,598,921.75.

(G) Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund (#21994): the balance of the fund at the close of fiscal year 2025.

(2) The following estimated amounts, which may be all or a portion of unencumbered fund balances, shall be transferred from the following funds to the General Fund. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall

report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July meeting the final amounts transferred from each fund and certify that such transfers will not impair the agency, office, or department reliant upon each fund from meeting its statutory requirements.

(A) AG-Fees & Reimbursements-Court Order Fund (#21638): $2,000,000.

(B) Unclaimed Property Fund (#62100): ~~$6,500,000~~ $10,995,595.

(3) ~~$66,935,000~~ $63,560,450.50 of the net unencumbered fund balances in the Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21075), the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085), and the Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21080) shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(c)(1) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.3 of the Rules for State Matching Funds under the Federal Public Assistance Program, in fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may provide funding from the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund that was transferred pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(J) of this section to subgrantees prior to the completion of a project. In fiscal ~~year~~ years 2025 and 2026, up to 70 percent of the State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project for municipalities that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT may be advanced at the request of a municipality.

(2) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.1 of the Rules for State Matching Funds Under the Federal Public Assistance Program, the Secretary of Administration shall increase the standard State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project to the highest percentage possible given available funding for municipalities in counties that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events and are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT.

Sec. 54. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.102 is amended to read:

Sec. D.102 REVERSIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

* * *

3150892104 MH – Case Management Serv	~~$350,000.00~~	$350,199.34

* * *

1100892208 AOA – VT Housing Finance Agency	$3,000,000.00
1100892403 AOA – Health Equity Community Grants	$500,000.00
1120020000 Tuition Assistance Program	$133,877.86
1120892401 DHR – New Position in DHR Ops	$477,769.00
1120892402 DHR – New Position in VTHR Ops	$40,726.07
1140010000 Tax Operation Costs	$1,267,062.22
1140060000 Reappraisal and Listing Payments	$35,270.75
1140070000 Use Tax Reimbursement Program	$37,864.25
1140330000 Renter Rebates	$2,186,940.33
1140892403 Tax – Child Care Contr Positions	$3,591,823.02
1260892201 TRE – Bond Redemption	$2,000,000.00
1260980000 Debt Service	$235,445.15
1266892401 VPIC – Pension System Assets	$5,000.00
2100892201 AG – Racial Disparities	$48,465.00
2130400000 SIUS Parent Account	$395,749.64
2150010000 Mil Admin/TAGO	$142,789.80
2150050000 Mil Vet Affairs Office	$100,000.00
2160892201 CCVS – VT Forensic Nursing	$246.43
2160892304 CCVS – Kurn Hattin Survivor	$250.00
2200010000 Administration Division	$167,222.00
3310000000 Commission on Women	$25,390.43
3330892401 GMCB – VHCURES Database Implemen	$545,782.90
3400892111 Supp New Americans Refugee	$23,431.00
3400892301 AHSCO – Refugee Resettlement	$1,293.00
3420892405 HD – Regional Emergency Med	$8,295.01
3440050000 DCFS – AABD	$35,310.73
3440892110 DCF – Grants to Reachup	$5.10

3440892203 DCF – Parent Child Ctrs Cap Imp	$20,708.22
3440892214 DCF – Child Care Provider Workfor	$294.79
4100500000 VT Department of Labor	$8,000,000.00
5100070000 Education Services	$100,000.00
5100892101 AOE – VSC Committee Per Diem	$16,295.33
5100892102 AOA – Advisory Group Per Diem	$9,018.00
5100892103 AOE – ESESAG Per Diems	$8,960.00
5100892201 AOE – Comm Pub Sch Emp Hlth Ben	$29,050.00
5100892202 AOE – Task Force Equit Inclusive	$6,150.00
5100892302 AOE – Ethnic&Social Equity Per D	$14,386.24
6100010000 Administration Management and Planning	$402,052.99
6100040000 Property Tax Assessment Approp	$11,692.11
6140880005 152/00 State Asst Munic Poll Cont	$126.26
7100892301 Everyone Eats	$144,565.43
7120892304 DED – Relocated and Remote Worker	$127,314.33
8100002100 Department of Motor Vehicles	$2,482.81

* * *

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the Education Fund from the accounts indicated:

5100010000 Administration	$301,041.03
5100050000 State-Placed Students	$13,687,528.41
5100090000 Education Grant	$359,570.31
5100110000 Small School Grant	$593,700.00
5100200000 Education – Technical Education	$1,802,347.44
5100210000 Education – Flexible Pathways	$1,312,334.72
5100892405 AOE – Universal School Meals	$6,201,479.69

Sec. 55. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.103 is amended to read:

Sec. D.103 RESERVES

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following reserve transactions shall be implemented for the funds provided:

(1) General Fund.

(A) Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 308, an estimated amount of ~~$15,168,663~~ $15,168,660.85 shall be added to the General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve.

(B) $5,480,000 shall be added to the 27/53 reserve in fiscal year 2025. This action is the fiscal year 2025 contribution to the reserve for the 53rd week of Medicaid as required by 32 V.S.A. § 308e and the 27th payroll reserve as required by 32 V.S.A. § 308e.

(C) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 308b, $3,913,200 shall be unreserved from the Human Services Caseload Reserve established within the General Fund in 32 V.S.A. § 308b.

* * *

Sec. 56. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.100 is amended to read:

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of ~~43~~ 47 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2025 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

* * *

(H) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Court Diversion Assistant Director.

* * *

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

* * *

(G) Human Rights Commission:

(i) one Intake Specialist; and

(ii) one Staff Attorney Investigator.

(H) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Assistant Attorney General.

* * *

(d) The conversion of eight limited service positions to exempt permanent status is authorized in fiscal year 2025 as follows:

(1) Office of the Defender General:

(A) one Administrative Services Tech;

(B) two DG IT Specialist II's;

(C) one ODG Legal Assistant I;

(D) two Staff Attorney I's;

(E) one Financial Specialist III; and

(F) one Admin Secretary.

* * *

Sec. 57 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 56, is further amended to read:

Sec. E.100 EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 75 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 for the following:

* * *

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

* * *

(F) Office of the State Treasurer:

(i) one Director – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division; and

(ii) one Communications and Outreach Manager – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division;

* * *

Sec. 58. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.301 is amended to read:

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE; GLOBAL COMMITMENT

* * *

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of ~~$24,301,185~~ $28,307,335 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds under Global Commitment as follows:

(1) ~~$21,295,850~~ $25,302,000 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid

services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with ~~$29,204,150~~ $34,698,000 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of ~~$50,500,000~~ $60,000,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund created in 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) $3,005,335 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to ~~$4,487,210~~ $3,614,245 is transferred from the Agency of Human Services Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act.

Sec. 59. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.109 is amended to read:

Sec. G.109 PAY ACT APPROPRIATIONS; FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

(a) Executive Branch. The first and second years of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association for the Defender General, Non-Management, Supervisory, and Corrections bargaining units, and, for the purpose of appropriation, the State's Attorneys' offices bargaining unit, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; the collective bargaining agreement with the Vermont Troopers' Association for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; and salary increases for employees in the Executive Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows:

(1) Fiscal year 2025.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

(2) Fiscal year 2026.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

Sec. 60. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 7 is amended to read:

Sec. 7. TELEPHONE TAX; REPEAL; TRANSITION

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 8521 (telephone personal property tax) is repealed on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. The final monthly installment payment of the telephone personal property tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8521 levied on the net book value of the taxpayer's personal property as of December 31, ~~2024~~ 2025 shall be due on or before July 25, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(b) 32 V.S.A. § 8522 (alternative telephone gross revenues tax) is repealed on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027. The final quarterly payment of the alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due on or before January 25, ~~2026~~ 2027.

(c) Any taxpayer who paid the alternative tax imposed by 32 V.S.A. § 8522 prior to the repeal of the tax on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027 shall become subject to the income tax imposed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 151 beginning with the taxpayer's first income tax year starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. No alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due for any period included in the taxpayer's income tax filing for tax years starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(d) In fiscal year ~~2025~~ 2026, the Division of Property Valuation and Review of the Department of Taxes and all communications service providers with taxable communications property in Vermont shall be subject to the inventory and valuation provisions prescribed in 32 V.S.A. § 4452, as applicable.

Sec. 61. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

* * *

(3) Secs. 8–12 (communications property tax) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 and shall apply to grand lists lodged on or after April 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

Sec. 62. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 166, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. TRANSFER AND APPROPRIATION

Notwithstanding 7 V.S.A. § 845(c), in fiscal year 2025:

(1) $500,000~~.00~~ is transferred from the Cannabis Regulation Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 845 to the Cannabis Business Development Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987; and

(2) $500,000.00 is appropriated from the Cannabis Business ~~19~~ Development Fund to the ~~Agency of Commerce and Community Development~~ Department of Economic Development to fund technical assistance and provide loans and grants pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987.

Sec. 63. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 78 is amended to read:

Sec. 78. ~~TRANSFERS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX~~

~~Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), or any other provision of law to the contrary, amounts in excess of $32,954,775.00 from the property transfer tax shall be transferred into the General Fund. Of this amount:~~

~~(1) $6,106,335.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~

~~(2) $1,279,740.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. 64. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 96 is amended to read:

Sec. 96. APPROPRIATION; RENT ARREARS ASSISTANCE FUND

The sum of $2,500,000~~.00~~ is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Vermont State Housing Authority~~ Department of Housing and Community Development in fiscal year 2025 for the Rent Arrears Assistance Fund established by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 45.

Sec. 65. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 3, as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 75, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.119, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 106, is further amended to read:

Sec. 3. MANUFACTURED HOME IMPROVEMENT AND REPAIR PROGRAM

(a) ~~Amounts~~ Of the amounts available from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery funds, $4,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Manufactured Home Improvement and Repair Program and shall be used for one or more of the following purposes:

* * *

Sec. 66. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 113b is amended to read:

Sec. 113b. APPROPRIATION; ~~NATURAL RESOURCES~~ LAND USE REVIEW BOARD

The sum of ~~$1,300,000.00~~ $400,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Natural Resources~~ Land Use Review Board in fiscal year 2025.

Sec. 67. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 24a is amended to read:

Sec. 24a. COMPENSATION FOR OVERPAYMENT

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, ~~the sum of $29,224.00~~ a $29,224 credit shall be ~~transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of~~ applied to the Canaan Town School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the ~~Town of~~ Canaan Town School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. ~~The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Canaan.~~

~~(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $5,924.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Bloomfield in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Bloomfield for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Bloomfield.~~

~~(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,575.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Brunswick in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Brunswick for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Brunswick.~~

~~(d) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $6,145.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of East Haven in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of East Haven for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating~~

~~average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of East Haven.~~

~~(e) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,046.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Granby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Granby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Granby.~~

~~(f) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $10,034.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Guildhall in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Guildhall for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Guildhall.~~

~~(g) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $20,536.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Kirby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Kirby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Kirby.~~

~~(h) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,402.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Lemington in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Lemington for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Lemington.~~

~~(i) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $11,464.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Maidstone in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Maidstone for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Maidstone.~~

~~(j) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $4,349.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Norton~~

~~in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Norton for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Norton.~~

~~(k) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,657.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Victory in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Victory for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Victory.~~

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a $68,132 credit shall be applied to the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership.

Sec. 68. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 40 and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. C.101, is further amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,300,000 General Fund to create, implement, and oversee a comprehensive statewide language access plan~~;~~.

(2) $15,000,000 General Fund to be used to offset the cost of denied claims for ~~Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)~~ federal reimbursement related to presidentially declared disasters in fiscal year 2024 or 2025, or to fund unanticipated statewide costs related to recovery efforts from declared disasters or administering programs created by funds from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery Fund, including the costs of related limited-service positions, and contracting for programs and services.

(3) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity. These funds shall not be released until the recommendation and report required by Sec. E.100.1 of this act, regarding the permanent administrative location for the Office of Health Equity, is provided to the committees of

jurisdiction listed in Sec. E.100.1 of this act and the positions in the Office of Health Equity created by this act are filled.

* * *

(l) Agency of Human Services Central Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(2) $8,834,000 General Fund and $11,483,302 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program. Funds shall be used to expand the substances covered by the program, include mental health and pediatric screenings, and make strategic investments with community partners; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(m) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $366,066 General Fund and $372,048 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

(2) $15,583,352 Global Commitment Fund #20405 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose; and

* * *

(n) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $4,595,448 Global Commitment Fund #20405 to the Division of Substance Use Programs for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(x) Judiciary. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1)(A) $4,680,000 General Fund for the Judiciary network replacement project.

(B) Judiciary shall update the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee on the status of this project on or before December 1, 2023.

(2) $300,000 General Fund for the Essex County Courthouse renovation planning. Of this amount, $50,000 may be used to construct bathrooms compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act in the Essex Meeting House.

* * *

(ee) Joint Fiscal Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $250,000 for ~~per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Task Force on Economic Development Incentives and for consulting services approved by the Task Force~~ consulting services related to legislative needs identified in the 2025-2026 biennium, including analysis of legislative staff compensation and organizational structure and implementation of adjustments in accordance with policies adopted by the Joint Legislative Management Committee.

* * *

Sec. 69. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1102, as added by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 47, is amended to read:

Sec. B.1102 FISCAL YEAR 2023 ONE-TIME TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2023, funds are appropriated from the Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951) for new and ongoing initiatives as follows:

(1) $40,010,000 to the Agency of Digital Services to be used as follows:

(A) $11,800,000 for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system upgrade of Human Capital Management and core statewide financial accounting system and integration with the Department of Labor and Agency of Transportation financial systems;

* * *

Sec. 70. 3 V.S.A. § 3306 is amended to read:

§ 3306. TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND

* * *

(b) Funds. The Fund shall consist of:

(1) any amounts transferred ~~or appropriated~~ to it by the General Assembly; and

(2) any interest earned by the Fund.

* * *

Sec. 71. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND; REPEAL

(a) 10 V.S.A. § 543 (Workforce Education and Training Fund) is repealed.

Sec. 72. 18 V.S.A. § 9502 is amended to read:

§ 9502. TOBACCO TRUST FUND

(a)(1) The Tobacco Trust Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the purposes of creating a self-sustaining, perpetual fund for tobacco cessation and prevention that is not dependent upon tobacco sales volume.

(2) The Trust Fund shall ~~comprise~~ be composed of:

(A) ~~appropriations~~ transfers made by the General Assembly; and

(B) ~~transfers from the Litigation Settlement Fund pursuant to subdivision (b) of this section; and~~

~~(C)~~ contributions from any other source.

(3) The State Treasurer shall not disburse monies from the Trust Fund, except upon appropriation by the General Assembly. In any fiscal year, total appropriations from the Trust Fund shall not exceed seven percent of the fair market value of the Fund at the end of the prior fiscal year.

(4) The Trust Fund shall be administered by the State Treasurer. The Treasurer may invest monies in the Fund in accordance with the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 434. All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain in the Fund. The Treasurer's annual financial report to the Governor and the General Assembly shall contain an accounting of receipts, disbursements, and earnings of the Fund.

(b) ~~Unless otherwise authorized by the General Assembly on or before June 30, 2000, and on June 30 of each subsequent fiscal year, any unencumbered balance in the Litigation Settlement Fund shall be transferred to the Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. 73. 30 V.S.A. chapter 86 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 86. UNDERGROUND UTILITY DAMAGE PREVENTION SYSTEM

* * *

§ 7006. MARKING OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITIES

A company notified in accordance with section 7005 of this title shall, within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, of the receipt of the notice, mark the approximate location of its underground utility facilities in the area of the proposed excavation activities; provided, however, if the company advises the person that the proposed excavation area is of such length or size that the company cannot reasonably mark all of the underground utility facilities within ~~48~~ 72 hours, the person shall notify the company of the specific locations in which the excavation activities will first occur and the company shall mark facilities in those locations within ~~48~~ 72 hours and the remaining facilities within a reasonable time thereafter. A company and an excavator may by agreement fix a later time for the company's marking of the facilities, provided the marking is made prior to excavation activities. For the purposes of this chapter, the approximate location of underground facilities shall be marked with stakes, paint, or other physical means as designated by the Commission.

§ 7006a. MAINTENANCE OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITY MARKINGS

After a company has marked its underground facilities in accordance with section 7006 of this title, the excavator shall be responsible for maintenance of the designated markings. In the event said markings are obliterated, destroyed, or removed, the person engaged in excavation activities shall notify the System referred to in section 7002 of this title that remarking is needed. The System shall then notify all member companies whose facilities may be affected. The company shall within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, following receipt of the notice, remark the location of its underground utility facilities.

* * *

Sec. 74. 32 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Loan" means a loan that is interest free or below market value.

(2) "State agency" means an Executive Branch agency, department, commission, office, or board.

* * *

Sec. 75. 32 V.S.A. § 706 is amended to read:

§ 706. TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS

Notwithstanding any authority granted elsewhere, all transfers of appropriations shall be made pursuant to this section upon the initiative of the Governor or upon the request of a secretary or commissioner.

(1) With the approval of the Governor, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may transfer balances of appropriations not to exceed ~~$50,000.00~~ $100,000 made under any appropriation act for the support of the government from one component of an agency, department, or other unit of State government to any component of the same agency, department, or unit.

(2) Except as specified in ~~subdivisions~~ subdivision (1) ~~and (4)~~ of this section, the transfer of balances of appropriations may be made only with the approval of the Emergency Board.

(3) For the specific purpose of balancing and closing out fund accounts at the end of a fiscal year, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may adjust a balance within an account of an agency or department in an amount not to exceed ~~$100.00~~ $200.

* * *

Sec. 76. 32 V.S.A. § 902 is amended to read:

§ 902. AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW MONEY

* * *

(b) The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of and expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing of such notes as the same fall due without further order or authority from the ~~General Fund or from the Transportation or other applicable funds or from the proceeds of bonds or notes~~ governmental debt service funds established in section 951a of this chapter. The authority hereby granted is in addition to and not in limitation of any other authority. Such notes shall be sold at public or private sale with or without published notice, as the State Treasurer may determine to be in the best interests of the State.

Sec. 77. 32 V.S.A. § 951a is amended to read:

§ 951a. DEBT SERVICE FUNDS

(a) Three governmental debt service funds are hereby established:

* * *

(b) Financial resources in each fund shall consist of ~~appropriations by the General Assembly to fulfill debt service obligations,~~ the transfer of funding sources by the General Assembly to fulfill future debt service obligations, bond proceeds raised to fund a permanent reserve required by a trust

agreement entered into to secure bonds, transfers of appropriations effected pursuant to section 706 of this title, investment income earned on balances held in trust agreement accounts as required by a trust agreement, and such other amounts as directed by the General Assembly or that are specifically authorized by provisions of this title. Each debt service fund shall account for the accumulation of resources and the fulfillment of debt service obligations within the current fiscal year and the accumulation of resources for debt service obligations maturing in future fiscal years.

* * *

Sec. 78. 32 V.S.A. § 954 is amended to read:

§ 954. PROCEEDS

(a) The proceeds arising from the sale of bonds, inclusive of any premiums, shall be applied to the purposes for which they were authorized, and the purposes ~~shall~~ may be considered to include ~~the expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing the bonds and any notes issued under section 955 of this title, and~~ underwriters' fees and amounts for reserves, but no purchasers of the bonds shall be in any way bound to see to the proper application of the proceeds. The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of, investment return on, and maturity value of the bonds and notes as the same fall due or accrue without further order or authority. The State Treasurer, with the approval of the Governor, may establish sinking funds, reserve funds, or other special funds of the State as the State Treasurer may deem for the best interests of the State. To the extent not otherwise provided, the amount necessary each year to fulfill the maturing principal and interest of, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on all the bonds then outstanding shall be included in and made a part of the annual appropriation bill for the expense of State government, and the principal and interest on, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on the bonds as may come due before appropriations for their fulfillment have been made shall be fulfilled from the applicable debt service fund.

(b) The ~~State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the~~ estimated cost of bond issuance or issuances ~~to the entities to which funds are appropriated by a capital construction act and for which bonding is required as the source of funds. If estimated receipts are insufficient, the State Treasurer shall allocate additional costs to the entities. Any remaining receipts shall not be expended, but carried forward to be available for future capital construction acts. If the source of funds appropriated by a capital construction act is other than by issuance of bonds, the State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the estimated cost of ongoing debt management services to the entities to which those funds~~

~~are appropriated~~ shall be appropriated annually from the funds from which transfers are made to fund debt service costs.

* * *

Sec. 79. VERMONT TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY FUND; REPEAL

(a) 33 V.S.A. chapter 78 (Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund) is repealed.

Sec. 80. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 38 is amended to read:

Sec. 38. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

(a) Creation; administration. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall design and implement a Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program and shall create and administer a revolving loan fund to provide subsidized loans for rental housing developments that serve middle-income households.

(b) Loans; eligibility; criteria.

* * *

(7) The Agency shall use one or more legal mechanisms to ensure that:

(A) a subsidized unit remains affordable to a household earning the applicable percent of area median income for the longer of:

(i) seven years; or

(ii) full repayment of the loan plus three years; and

(B) during the affordability period determined pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (7), the annual increase in rent for a subsidized unit does not exceed three percent or an amount otherwise authorized by the Agency.

* * *

Sec. 81. 32 V.S.A. § 308b is amended to read:

§ 308b. HUMAN SERVICES CASELOAD RESERVE

(a) There is created within the General Fund a Human Services Caseload Reserve. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be subject to an appropriation by the General Assembly or approval by the Emergency Board. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be limited to Agency of Human Services caseload-related needs primarily in the Departments for Children and Families, of Health, of Mental Health, of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, of Vermont Health Access, and settlement costs associated with managing the Global Commitment waiver.

(b) The Secretary of Administration may transfer to the Human Services Caseload Reserve any General Fund ~~carry-forward~~ carryforward directly attributable to Agency of Human Services caseload reductions and the effective management of related federal receipts, with the exclusion of the Department of Corrections.

(c) The Human Services Caseload Reserve shall contain two ~~sub-accounts~~ subaccounts:

(1) A ~~sub-account~~ subaccount for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses. Each fiscal year ~~beginning with fiscal year 2020~~, the Department of Finance and Management shall adjust the amount reserved for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses to equal the amount specified in the ~~Comprehensive~~ Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year occurring two years prior for the estimated amount of incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses associated with the current Medicaid Global Commitment waiver.

* * *

Sec. 82. CHILD CARE CONTRIBUTION SPECIAL FUND; UNALLOCATED AND UNRESERVED BALANCE

(a) In fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration shall unreserve and transfer funds from the Human Services Caseload Reserve to the Child Care Contribution Special Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 10554 as necessary to maintain a balance that appropriately supports the State's statutory obligations under the Child Care Financial Assistance Program established in 33 V.S.A. §§ 3512 and 3513.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that any unreserved and unallocated balance in the Child Care Contribution Special Fund shall remain in the Fund to support the future establishment of a reserve for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program.

Sec. 83. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; FACILITY WORK PROGRAMS; STRATEGIC PLAN

(a) Findings and intent.

(1) The General Assembly finds that a significant budget deficit has developed within previously existing programs despite a wage structure that pays incarcerated individuals in Vermont at rates ranging from $0.25 to $1.35 per hour, significantly below the federal minimum wage.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly that all Department of Corrections facility work programs operate in a manner that is fiscally

sustainable to the extent possible within current statutory limitations and effective in preparing offenders for meaningful employment upon release.

(b) Strategic plan. On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Corrections shall, in consultation with the Department of Labor, submit a strategic plan with proposed benchmarks for improvement to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary. The strategic plan shall include:

(1) A business plan to improve program efficiency and self-sustainability to ensure all facility work programs, including Vermont Correctional Industries, vocational training programs, and other paid facility duties, operate without recurring deficits or to clearly identify funding sources to address the deficits.

(2) A comprehensive evaluation of the skills provided through facility work programs to determine if those skills are transferable to employment opportunities post-incarceration. The evaluation shall include consideration of expanding technical training and certification opportunities that carry recognized value in the labor market.

(3) An analysis of facility work programs to determine if each program serves a sufficient portion of the incarcerated population to justify its administration. The analysis shall also consider whether participants gain meaningful and valuable work experiences.

(4) A review of wages paid to facility work program participants, the implications of wage structures on program outcomes, and the appropriate use of funds in relation to program objectives.

(c) In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, the Department of Corrections shall submit timely reports to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary, or the Joint Fiscal Committee and the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee when the General Assembly is not in session, on the development of facility work program deficits. The Department shall include in these reports any financial or operational actions taken to address deficits, increase oversight, and prevent future deficits.

Sec. 84. MEDICAID PROVIDERS WITH STABILIZATION NEEDS; GRANT ELIGIBILITY

(a) All Vermont Medicaid participating providers with demonstrated stabilization needs and a plan to achieve sustainability shall be eligible to apply for funds appropriated pursuant to 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), including substance use residential treatment facilities, federally

qualified health centers, residential mental health providers, and other providers of health care and human services.

(b) On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall submit a report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations. The report shall include:

(1) A detailed account of grants distributed pursuant to the appropriation made in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), as added by this act. This shall include the dollar amount and recipient of each grant.

(2) A description of each grant recipient's financial status prior to receipt of the grant, a summary of the impact of the grant for each recipient, and a summary of a revised long-term sustainability plan for each grant recipient.

(3) An analysis of grant outcomes and any recommendations for enhancing the financial stability of Vermont Medicaid providers.

Sec. 85. ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM AND HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAM TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 945 and any other provision of law to the contrary, a high school may award a high school diploma to any student who meets the following criteria:

(1) Prior to July 1, 2024, the student was participating in the High School Completion Program as the program existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

(2) The student has met the requirements of the student's individual graduation plan and would have been eligible to receive a diploma pursuant to the High School Completion Program as it existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

(b) This section is repealed on July 1, 2025.

Sec. 86. SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; DISCRETIONARY EXEMPTIONS

(a) For the remainder of federal fiscal year 2025, the Department for Children and Families shall utilize the State's allocation of discretionary exemptions in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to the extent permitted by federal regulation for the purposes of:

(1) extending benefits to Program participants who would otherwise experience a disruption of benefits; and

(2) ensuring that Program participants are not accruing any time-limited benefit work requirement countable months.

Sec. 87. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 19, Secs. 5 and 6 are amended to read:

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 4 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

(b) ~~Sec. 5 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.~~

~~(c)~~ All other sections shall take effect 30 calendar days after passage.

Sec. 88. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 53, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.102 is further amended to read:

Sec. 53. FISCAL YEAR 2022 UNALLOCATED RESERVE

* * *

(b) After meeting the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, but prior to satisfying the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308c, the remaining unreserved and undesignated funds at the close of fiscal year 2022 shall be allocated to the extent available as follows:

* * *

(7) $9,600,000 is appropriated to the Judiciary, of which $3,880,000 is for the reopening of the courts ~~and $5,720,000~~, $4,920,000 is to replace HVAC in county court houses, and $800,000 is to upgrade the network wiring and security systems in county court houses.

* * *

Sec. 89. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15b, as added by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, is amended to read:

Sec. 15b. SERGEANT AT ARMS

(a) The sum of ~~$100,000.00~~ $100,000 is appropriated in ~~FY~~ fiscal year 2025 to the Sergeant at Arms for the following projects:

(1) the replacement of State House cafeteria furnishings; and

(2) the purchase and installation at the State House of an X-ray machine designed to screen baggage.

Sec. 90. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.321 is amended to read:

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY HOUSING

* * *

(b)(1) General Assistance Emergency Housing shall be provided in a community-based shelter whenever possible. If there is inadequate community-based shelter space available within the Agency of Human Services district in which the household presents itself, the household shall be provided emergency housing in a hotel or motel within the district, if available, until adequate community-based shelter space becomes available in the district. The utilization of hotel and motel rooms pursuant to this subdivision shall be capped at 1,100 rooms per night between September 15, 2024 through November 30, 2024 ~~and between April 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025~~.

* * *

(3) The Department shall provide emergency winter housing to households meeting the eligibility criteria in subsection (a) of this section between December 1, 2024 and ~~March 31,~~ June 30, 2025. Emergency housing in a hotel or motel provided pursuant to this subdivision shall not count toward the maximum days of eligibility per 12-month period provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. 91. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 82, Sec. 1, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 108, Sec. 3, is further amended to read:

Sec. 1. REIMBURSEMENT TO MUNICIPALITIES OF STATE EDUCATION PROPERTY TAXES THAT WERE ABATED DUE TO FLOODING

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Taxes may approve an application by a municipality for reimbursement of State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426. To be eligible for reimbursement under this section, prior to November 15, ~~2024~~ 2025, a municipality must have abated, in proportion to the abated municipal tax, under 24 V.S.A. § 1535 the State education property taxes that were assessed on eligible property, after application of any property tax credit allowed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 154.

(2) As used in this subsection, "eligible property" means property lost or destroyed due directly or indirectly to severe storms and flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, provided the loss or destruction resulted in one or more of the following:

(A) a 50 percent or greater loss in value to the primary structure on the property;

(B) loss of use by the property owner of the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more;

(C) loss of access by the property owner to utilities for the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more; or

(D) condemnation of the primary structure on the property under federal, State, or municipal law, as applicable.

(b) If a municipality demonstrates that, due to disruption to tax collections resulting from flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, the municipality incurred unanticipated interest expenses on funds borrowed to make State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426, the municipality may be reimbursed by an amount equal to its reasonable interest expenses under this subsection, provided the amount of reimbursed interest expenses shall not exceed eight percent.

* * *

Sec. 92. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106 is amended to read:

Sec. E.106 CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND APPROPRIATIONS; REVERSION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SPENDING AUTHORITY

* * *

(b) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall revert all unobligated American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority prior to December 31, 2024. The total amount of American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority reverted in accordance with this subsection shall equal the amount of new spending authority established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511 for the following purposes in the following order:

* * *

(3) $30,000,000 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of: affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units~~,~~ including improvements to manufactured homes and communities~~,~~; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness~~,~~; recovery residences~~,~~; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home and community based services.

Sec. 93. CARRYFORWARD AUTHORITY

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law and subject to the approval of the Secretary of Administration, General Fund, Transportation Fund, Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund, Education Fund, Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951), Clean Water Fund (21932), and Agricultural Water Quality Fund (21933) appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Executive Branch shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, General Fund appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Legislative and Judicial Branches shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

Sec. 94. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This act shall take effect on passage, except that, notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214:

(1) Sec. 67 shall take effect retroactively on July 1, 2024; and

(2) Sec. 91 shall take effect retroactively on November 15, 2024.

And by renumbering all of the sections of the bill to be numerically correct (including internal references) and adjusting all of the totals to be arithmetically correct.

SEN. ANDREW J. PERCHLIK
SEN. VIRGINIA V. LYONS
SEN. RANDOLPH D. BROCK
Committee on the part of the Senate

REP. ROBIN P. SCHEU
REP. TIFFANY BLUEMLE
REP. TREVOR J. SQUIRRELL
Committee on the part of the House

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate accept and adopt the report of the Committee of Conference?, was decided in the affirmative

Thereupon on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Morgan and others,

Offered by Senator Brennan,

H.C.R. 41.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Keeler's Bay Variety Store of South Hero on the 50th anniversary of the Horne family's ownership.

Offered by Reps. Holcombe and others,

H.C.R. 42.

House concurrent resolution honoring Oxbow Union High School CoPrincipal and Gather author Kenneth M. Cadow of Norwich.

Offered by Reps. Holcombe and Masland,

H.C.R. 43.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Thetford Academy Panthers Division II boys' championship indoor track and field team.

Offered by Reps. Krasnow and others,

H.C.R. 44.

House concurrent resolution recognizing July 2025 as Park and Recreation Month in Vermont and designating July 18, 2025 as Vermont Park and Recreation Professionals Day in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Dodge and others,

H.C.R. 45.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets Division I boys' indoor track and field team on winning a second consecutive Division I championship.

Offered by Reps. Dodge and others,

H.C.R. 46.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Essex High School Hornets girls' volleyball program on winning a fourth consecutive State championship.

Offered by Rep. Noyes,

H.C.R. 47.

House concurrent resolution recognizing March 2025 as National Senior Nutrition Program Month in Vermont.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 48.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative Curt McCormack of Burlington.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 4.

TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Paul Sawyer of Hartland.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Committee Relieved of Further Consideration; Bills Committed

S. 21.

On motion of Senator Bongartz, the Committee on Education was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to cell phone-free schools,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 26.

On motion of Senator Bongartz, the Committee on Education was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to prohibiting certain artificial dyes in foods and beverages served or sold at school,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 39.

On motion of Senator Bongartz, the Committee on Education was relieved of further consideration of Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the State Aid for School Construction Program,

and the bill was committed to the Committee on Finance.

Bills Referred to the Committee on Finance

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. 12. An act relating to sealing criminal history records.

S. 18. An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

Bills Referred to the Committee on Appropriations

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule were referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

S. 27. An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

S. 60. An act relating to establishing the Farm Security Special Fund to provide grants for farm losses due to weather conditions.

Message from the Governor
Appointments Referred

A message was received from the Governor, by Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, submitting the following appointments, which were referred to committees as indicated:

Clark, Sarah of Waterbury Center - Secretary, Agency of Administration - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Flynn, Joseph of South Hero - Secretary, Agency of Transportation - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Kurrle, Lindsay of Middlesex - Secretary, Agency of Commerce and Community Development - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Moore, Julie of Middlesex - Secretary, Agency of the Natural Resources - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Reilly-Hughes, Denise of Cavendish - Secretary, Agency of the Digital Services - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Samuelson, Jenney of Shelburne - Secretary, Agency of the Human Services - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Saunders, Zoie of Shrewsbury - Secretary, Agency of Education - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Education.

Tebbetts, Anson of Cabot - Secretary, Agency of the Agriculture, Food and Markets - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Agriculture.

Collier, Andrew of Westford - Commissioner, Department of the Motor Vehicles - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Fastiggi, Beth of Burlington - Commissioner, Department of the Human Resources - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Greshin, Adam of Warren - Commissioner, Department of the Finance and Management - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Harrington, Michael A. of Northfield - Commissioner, Department of Labor - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Minoli, Wanda of Montpelier - Commissioner, Department of the Buildings and General Services - from October 24, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Minoli, Wanda of Montpelier - Commissioner, Department of the Buildings and General Services - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Shouldice, William IV of Stowe - Commissioner, Department of Taxes - from February 18, 2025 to February 28, 2025.

To the Committee on Finance.

Shouldice, William IV of Stowe - Commissioner, Department of Taxes - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Finance.

Valerio, Matthew of Proctor - Defender General, Office of the Defender General - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Bailey-Rowe, Gwen of Newport - Trustee of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

To the Committee on Education.

Campion, Brian of Bennington - Member of the State Board of Education - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Education.

Dengler, Wayne of Isle La Motte - Member of the Parole Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 29, 2028.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Giffin, Tom of Rutland - Member of the Parole Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 29, 2028.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Harris, Kyle of Roxbury - Member of the Cannabis Control Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 29, 2028.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Jefferson, Shirley of South Royalton - Member of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

To the Committee on Education.

Kilborn, Ryan of East Orange - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Maulucci, Jason of Essex - Trustee of the University of VT and Agricultural College Board of Trustees - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Education.

McQuesten, Gary of Plainfield - Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Morrison, Jennifer of North Hero - Commissioner, Department of Public Safety - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Saarnijoki, Linda of Weston - Member of the Board of Libraries - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

To the Committee on Education.

Snedeker, David of St. Johnsbury - Member of the State Infrastructure Bank Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2030.

To the Committee on Finance.

Valsangiacomo, Jon of Barre - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Werner, Rich of East Dover - Member of the State Board of Education - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2030.

To the Committee on Education.

Zeller, Susan of Montpelier - Trustee of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

To the Committee on Education.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 17.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 17. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on March 14, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, March 14, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, March 18, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 105.

By Senators Douglass, Baruth, Beck, Brock, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hart, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Mattos and Williams,

An act relating to exemptions from vehicle inspections.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 106.

By Senators Gulick, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to continuing the Psychedelic Therapy Advisory Working Group.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 107.

By Senator Brennan,

An act relating to reimbursing the Department of Fish and Wildlife for revenue lost due to issuance of free licenses.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 108.

By Senators Clarkson, Major and White,

An act relating to the Dog, Cat, and Wolf-Hybrid Spaying and Neutering Program.

To the Committee on Agriculture.

S. 109.

By Senator Hashim,

An act relating to miscellaneous judiciary procedures.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 110.

By Senators Williams, Brennan, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris and Weeks,

An act relating to changes to Vermont’s air pollution and renewable energy laws.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 111.

By Senator Gulick,

An act relating to language access and emergency response.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 112.

By Senators Hardy, Clarkson, Gulick, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to amending a death certificate to reflect gender identity.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 113.

By Senator Harrison,

An act relating to requiring the Agency of Transportation to request conditions in relation to the relicensing of the Bellows Falls Hydroelectric Project.

To the Committee on Finance.

Joint Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 16.

Joint Senate resolution entitled:

Joint resolution providing for a Joint Assembly to vote on the retention of seven Superior Court Judges and one Magistrate.

Having been placed on the Calendar for action, was taken up and adopted on the part of the Senate.

Senate Resolutions Adopted

Senate resolutions of the following titles were severally taken up and adopted;

S.R. 8. Senate resolution relating to concurrently conducted electronic committee meetings

S.R. 9. Senate resolution relating to electronic participation in Senate Sessions.

Message from the House No. 24

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 339. An act relating to removing the repeal of 7 V.S.A. § 230.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The Governor has informed the House that on March 5, 2025, he approved and signed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 31. An act relating to claim edit standards and prior authorization requirements.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 339.

An act relating to removing the repeal of 7 V.S.A. § 230.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 69.

Senator Harrison, for the Committee on Institutions, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to an age-appropriate design code.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 9 V.S.A. chapter 62, subchapter 6, in section 2449a, by striking out subdivision (5) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (5) to read as follows:

(5) "Business associate" has the same meaning as in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191 (HIPAA).

Second: In Sec. 1, 9 V.S.A. chapter 62, subchapter 6, in section 2449a, by striking out subdivision (11) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (11) to read as follows:

(11) "Covered business" means a sole proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company, corporation, association, other legal entity, or an affiliate thereof:

(A) that conducts business in this State;

(B) that generates a majority of its annual revenue from online services;

(C) whose online products, services, or features are reasonably likely to be accessed by a minor;

(D) that collects consumers' personal data or has consumers' personal data collected on its behalf by a processor; and

(E) that alone or jointly with others determines the purposes and means of the processing of consumers personal data.

Third: In Sec. 1, 9 V.S.A. chapter 62, subchapter 6, by striking out section 2449b in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new section 2449b to read as follows:

§ 2449b. EXCLUSIONS

This subchapter does not apply to:

(1) a federal, state, tribal, or local government entity in the ordinary course of its operation;

(2) protected health information that a covered entity or business associate processes in accordance with, or documents that a covered entity or business associate creates for the purpose of complying with, HIPAA;

(3) information used only for public health activities and purposes described in 45 C.F.R. § 164.512;

(4) information that identifies a consumer in connection with:

(A) activities that are subject to the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects as set forth in 45 C.F.R. Part 46;

(B) research on human subjects undertaken in accordance with good clinical practice guidelines issued by the International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use;

(C) activities that are subject to the protections provided in 21 C.F.R. Part 50 and 21 C.F.R. Part 56; or

(D) research conducted in accordance with the requirements set forth in subdivisions (A)–(C) of this subdivision (4) or otherwise in accordance with State or federal law;

(5) an entity whose primary purpose is journalism as defined in 12 V.S.A. § 1615(a)(2) and that has a majority of its workforce consisting of individuals engaging in journalism;

(6) a person who controlled or processed the personal data of not more than:

(A) 25,000 consumers in the previous calendar year, excluding personal data controlled or processed solely for the purpose of completing a payment transaction; or

(B) 50,000 consumers in the previous calendar year, excluding personal data controlled or processed solely for the purpose of completing a payment transaction and had an annual gross revenue of not more than $1,000,000.00 in the previous calendar year; and

(7) a financial institution or data subject to Title V of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, Pub. L. No. 106-102, and regulations adopted to implement that act.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the recommendation of amendment was agreed to on a roll call, Yeas 25, Nays 5.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: *Beck, *Douglass, *Hart, Ingalls, Norris.

*Senator Beck explained his vote as follows:

"S. 69 has a lot of potential to address a real problem. I look forward to a more fully developed bill before we adjourn.

*Senator Douglass explained his vote as follows:

"The harms are very real, and I am an advocate for addictions among our population.

"I do not believe that this bill will accurately identify minors. We were told multiple times that age verification methods are very difficult, if not impossible, to implement.

"The Attorney General is directed to adopt rules for age verification, but prioritize user privacy and accessibility over the accuracy of the age verification.

"I want to solve the digital addictions problem, and I was initially excited to see this bill, but passing it will hold off our attention on crafting a bill that will work as intended."

*Senator Hart explained his vote as follows:

"I objected because the bill was mirrored off a bill in California, when we should have created a bill here in the Senate that protects our kids from over use of social media."

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered.

Third Reading Ordered

S. 50.

Senator Williams, for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to increasing the size of solar net metering projects that qualify for expedited registration.

Reported that the bill ought to pass.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 28.

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

An act relating to access to certain legally protected health care services.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 1 V.S.A. § 317(c) is amended to read:

(c) The following public records are exempt from public inspection and copying:

* * *

(44) Records held by the Office of Professional Regulation, Board of Medical Practice, or another public agency that issues one or more licenses, certificates, or registrations to engage in a State-regulated profession or occupation if the records contain the telephone number, email address, physical address, or mailing address, or a combination of these, of an individual who has applied for or has been granted a license, certificate, or registration to practice a profession or occupation in this State, except that the public agency shall disclose any address that the individual has designated as a public address in the record.

Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 129a is amended to read:

§ 129a. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) In addition to any other provision of law, the following conduct by a licensee constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of a license or other disciplinary action. Any one of the following items or any combination of items, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, shall constitute unprofessional conduct:

(1) Fraudulent or deceptive procurement or use of a license.

(2) Advertising, including advertising about health care services, that is intended or has a tendency to deceive or mislead.

* * *

(6) Delegating professional responsibilities, including the delivery of health care services, to a person whom the licensed professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by any combination of training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform them, or knowingly providing professional supervision or serving as a preceptor to a person who has not been licensed or registered as required by the laws of that person's profession.

* * *

(21) Permitting one's name or license to be used by a person, group, or corporation when not actually in charge of ~~or~~ responsible for, or actively overseeing the professional services provided.

* * *

(f)(1) Health care providers. Notwithstanding subsection (e) of this section or any other law to the contrary, no health care provider who is certified, registered, or licensed in Vermont shall be subject to professional disciplinary action by a board or the Director, nor shall a board or the Director take adverse action on an application for certification, registration, or licensure of a qualified health care provider, based solely on:

* * *

(2) Definitions. As used in this subsection:

* * *

(B) "Health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical or mental health condition, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

* * *

Sec. 3. 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 11 is amended to read:

Subchapter 11. ~~Pregnancy Services Centers~~ Health Care Services

§ 2491. FINDINGS; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

~~(a) Findings.~~ The General Assembly finds that:

(1) ~~Centers that seek to counsel clients against abortion, often referred to as crisis pregnancy centers or limited-services pregnancy centers, have become common across the country, including in Vermont. Accurate information about the services that a limited-services pregnancy center performs, in addition to forthright acknowledgement of its limitations, is essential to enable individuals in this State to make informed decisions about their care. This includes individuals being informed of whether they are receiving services from a licensed and qualified health care provider at a limited-services pregnancy center, as this allows individuals to determine if they need to seek medical care elsewhere in order to continue or terminate a pregnancy.~~

~~(2) Although some limited-services pregnancy centers openly acknowledge in their advertising, on their websites, and at their facilities that they neither provide abortions nor refer clients to other providers of abortion services, others provide confusing and misleading information to pregnant individuals contemplating abortion by leading those individuals to believe that their facilities offer abortion services and unbiased counseling. Some limited-services pregnancy centers have promoted patently false or biased medical claims about abortion, pregnancy, contraception, and reproductive health care providers.~~

~~(3) False and misleading advertising by centers that do not offer or refer clients for abortion is of special concern to the State because of the time-sensitive and constitutionally protected nature of the decision to continue or terminate a pregnancy. When a pregnant individual is misled into believing that a center offers services that it does not in fact offer or receives false or misleading information regarding health care options, the individual loses time crucial to the decision whether to terminate a pregnancy and may lose the option to choose a particular method or to terminate a pregnancy at all.~~

~~(4)~~ Telling the truth is how trained health care providers demonstrate respect for patients, foster trust, promote self-determination, and cultivate an environment where best practices in shared decision-making can flourish. Without veracity in information and communication, it is difficult for individuals to make informed, voluntary choices that are essential to one's sense of personal agency and autonomy.

~~(5)~~(2) Advertising strategies and educational information about health care options that lack transparency, use misleading or ambiguous terminology, misrepresent or obfuscate services provided, or provide factually inaccurate information are a form of manipulation that disrespects individuals, undermines trust, broadens health disparity, and can result in patient harm.

~~(b) Intent.~~

~~(1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that the public is provided with accurate, factual information about the types of health care services that are available to pregnant individuals in this State. The General Assembly respects the constitutionally protected right of each individual to personal reproductive autonomy, which includes the right to receive clear, honest, and nonmisleading information about the individual's options and to make informed, voluntary choices after considering all relevant information.~~

~~(2) The General Assembly respects the right of limited-services pregnancy centers to counsel individuals against abortion, and nothing in this subchapter should be construed to regulate, limit, or curtail such advocacy.~~

§ 2492. ~~DEFINITIONS~~ DEFINITION

As used in this subchapter~~:~~,

~~(1) "Abortion" means any medical treatment intended to induce the termination of, or to terminate, a clinically diagnosable pregnancy except for the purpose of producing a live birth.~~

~~(2) "Client" means an individual who is inquiring about or seeking services at a pregnancy services center.~~

~~(3) "Emergency contraception" means any drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as a contraceptive method for use after sexual intercourse, whether provided over the counter or by prescription.~~

~~(4) "Health information" means any oral or written information in any form or medium that relates to health insurance or the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of a client.~~

~~(5) "Limited-services pregnancy center" means a pregnancy services center that does not directly provide, or provide referrals to clients for, abortions or emergency contraception.~~

~~(6) "Pregnancy services center" means a facility, including a mobile facility, where the primary purpose is to provide services to individuals who are or may be pregnant and that either offers obstetric ultrasounds, obstetric sonograms, or prenatal care to pregnant individuals or has the appearance of a medical facility. A pregnancy services center has the appearance of a medical facility if two or more of the following factors are present:~~

~~(A) The center offers pregnancy testing or pregnancy diagnosis, or both.~~

~~(B) The center has staff or volunteers who wear medical attire or uniforms.~~

~~(C) The center contains one or more examination tables.~~

~~(D) The center contains a private or semiprivate room or area containing medical supplies or medical instruments.~~

~~(E) The center has staff or volunteers who collect health information from clients.~~

~~(F) The center is located on the same premises as a State-licensed medical facility or provider or shares facility space with a State-licensed medical provider.~~

~~(7) "Premises" means land and improvements or appurtenances or any part thereof~~ "health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical, dental, behavioral, or mental health condition or substance use disorder, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

§ 2493. UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE ACT

(a) It is an unfair and deceptive act and practice in commerce and a violation of section 2453 of this title for any ~~limited-services pregnancy center~~ person to disseminate or cause to be disseminated to the public any advertising about ~~the~~ health care services or proposed services performed ~~at that center~~ in

this State that is untrue or clearly designed to mislead the public about the nature of the services provided. Advertising includes representations made directly to consumers; marketing practices; communication in any print medium, such as newspapers, magazines, mailers, or handouts; and any broadcast medium, such as television or radio, telephone marketing, or advertising over the ~~Internet~~ internet such as through websites ~~and~~, web ~~ads~~ advertisements, and social media. For purposes of this chapter, advertising ~~or the provision of services by a limited-services pregnancy center~~ about health care services is an act in commerce.

(b) ~~Health care providers certified, registered, or licensed under Title 26 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated who are employed by, contracted to provide services for or on behalf of, or volunteer to provide services at a limited-services pregnancy center shall be responsible for conducting and providing health care services, information, and counseling at the center. The failure of a health care professional certified, registered, or licensed under Title 26 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated to conduct or to ensure that health care services, information, and counseling at the limited-services pregnancy services center are conducted in accordance with State law and professional standards of practice may constitute unprofessional conduct under 3 V.S.A. § 129a and 26 V.S.A. § 1354.~~ [Repealed.]

(c) The Attorney General has the same authority to make rules, conduct civil investigations, and bring civil actions with respect to violations of ~~subsection (a) of~~ this section as provided under subchapter 1 of this chapter.

Sec. 4. 18 V.S.A. § 4999 is amended to read:

§ 4999. DEFINITIONS

As used in this part:

* * *

(2) "Licensed health care professional~~,~~" ~~as used in 18 V.S.A. chapter 107,~~ means a physician, a physician assistant, ~~a naturopathic physician,~~ or an advanced practice registered nurse. As used in chapter 107 of this part only, the term also includes a naturopathic physician.

* * *

Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 5200 is amended to read:

§ 5200. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(4) "Licensed health care professional" means a physician, a physician assistant, a naturopathic physician, or an advanced practice registered nurse.

(5) "Natural organic reduction" has the same meaning as in section 5302 of this title.

Sec. 6. 18 V.S.A. § 5222 is amended to read:

§ 5222. REPORTS

(a)(1) The following fetal deaths shall be reported by the hospital, ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional, or funeral director directly to the Commissioner within seven days after delivery on forms prescribed by the Department:

~~(1)~~(A) All fetal deaths of 20 or more weeks of gestation or, if gestational age is unknown, of 400 or more grams, 15 or more ounces, fetal weight shall be reported.

~~(2)~~(B) All therapeutic or induced abortions, as legally authorized to be performed, of any length gestation or weight shall be reported.

~~(3)~~(2) Spontaneous abortions and ectopic pregnancies of less than 20 weeks gestation are not required to be reported.

(b) The ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional who treats a woman as a result of a miscarriage or abortion shall report the fetal death if it is not known to be previously reported under subsection (a) of this section. If there is evidence of violence or other unusual or suspicious circumstances, the medical examiner shall be immediately notified, and ~~he or she~~ the medical examiner shall complete at least the medical items on the report. If a funeral director is to be involved, the ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional may delegate to the funeral director the responsibility for completing items other than those of a medical nature. Similarly, the ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional may delegate the responsibility for completion of nonmedical items to appropriate personnel having access to records containing the information.

(c) If a fetal death occurs on a moving conveyance, the place of occurrence shall be given as the town or city where removal from the vehicle took place.

(d) ~~Fetal death reports~~ Reports made pursuant to this section are for statistical purposes only and are not public records. They shall be kept confidential; shall not be disclosed or discoverable in any civil, criminal, administrative, or other proceeding; and shall be destroyed after ~~five~~ two years.

Sec. 7. 26 V.S.A. § 1354 is amended to read:

§ 1354. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) Prohibited conduct. The Board shall find that any one of the following, or any combination of the following, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, constitutes unprofessional conduct:

* * *

(2) all advertising ~~of~~ about health care services or a medical business that is intended or has a tendency to mislead or deceive the public or impose upon credulous or ignorant persons and so be harmful or injurious to public morals or safety;

* * *

(21) permitting one's name or license to be used by a person, group, or corporation when not actually in charge of, ~~or~~ responsible for, or actively overseeing the treatment ~~given~~ or other health care services provided;

* * *

(29) delegation of professional responsibilities, including delivery of any health care services, to a person whom the licensed professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by any combination of training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform them;

* * *

(33)(A) providing, prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing medical services or prescription medication or prescription-only devices to a person in response to any communication transmitted or received by computer or other electronic means, when the licensee fails to take the following actions to establish and maintain a proper physician-patient relationship:

(i) a reasonable effort to verify that the person requesting medication is in fact the patient, and is in fact who the person claims to be;

(ii) establishment of documented diagnosis through the use of accepted medical practices; and

(iii) maintenance of a current medical record;

(B) for the purposes of this subdivision (33), an electronic, ~~on-line~~ online, or telephonic evaluation by questionnaire is inadequate for the initial evaluation of the patient, except as otherwise provided in subdivision (C)(iv) of this subdivision (33);

(C) the following would not be in violation of this subdivision (33) if transmitted or received by computer or other electronic means:

(i) initial admission orders for newly hospitalized patients;

(ii) prescribing for a patient of another physician for whom the prescriber has taken the call;

(iii) prescribing for a patient examined by a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, or other advanced practitioner authorized by law and supported by the physician;

(iv) in furtherance of 18 V.S.A. chapter 223, prescribing medication for an individual to terminate the individual's pregnancy based on an adaptive questionnaire that allows the licensee to obtain additional medical history and ask follow-up questions as needed;

(v) continuing medication on a short-term basis for a new patient, prior to the patient's first appointment; or

~~(v)~~(vi) emergency situations where life or health of the patient is in imminent danger;

* * *

(b) Failure to practice competently. The Board may also find that failure to practice competently by reason of any cause on a single occasion or on multiple occasions constitutes unprofessional conduct. Failure to practice competently includes, as determined by the Board:

(1) performance of unsafe or unacceptable patient care; or

(2) failure to conform to the essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice.

(c) Burden of proof. The burden of proof in a disciplinary action shall be on the State to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the person has engaged in unprofessional conduct.

(d)~~(1)~~ Health care providers. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, no health care provider who is certified, registered, or licensed in Vermont shall be subject to professional disciplinary action by the Board, nor shall the Board take adverse action on an application for certification, registration, or licensure of a qualified health care provider, based solely on:

~~(A)~~(1) the health care provider providing or assisting in the provision of legally protected health care activity; or

~~(B)~~(2) a criminal, civil, or disciplinary action in another state against the health care provider that is based solely on the provider providing or assisting in the provision of legally protected health care activity.

~~(2)~~(e) Definitions. As used in this ~~subsection~~ section:

~~(A)~~(1) "Health care provider" means a person who provides professional health care services to an individual during that individual's medical care, treatment, or confinement.

~~(B)~~(2) "Health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical or mental health condition, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

~~(C)~~(3) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as in 1 V.S.A. § 150.

Sec. 8. 26 V.S.A. § 1615 is amended to read:

§ 1615. ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES; REGULATORY AUTHORITY; UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) In addition to the provisions of 3 V.S.A. § 129a and section 1582 of this chapter, the Board may deny an application for licensure, renewal, or reinstatement or may revoke, suspend, or otherwise discipline an advanced practice registered nurse upon due notice and opportunity for hearing if the person engages in the following conduct:

* * *

(6) ~~Providing~~ Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, providing, prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing medical services or prescription medication or prescription-only devices to a person in response to any communication transmitted or received by computer or other electronic means when the licensee fails to take the following actions to establish and maintain a proper provider-patient relationship:

(A) a reasonable effort to verify that the person requesting medication is in fact the patient and is in fact who the person claims to be;

(B) establishment of documented diagnosis through the use of accepted medical practices; and

(C) maintenance of a current medical record.

* * *

(b)(1) For the purposes of subdivision (a)(6) of this section, an electronic, online, or telephonic evaluation by questionnaire is inadequate for the initial evaluation of the patient, except as otherwise provided in subdivision (2)(D) of this subsection.

(2) The following would not be in violation of subdivision (a)(6) of this section:

(A) initial admission orders for newly hospitalized patients;

(B) prescribing for a patient of another provider for whom the prescriber has taken call;

(C) prescribing for a patient examined by a licensed APRN, physician assistant, or other practitioner authorized by law and supported by the APRN;

(D) in furtherance of 18 V.S.A. chapter 223, prescribing medication for an individual to terminate the individual's pregnancy based on an adaptive questionnaire that allows the licensee to obtain additional medical history and ask follow-up questions as needed;

(E) continuing medication on a short-term basis for a new patient prior to the patient's first appointment; or

~~(E)~~(F) emergency situations where the life or health of the patient is in imminent danger.

Sec. 9. 26 V.S.A. § 1658 is amended to read:

§ 1658. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) The following conduct and the conduct described in section 1354 of this title by a certified anesthesiologist assistant constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of certification:

* * *

(17) delegating professional responsibilities to a person whom the certified professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by any combination of training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform;

* * *

Sec. 10. 26 V.S.A. § 1736 is amended to read:

§ 1736. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) The following conduct and the conduct described in section 1354 of this title by a licensed physician assistant shall constitute unprofessional conduct; when that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of licensure:

* * *

(2) occupational advertising or advertising about health care services that is intended or has a tendency to mislead or deceive the public;

(3) exercising undue influence on or taking improper advantage of a person using the individual's services, or promoting the sale of professional goods or services in a manner that exploits a person for the financial gain of the practitioner or of a third party;

(4) failing to comply with provisions of federal or state statutes or rules governing the profession;

(5) conviction of a crime related to the profession; and

(6) conduct that evidences unfitness to practice in the profession.

* * *

(d) As used in this section, "health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical or mental health condition, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

Sec. 11. 26 V.S.A. § 2024 is added to read:

§ 2024. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PRESCRIBER INFORMATION ON MEDICATIONS FOR LEGALLY PROTECTED HEALTH CARE ACTIVITY

(a) As used in this section, "gender-affirming health care services" and "reproductive health care services" have the same meanings as in 1 V.S.A. § 150.

(b) Upon the request of a prescribing practitioner and to the extent not expressly prohibited under federal law, a pharmacist shall not list the practitioner's name on a fulfilled prescription for medication for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services but shall instead list the name of the facility at which the practitioner is employed or is a contract employee.

(c) Nothing in this chapter or the rules governing the pharmacy profession shall be construed to require a pharmacist to list the prescribing practitioner's name on a fulfilled prescription for medication for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services.

Sec. 12. 26 V.S.A. § 2858 is amended to read:

§ 2858. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) The following conduct and the conduct described in section 1354 of this title by a certified radiologist assistant constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of certification:

* * *

(17) delegating professional responsibilities to a person whom the certified professional knows or has reason to know is not qualified by any combination of training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform;

* * *

Sec. 13. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Rules Suspended; Bill Committed

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, Senator Hashim moved that the rules be suspended and that Senate bill entitled:

S. 29. An act relating to establishing the Chloride Contamination Reduction Program at the Agency of Natural Resources.

be committed to the Committee on Judiciary with the report of the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy *intact*,

Which was agreed to.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, March 13, 2025.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Glenn Russell of Winooski.

Appointment Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, upon full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nomination of

Saunders, Zoie of Shrewsbury - Secretary, Agency of Education - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed on a roll call, Yeas 22, Nays 8.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Clarkson, Gulick, Hardy, Major, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, White.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 114.

By Senator Brennan,

An act relating to charging for actual cost under Vermont's Public Records Act.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 115.

By Senators Hashim and Harrison,

An act relating to requiring prior approval by a municipality to operate an overdose prevention center.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 116.

By Senators Williams, Hart and Heffernan,

An act relating to crimes against an unborn child.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Committee Bill Introduced

Senate committee bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time, and, under the rule, placed on the Calendar for notice the next legislative day:

S. 117.

By the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs,

An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 118.

By Senator Ram Hinsdale,

An act relating to agricultural economic development.

To the Committee on Agriculture.

S. 119.

By Senators Clarkson and White,

An act relating to the licensure of early childhood educators.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 120.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick and White,

An act relating to funding support services for persons who use drugs and eliminating misdemeanor criminal penalties for possessing or dispensing a personal use drug supply.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Bill Passed

S. 28.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to access to certain legally protected health care services.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 50.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to increasing the size of solar net metering projects that qualify for expedited registration.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Perchlik moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 30 V.S.A. § 8010, in subdivision (c)(3)(G), by striking out "up to 25 kilowatts" and inserting in lieu thereof "25 kilowatts and less"

Second: In Sec. 2, rulemaking, in the first sentence, by striking out "of not more than 25 kW" and inserting in lieu thereof "of 25 kilowatts and less"

Third: In Sec. 2, rulemaking, in the second sentence, by striking out "of not more than 25 kW" and inserting in lieu thereof "of 25 kilowatts and less"

Fourth: By inserting a new Sec. 3 to read as follows:

Sec. 3. 24 V.S.A. § 4412 is amended to read:

§ 4412. REQUIRED PROVISIONS AND PROHIBITED EFFECTS

* * *

(15) Notwithstanding any contrary provision of sections 2291a and 4413 of this title or 30 V.S.A. chapter 5 or 89, in a municipality that has adopted a bylaw to establish setback requirements for development, those requirements shall apply to a net metering system that is 25 kW or less in size that has been registered with the Public Utility Commission as part of expedited review under 30 V.S.A. § 248. Setback requirements under this subdivision shall not be more restrictive than requirements applied to other development in the municipality under this chapter.

Fifth: By inserting a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 4. 30 V.S.A. § 8010 is amended to read:

§ 8010. SELF-GENERATION AND NET METERING

* * *

(c) In accordance with this section, the Commission shall adopt and implement rules that govern the installation and operation of net metering systems.

(1) The rules shall establish and maintain a net metering program that:

* * *

(G) accounts for changes over time in the cost of technology; ~~and~~

(H) allows a customer to retain ownership of the environmental attributes of energy generated by the customer's net metering system and of

any associated tradeable renewable energy credits or to transfer those attributes and credits to the interconnecting retail provider, and:

(i) if the customer retains the attributes, reduces the value of the credit provided under this section for electricity generated by the customer's net metering system by an appropriate amount; and

(ii) if the customer transfers the attributes to the interconnecting provider, requires the provider to retain them for application toward compliance with sections 8004 and 8005 of this title; and

(I) allows a customer to change their decision one time to retain or transfer the attributes of a new or existing system if the system is 25 kW or less in size.

* * *

and by renumbering the remaining section to be numerically correct.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Passed

S. 69.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to an age-appropriate design code.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 44.

Senator Baruth, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to requiring legislative approval prior to entering into certain immigration agreements.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 20 V.S.A. § 4652 is amended to read:

§ 4652. AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS PURSUANT TO 8 U.S.C. § 1357(g) AND 19 U.S.C. § 1401(i)

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, only the Governor, in consultation with the Vermont Attorney General, is authorized to enter into, modify, or extend an agreement pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1357(g) or 19 U.S.C. § 1401(i).

(b) ~~Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a State, county, or municipal law enforcement agency is authorized to enter into an agreement pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1357(g) or 19 U.S.C. § 1401(i) when necessary to address threats to the public safety or welfare of Vermont residents arising out of a declaration of a State or national emergency~~ No public agency, as that term is defined in 1 V.S.A. § 317, or an officer, employee, agent, or independent contractor of a public agency, shall enter into an agreement pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1357(g) or 19 U.S.C. § 1401(i) unless the Governor has authorized the agreement as set forth in subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to authorization to enter into certain immigration agreements"

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the recommendation of amendment was agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered, on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 1.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

The Senator who voted in the negative was: Norris.

Message from the House No. 25

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 96. An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 17. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on March 14, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, March 14, 2025.

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend James Zuccaro of Hinesburg.

Bills Referred to the Committee on Appropriations

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

S. 56. An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

S. 117. An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

Senate Resolution Placed on Calendar

S.R. 10.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Committee on Government Operations,

S.R. 10. Senate resolution relating to the disapproval of Executive Order 01-25.

Whereas, on January 15, 2025, the Governor signed Executive Order 01-25 providing for the creation of an Agency of Public Safety by reorganizing the Department of Public Safety as the Agency of Public Safety, and

Whereas, according to the Executive Order, effective April 16, 2025, "the expansion of responsibilities accruing to the Department of Public Safety in

service to the Governor's Constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws and the public health and safety needs of Vermonters statewide, necessitate the elevation of the Department of Public Safety to a cabinet-level agency," and

Whereas, in Executive Order 01-25, the Governor lists the expanding scope of responsibilities assigned to the Department, including "law enforcement provided by the Vermont State Police"; "special teams from both the Vermont State Police and the Division of Fire Safety"; the dual responsibilities of the Division of Emergency Management (VEM), for both disaster relief and the management of the State Emergency Operations Center, and that VEM's "responsibilities will only increase as Vermont faces the dynamic impacts of climate change"; the "[b]road responsibilities of the Division of Fire Safety"; the "[n]umerous support services including Radio Technology and Crime Information, as well as management of Vermont's only accredited forensic lab"; and "[a]nimal welfare," and

Whereas, the Senate Committee on Government Operations has carefully reviewed and discussed this Executive Order, and

Whereas, the Senate recognizes that the Department of Public Safety's responsibilities are increasing, that they are of enormous importance for all Vermonters, and should be delivered in the most effective possible manner, and

Whereas, the Senate also wishes to ensure that the Governor's reorganization achieves this goal without leading to unintended consequences, and

Whereas, the best mechanism to explore a possible reorganization of the Department of Public Safety into a new Agency of Public Safety is to use the standing committee process, with the resulting opportunity for enhanced research, analysis, and public participation, and

Whereas, as part of this process, the Senate Committee on Government Operations looks forward to reviewing and taking testimony on all the details of this proposed reorganization of the Department of Public Safety into the Agency of Public Safety, and

Whereas, the Senate is fully committed to working cooperatively and promptly with the Administration to develop the best possible governmental organizational arrangement for the delivery of the essential services now under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Safety, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 2002, disapproves of Executive Order 01-25, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont commits to bring forward draft legislation to maximize the delivery of public safety services to all Vermonters, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Governor Philip B. Scott.

Thereupon, under Rule 48 and 51, the resolution was placed on the Calendar for notice.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 121.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick and White,

An act relating to the regulation of kratom products.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 96.

An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Bill Passed

S. 44.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to requiring legislative approval prior to entering into certain immigration agreements.

Joint Resolution Amended; Third Reading Ordered

J.R.S. 15.

Senator Hashim, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred joint Senate resolution entitled:

Joint resolution supporting Vermont's transgender and non-binary community and declaring Vermont's commitment to fighting discrimination and treating all citizens with respect and dignity.

Reported recommending that the joint resolution be amended in the final Resolved clause after "Pride Center of Vermont" by striking out "and" and inserting in lieu thereof "," and after "Outright Vermont" by inserting ", and to the Vermont Congressional Delegation"

And that when so amended the resolution ought to be adopted.

Thereupon, the resolution was read a second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the recommendation of amendment was agreed to on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Thereupon, third reading of the resolution was ordered.

Message from the House No. 26

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 2. An act relating to increasing the minimum age for delinquency proceedings.

H. 21. An act relating to service of writs of possession.

H. 50. An act relating to identifying underutilized State buildings and land.

H. 105. An act relating to expanding the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 16. Joint resolution providing for a Joint Assembly to vote on the

retention of seven Superior Court Judges and one Magistrate.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 49. House concurrent resolution recognizing March 21, 2025 as World Day for Glaciers in Vermont.

H.C.R. 50. House concurrent resolution recognizing the unique role of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the Vermont health care system.

H.C.R. 51. House concurrent resolution honoring Louis Lamphere on his receipt of the gubernatorial Rays of Kindness recognition.

H.C.R. 52. House concurrent resolution honoring Anthony P. Romeo on his 70th birthday.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered concurrent resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

S.C.R. 3. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Liliane Gordon of Hinesburg on her receipt of the Girl Scout Gold Award.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The Governor has informed the House that on March 14, 2025, he returned without signature and vetoed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 141. An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Text of Communication from Governor

The text of the communication from His Excellency, the Governor, whereby he vetoed and returned unsigned **House Bill No. 141** is as follows:

"March 14, 2025

The Honorable BetsyAnn Wrask
Clerk of the Vermont House of Representatives
State House
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Ms. Wrask:

Pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution, I'm returning H.141, *An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments,* without my signature.

For weeks, I have been clear that I do not support H.141 as passed by the House or the Senate for many reasons including:

1. Given growing uncertainty around federal funding and the potential for significant funding cuts to critical programs, spending additional general funds in the budget adjustment for expenses that are not time sensitive is irresponsible. These new spending proposals should be considered as part of the FY26 budget to be weighed against other initiatives that may have been reduced due to federal budget cuts.
2. Expanding the free "hotel/motel program," moves us backwards, reversing important progress made towards reforming this failed program, agreed upon by the Administration and Legislature just last year. After nearly five years of experience, we know this approach is far too expensive and fails our constituents, communities and taxpayers.

I proposed a compromise path to the Committee of Conference which would have moved these spending and policy decisions to the FY26 budget while providing $2.1 million in flexible grants to municipalities to address needs in their communities during April, May and June. My compromise proposal protects the most vulnerable, develops emergency shelter capacity, adheres to the agreement from the last session, and limits unnecessary appropriations while we monitor federal action.

This compromise proposal, or something similar, remains on the table.

For these reasons, I'm vetoing H.141 pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution.

It's my hope the Legislature will reconsider and send me a budget adjustment I can agree to.

Sincerely,

/s/Philip B. Scott
Governor"

Senate Concurrent Resolution

The following joint concurrent resolution, having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, was adopted on the part of the Senate:

Offered By Senators Lyons, Chittenden and Ram Hinsdale,

S.C.R. 3.

Senate concurrent resolution congratulating Liliane Gordon of Hinesburg on her receipt of the Girl Scout Gold Award.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Rep. Greer,

H.C.R. 49.

House concurrent resolution recognizing March 21, 2025 as World Day for Glaciers in Vermont.

Offered by Rep. Cordes,

H.C.R. 50.

House concurrent resolution recognizing the unique role of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the Vermont health care system.

Offered by Reps. Austin and others,

H.C.R. 51.

House concurrent resolution honoring Louis Lamphere on his receipt of the gubernatorial Rays of Kindness recognition.

Offered by Reps. Howard and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 52.

House concurrent resolution honoring Anthony P. Romeo on his 70th birthday.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 17.

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Bills Referred to Committee on Finance

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. 46. An act relating to the taxation of vehicles used for forestry operations.

S. 53. An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services.

S. 63. An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board.

S. 65. An act relating to energy efficiency utility jurisdiction.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

S. 36.

Senate 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 Medicaid coverage of long-term residential treatment for co-occurring substance use disorder and mental health condition.

Message from the Governor
Appointments Referred

A message was received from the Governor, by Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, submitting the following appointments, which were referred to committees as indicated:

Cheney, Margaret of Norwich - Member of the Public Utility Commission - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Finance.

Corey, Jeffrey of Fairfax - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - from March 5, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Elwell, Peter of Brattleboro - Member of the Vermont Economic Development Authority - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Finance.

Keenan, Kathleen of St. Albans - Member of the Employment Security Board - from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Stuart, Cynthia L. of Lyndonville - Member of the State Board of Education - from March 6, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

To the Committee on Education.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 18.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 18. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on March 21, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, March 21, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, March 25, 2025.

Committee Bills Introduced

Senate committee bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time, and, under the rule, placed on the Calendar for notice tomorrow:

S. 122.

By the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs,

An act relating to economic and workforce development.

S. 123.

By the Committee on Transportation,

An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

S. 124.

By the Committee on Agriculture,

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

S. 125.

By the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs,

An act relating to workers' compensation and collective bargaining rights.

S. 126.

By the Committee on Health and Welfare,

An act relating to health care payment and delivery system reform.

S. 127.

By the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs,

An act relating to housing and housing development.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 2.

An act relating to increasing the minimum age for delinquency proceedings.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 21.

An act relating to service of writs of possession.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 50.

An act relating to identifying underutilized State buildings and land.

To the Committee on Institutions.

H. 105.

An act relating to expanding the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Rules Suspended; Bill Committed

S. 124.

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and Senate Committee bill entitled:

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the bill was committed to the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Rules Suspended; Bills Referred to Finance Pursuant to Rule 31

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth the rules were suspended and Senate bills entitled:

S. 122. An act relating to economic and workforce development.

S. 123. An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

S.127. An act relating to housing and housing development.

were referred to the Committee on Finance pursuant to Rule 31.

Rules Suspended; Bills Referred to Appropriations Pursuant to Rule 31

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth the rules were suspended and Senate bills entitled:

S. 125. An act relating to workers' compensation and collective bargaining rights.

S. 126. An act relating to health care payment and delivery system reform.

were referred to the Committee on Appropriations pursuant to Rule 31.

Third Reading Ordered

S. 45.

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to protection from nuisance suits for agricultural activities.

Reported that the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and third reading of the bill was ordered, on a roll call, Yeas 25, Nays 5.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos,

Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Clarkson, Gulick, Vyhovsky, Watson, White.

Joint Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 15.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was read the third time and adopted on the part of the Senate:

Joint resolution supporting Vermont's transgender and non-binary community and declaring Vermont's commitment to fighting discrimination and treating all citizens with respect and dignity.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 66.

Senator White, for the Committee on Transportation, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to motor vehicle noise, exhaust modifications, and engine compression brakes.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 23 V.S.A. § 1221 is amended to read:

§ 1221. CONDITION OF VEHICLE; EXCESSIVE NOISE

(a) A motor vehicle~~,~~ operated on any highway~~,~~ shall be in good mechanical condition and shall be properly equipped.

(b)(1) An individual shall not operate on a highway a motor vehicle equipped with a muffler lacking interior baffle plates or other effective muffling devices, a gutted muffler, a muffler cutout, or a straight pipe exhaust.

(2) An individual shall not operate on a highway a motorcycle manufactured after December 31, 1985 that is not labeled in compliance with 40 C.F.R. § 205.158 and equipped with a muffler that meets the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 205.169.

(3) The prohibition of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection shall not apply when a motor vehicle or motorcycle is operated in a race, contest, or demonstration of speed or skill at an authorized public exhibition held in accordance with applicable State or municipal law and land use permits.

(c)(1) A motor vehicle equipped or modified as described in subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall not pass an inspection required under section 1222 of this title.

(2) A motorcycle that does not meet the requirements of subdivision (b)(2) of this section shall not pass an inspection required under section 1222 of this title.

Sec. 2. 23 V.S.A. § 1309 is added to read:

§ 1309. ENGINE COMPRESSION BRAKE DEVICES; REQUIREMENTS

(a)(1) An individual shall not operate a motor truck or truck tractor equipped with an engine compression brake device unless the motor truck or truck tractor is also equipped with a muffler to prevent excessive noise from the device.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subdivision (1) of this subsection to use an engine compression brake device in a motor truck or truck tractor that is not equipped with a muffler to prevent excessive noise from the device if the device is used to slow down or stop the motor truck or truck tractor in an emergency.

(b) A motor truck or truck tractor that is equipped with an engine compression brake device but is not equipped with a working muffler to prevent excessive noise from the device shall fail inspection pursuant to section 1222 of this title.

(c) As used in this section, "engine compression brake device" means a device that slows a motor truck or truck tractor by utilizing engine compression and the release of compressed air. "Engine compression brake device" includes compression brakes, decompression brakes, engine compression release brakes, "Jake" brakes, and "Jacobs" brakes.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a municipality from adopting an ordinance that prohibits the operation of an engine compression brake devices within the municipality or in specific parts of the municipality.

Sec. 3. RULEMAKING; PERIODIC INSPECTION MANUAL; EXHAUST MODIFICATIONS; ENGINE COMPRESSION BRAKE MUFFLERS; OUTREACH

(a) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall, unless extended by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, adopt amendments to Department of Motor Vehicles, Inspection of Motor Vehicles (CVR 14-050-022) to implement the provisions of Secs. 1 and 2 of this act that shall take effect on or before July 1, 2026.

(b) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall implement a public outreach campaign regarding prohibited exhaust modifications pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1221 and the requirement for engine compression brakes to be equipped with a muffler pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1309. The public outreach campaign shall include information on the provisions of the rules for Inspection of Motor Vehicles (CVR 14-050-022), related to exhaust modifications and engine compression brake mufflers, including the amendments adopted under the Administrative Procedure Act pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The Department of Motor Vehicles shall begin to disseminate information pursuant to this subsection not later than two months prior to the effective date of Secs. 1 and 2 of this act and shall disseminate information pursuant to this subsection through email, bulletins, software updates, and the Department of Motor Vehicles' website.

Sec. 4. MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE LEVELS; REPORT

(a) On or before December 15, 2025, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall submit a written report to the Senate and House Committees on Transportation with a proposal for limits on motor vehicle noise and proposed procedures for the enforcement of those limits.

(b) The report shall examine laws and procedures in Maine and other New England states regarding:

(1) maximum sound levels for motor vehicles and trucks;

(2) enforcement of maximum sound levels for motor vehicles and trucks;

(3) procedures for a person to challenge a determination that the person's vehicle was operating in excess of the applicable maximum sound level; and

(4) procedures for a citizen to report a suspected violation of the maximum sound levels for motor vehicles and trucks to law enforcement.

(c) The report shall include proposals for:

(1) maximum sound levels above which motor vehicles and trucks would not be permitted to operate on highways in Vermont, which may vary depending on the type of vehicle, vehicle weight, and vehicle speed;

(2) methods for determining whether a vehicle is operating on a highway in excess of the maximum sound levels;

(3) procedures for enforcing the maximum sound levels;

(4) procedures for a person to challenge a determination that the person's vehicle was operating in excess of the applicable maximum sound level; and

(5) procedures for allowing citizens to report a suspected violation of the maximum sound levels for motor vehicles and trucks to law enforcement.

(d) The report shall identify any legislative action necessary to implement the proposals included pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 3 and 4 of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(b) Secs. 1 and 2 of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 87.

Senator Hashim, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to extradition procedures.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 4955 is amended to read:

§ 4955. COMMITMENT TO AWAIT EXTRADITION; BAIL

If upon examination it appears that the person held is the person charged with having committed the crime alleged and that the person probably committed the crime, and, except in cases arising under section 4946 of this title, that the person has fled from justice, the judge or magistrate shall commit the person to jail by a warrant, reciting the accusation, for such a time, not exceeding ~~30~~ 90 days, to be specified in the warrant as will enable the arrest of the accused to be made under a warrant of the Governor on a requisition of the executive authority of the state having jurisdiction of the offense, unless the accused give bail as provided in section 4956 of this title, or until the person shall be legally discharged. On request of the state, the hearing may be continued for up to three ~~working~~ business days, only for the purpose of determining whether the person probably committed the crime. Findings

under this section may be based upon hearsay evidence or upon copies of affidavits, whether certified or not, made outside this State. It shall be sufficient for a finding that a person probably committed the crime that there is a current grand jury indictment from another state.

Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 4957 is amended to read:

§ 4957. EXTENDING TIME OF COMMITMENT

If the accused is not arrested under warrant of the Governor by the expiration of the time specified in the warrant, bond, or undertaking, such judge may discharge ~~him or her~~ or ~~may~~ recommit ~~him or her~~ the accused for a further period not to exceed ~~60~~ 30 days, or may again take bail for ~~his or her~~ the accused's appearance and surrender as provided in section 4956 of this title, but within a period not to exceed ~~60~~ 30 days after the date of such new bond.

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 4967 is amended to read:

§ 4967. WRITTEN WAIVER OF EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS

(a) Any person arrested in this State charged with having committed any crime in another state or alleged to have escaped from confinement~~,~~ or broken the terms of ~~his or her~~ bail, probation, or parole may waive the issuance and service of the warrant provided for in sections 4947 and 4948 of this title and all other procedure incidental to extradition proceedings, by executing or subscribing in the presence of a judge of any court of record within this State a writing that states that ~~he or she~~ the person consents to return to the demanding state; provided, however, before ~~such~~ the waiver ~~shall be~~ is executed or subscribed by ~~such~~ the person ~~it shall be the duty of such~~, the judge ~~to~~ shall inform ~~such~~ the person of ~~his or her~~ the ~~rights~~ right to ~~the~~ issuance and service of a warrant of extradition and the right to obtain a writ of habeas corpus as provided for in section 4950 of this title.

(b) If and when such consent has been duly executed, it shall forthwith be forwarded to the office of the Governor of this State and filed therein. The judge shall direct the officer having such person in custody to deliver forthwith such person to the duly accredited agent or agents of the demanding state~~,~~ and shall deliver or cause to be delivered to such agent or agents a copy of such consent; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall be deemed to limit the rights of the accused person to return voluntarily and without formality to the demanding state, nor shall this waiver procedure be deemed to be an exclusive procedure or to limit the powers, rights, or duties of the officers of the demanding state or of this State.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a law enforcement or corrections agency in this State holding a person who is alleged to have broken

the terms of the person's probation, parole, bail, or any other release in the demanding state shall immediately deliver that person to the duly authorized agent of the demanding state without the requirement of a Governor's warrant if all of the following apply:

(1) The person has signed a prior waiver of extradition as a term of the person's current probation, parole, bail, or other release in the demanding state.

(2) The law enforcement or corrections agency holding the person has received an authenticated copy of the prior waiver of extradition signed by the person and photographs or fingerprints or other evidence properly identifying the person as the person who signed the waiver. These documents may be received by reliable electronic means.

(3) Except as the State's Attorney shall otherwise determine in the interest of justice, all open criminal charges in this State have been disposed of through trial and sentencing.

Sec. 4. 13 V.S.A. § 5043 is amended to read:

§ 5043. HEARING, COMMITMENT, DISCHARGE

(a) If an arrest is made in this State by an officer of another state in accordance with the provisions of section 5042 of this title, ~~he or she shall~~ the officer, without unnecessary delay, shall take the person arrested before a Superior judge of the unit in which the arrest was made, who shall conduct a hearing for the purpose of determining the lawfulness of the arrest.

(b) If the judge determines that the arrest was lawful, ~~he or she~~ the judge shall commit the person arrested to await for ~~a reasonable time~~ the issuance of an extradition warrant by the Governor of this State within 90 days or admit such person to bail pending the issuance of such warrant. The judge shall consider the issuance of a judicial warrant for the arrest of the person who has fled justice to Vermont from another state when determining the risk of flight from prosecution.

(c) If the judge determines that the arrest was unlawful, ~~he or she~~ the judge shall discharge the person arrested.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage and shall apply prospectively and not affect extraditions in process at the time of enactment.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock in the forenoon on Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Ellen Ravelin of Winooski.

Message from the House No. 27

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 1. An act relating to accepting and referring complaints by the State Ethics Commission.

H. 206. An act relating to the Uniform Commercial Code.

H. 238. An act relating to the phaseout of consumer products containing added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

H. 458. An act relating to the Agency of Digital Services.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bills Referred to the Committee on Appropriations

Senate bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

S. 18. An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

S. 53. An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services.

S. 122. An act relating to economic and workforce development.

S. 123. An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 128.

By Senators Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to eliminating certain exemptions from the minimum wage and overtime, including the tipped minimum wage; increasing the minimum wage; and requiring that inmates receive the minimum wage for work performed.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 1.

An act relating to accepting and referring complaints by the State Ethics Commission.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 206.

An act relating to the Uniform Commercial Code.

To the Committee on Finance.

H. 238.

An act relating to the phaseout of consumer products containing added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 458.

An act relating to the Agency of Digital Services.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 59.

Senator Hart, for the Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to amendments to Vermont's Open Meeting Law.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 1 V.S.A. § 310 is amended to read:

§ 310. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(9) "Undue hardship" means an action ~~required to achieve compliance would require~~ requiring significant difficulty or expense to the unit of government to which a public body belongs, considered in light of factors including the overall size of the entity, ~~sufficient~~ the availability of necessary personnel and ~~staffing availability~~ staff, the entity's ~~budget~~ available resources, and the costs associated with compliance.

Sec. 2. 1 V.S.A. § 312 is amended to read:

§ 312. RIGHT TO ATTEND MEETINGS OF PUBLIC AGENCIES

(a)(1) All meetings of a public body are declared to be open to the public at all times, except as provided in section 313 of this title. No resolution, rule, regulation, appointment, or formal action shall be considered binding except as taken or made at such open meeting, except as provided under subdivision 313(a)(2) of this title. A meeting of a public body is subject to the public accommodation requirements of 9 V.S.A. chapter 139. A public body shall electronically record all public hearings held to provide a forum for public comment on a proposed rule, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 840. The public shall have access to copies of such electronic recordings as described in section 316 of this title.

* * *

(3)(A) State ~~nonadvisory~~ public bodies; hybrid meeting requirement; exception for advisory bodies. Any public body of the State, except advisory bodies, shall:

~~(A)~~(i) hold all regular and special meetings in a hybrid fashion, which shall include both a designated physical meeting location and a designated electronic meeting platform;

~~(B)~~(ii) electronically record all meetings; and

~~(C)~~(iii) for a minimum of 30 days following the approval and posting of the official minutes for a meeting, retain the audiovisual recording and post the recording in a designated electronic location.

(B) Exception; site inspections and field visits. This subdivision (3) shall not apply to gatherings of a public body for purposes of a site inspection or field visit.

* * *

(5) State ~~nonadvisory~~ public bodies; State and local advisory bodies; designating electronic platforms. ~~State nonadvisory~~ A public ~~bodies~~ body meeting ~~in a hybrid fashion~~ pursuant to subdivision (3) ~~of this subsection and State and local advisory bodies meeting without a physical meeting location~~ or advisory body meeting pursuant to subdivision (4) of this subsection shall designate and use an electronic platform that allows the direct access, attendance, and participation of the public, including access by telephone. The public body shall post information that enables the public to directly access the designated electronic platform and include this information in the published agenda or public notice for the meeting.

(6) Local ~~nonadvisory~~ public bodies; meeting recordings.

(A) A public body of a municipality or political subdivision, except advisory bodies, shall record, in audio or video form, any meeting of the public body and post a copy of the recording in a designated electronic location for a minimum of 30 days following the ~~approval and~~ posting of the ~~official~~ minutes for a meeting.

(B) A municipality is exempt from subdivision (A) of this subdivision (6) if compliance would impose an undue hardship on the municipality.

(C) A municipality shall have the burden of proving that compliance under this section would impose an undue hardship on the municipality.

* * *

(d)(1) At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be:

* * *

(3) A meeting agenda shall contain sufficient details concerning the specific matters to be discussed by the public body. For any meeting that may include an executive session, the meeting agenda shall state that the meeting includes a "proposed executive session."

(4)(A) Any addition to or deletion from the agenda shall be made as the first act of business at the meeting.

* * *

Sec. 3. 1 V.S.A. § 313 is amended to read:

§ 313. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

(a) No public body may hold or conclude an executive session from which the public is excluded, except by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of its members present in the case of any public body of State government or of a majority of its members present in the case of any public body of a municipality or other political subdivision. A motion to go into executive session shall indicate the nature of the business of the executive session, and no other matter may be considered in the executive session. ~~Such~~ The vote to enter executive session shall be taken in the course of an open meeting and the result of the vote recorded in the minutes. No formal or binding action shall be taken in executive session except for actions relating to the securing of real estate options under subdivision (2) of this subsection. Minutes of an executive session need not be taken, but if they are, the minutes shall, notwithstanding subsection 312(b) of this title, be exempt from public copying and inspection under the Public Records Act. A public body may not hold an executive session except to consider one or more of the following:

* * *

(10) security or emergency response measures, the disclosure of which could jeopardize public safety; or

(11) information relating to the interest rates for publicly financed loans.

* * *

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Bills Passed

Senate bills of the following titles were severally read the third time and passed:

S. 45. An act relating to protection from nuisance suits for agricultural activities.

S. 66. An act relating to motor vehicle noise, exhaust modifications, and engine compression brakes.

S. 87. An act relating to extradition procedures.

Committee Resolution; Third Reading Ordered

S.R. 10.

Senate resolution entitled:

Senate resolution relating to the disapproval of Executive Order 01-25.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 23.

Senator Collamore, for the Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the use of synthetic media in elections.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. chapter 35, subchapter 4 is added to read:

Subchapter 4. Use of Synthetic Media in Elections

§ 2031. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media" means synthetic media that creates a representation of an individual or individuals with the intent to injure the reputation of a candidate, to influence the outcome of an election, or to otherwise deceive a voter, in a manner that:

(A) appears to a reasonable person to be an authentic recording of an individual saying or doing something that did not occur; or

(B) provides a reasonable person with a fundamentally different understanding or impression of the appearance, speech, conduct, or environment that a reasonable person would have from an unaltered and original version of the image, audio recording, or video recording.

(2) "Synthetic media" means an image, an audio recording, or a video recording of an individual's appearance, speech, conduct, or environment that has been created or intentionally manipulated with the use of digital technology, including artificial intelligence, in a manner that creates a realistic but false representation of the candidate.

§ 2032. DISCLOSURE OF A DECEPTIVE AND FRAUDULENT SYNTHETIC MEDIA

(a) Disclosure. A person shall not, within 90 days before an election at which a candidate for elective office will appear on the ballot, publish, communicate, or otherwise distribute a synthetic media message that the person knows or should have known is a deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media of a candidate on the ballot, unless the person includes a disclosure in the synthetic media stating: "This media has been created or intentionally manipulated by digital technology or artificial intelligence."

(1) For deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media consisting of images and video recordings, the text of the disclosure shall appear in a size that is easily readable by the average viewer and not smaller than the largest font size of other text appearing in the visual media. If the image or video recording does not include any other text, the disclosure shall appear in a size that is easily readable by the average viewer. For video recordings, the disclosure shall appear for the full duration of the video recording.

(2) For deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media consisting of audio recordings only, the disclosure shall be read in a clearly spoken manner and in a pitch and pace that can be easily heard by the average listener, at the beginning of the audio recording, at the end of the audio recording, and, if the audio is greater than two minutes in length, interspersed within the audio recording at intervals of not greater than two minutes each.

(b) Exceptions. Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to:

(1) a radio or television broadcasting station, including a cable or satellite television operator, programmer, or producer, or to a website, streaming platform, or mobile application, that:

(A) broadcasts deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media as part of a bona fide newscast, news interview, news documentary, or on-the-spot coverage of bona fide news events, so long as the broadcast clearly acknowledges through content or a disclosure, in a manner that can be easily heard or read by the average listener or viewer, that there are questions about the authenticity of the deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media;

(B) is paid to broadcast deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media; or

(C) is required by federal law to broadcast advertisements from legally qualified candidates;

(2) a website or a regularly published newspaper, magazine, or other periodical of general circulation, including an internet or electronic publication, that routinely carries news and commentary of general interest, and that publishes deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media, if the publication clearly states that the deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media does not accurately represent the speech or conduct of the represented individual;

(3) a person that produces deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media constituting satire or parody;

(4) a provider of a telecommunications service or information service, as those terms are defined in the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. § 153, for content provided by another person; or

(5) a provider of an interactive computer service, as defined in 47 U.S.C. § 230, for content provided by another person.

§ 2033. PENALTIES

(a) A person that knowingly and intentionally violates a provision of this subchapter shall be fined not more than $1,000.00, unless:

(1) the person commits the violation with the intent to cause violence or bodily harm, in which case the fine shall be not more than $5,000.00;

(2) the person commits the violation within five years after one or more prior convictions under this section, in which case the fine shall be not more than $10,000.00; or

(3) the person commits the violation with the intent to cause violence or bodily harm and the person commits the violation within five years after one or more prior convictions under this section, in which case the fine shall be not more than $15,000.00.

(b) A candidate whose appearance, speech, conduct, or environment is misrepresented through the use of deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media in violation of section 2032 of this title may seek injunctive or other equitable relief prohibiting the publication, communication, or other distribution of such deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media.

Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. chapter 35, subchapter 5 is added to read:

Subchapter 5. Enforcement and Additional Remedies

§ 2041. INJUNCTIONS

In addition to the other penalties provided in this chapter, a State's Attorney or the Attorney General may institute any appropriate action, injunction, or other proceeding to prevent, restrain, correct, or abate any violation of this chapter.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 27.

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

An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 3, 9 V.S.A. § 2466d, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 3 to read as follows:

Sec. 3. 9 V.S.A. § 2466d is added to read:

§ 2466d. REPORTING OF MEDICAL DEBT INFORMATION PROHIBITED

(a) A credit reporting agency shall not report or maintain in the file on a consumer information relating to a medical debt.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical, dental, behavioral, or mental health condition or substance use disorder, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

(2) "Medical debt" means debt arising from health care services, including dental services, or from health care goods, including products, devices, durable medical equipment, and prescription drugs. "Medical debt" does not include debt arising from services provided by a veterinarian; debt charged to a credit card unless the credit card is issued under an open-end or closed-end credit plan offered solely for the payment of health care services;

debt charged to a home equity or general-purpose line of credit; or secured debt.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Lyons, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 51.

Senator Hardy, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds:

(1) According to the U.S. Department of Labor, women in the United States 55 years of age and older provide 26.6 million hours of unpaid care to family and friends daily.

(2) According to the AARP:

(A) More than 75 percent of family caregivers 50 years of age and older who retired early because of family caregiving responsibilities would have remained in the workforce longer if they had access to financial or nonfinancial supports.

(B) If family caregivers aged 50 years of age and older have access to support in the workplace, U.S. Gross Domestic Product could grow by an additional $1.7 trillion (5.5 percent) in 2030.

(3) According to a 2023 report by the Urban Institute, entitled "Lifetime Employment-Related Costs to Women of Providing Family Care," the employment-related costs for mothers of providing unpaid care to minor children and parents, parents-in-law, and spouses (including unmarried partners) with care needs average $295,000.00 over a lifetime.

(4) Using a national survey and six focus groups, the Commonwealth Fund identified financial compensation for the time spent caregiving as a top policy priority for family caregivers.

Sec. 2. 32 V.S.A. § 5813 is amended to read:

§ 5813. STATUTORY PURPOSES

* * *

(aa) The statutory purpose of the unpaid caregiver tax credit in section 5830g of this title is to provide financial support to Vermonters who spend significant time providing uncompensated care for a family member.

Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 5830g is added to read:

§ 5830g. VERMONT UNPAID CAREGIVER TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who provides uncompensated care shall be entitled to a refundable credit against the tax imposed by section 5822 of this title for the taxable year. The maximum allowable credit per taxable year shall be $1,000.00 for providing 12 months of uncompensated care. The credit shall be based on the number of months the individual caregiver spent providing at least 20 hours per week of uncompensated care for an individual who:

(1) is related to the caregiver by blood, civil marriage, or adoption;

(2) needs assistance with activities of daily living, home health care, or assistance remaining safe at home;

(3) has a medically diagnosed disability or health condition; and

(4) does not reside at a residential care home, an assisted living residence, or nursing home as defined by 33 V.S.A. § 7102, or any other similar adult care home that is licensed or required to be licensed pursuant to 33 V.S.A. chapter 71.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the amount of the credit under this section shall be reduced by $20.00 for each $1,000.00, or fraction thereof, by which the individual's adjusted gross income exceeds $125,000.00, irrespective of the individual's filing status. For purposes of this subsection, spouses filing jointly shall be considered an individual.

(c) An individual claiming the credit under this section shall attest that they met all requirements under this section for the number of months claimed.

(d) Upon the Commissioner's request, an individual claiming a credit under this section shall provide supporting documentation or other information relating to the individual's qualification for the credit, including a form

prepared by the Commissioner, to be executed by a licensed medical professional, attesting that the licensed medical professional provides primary or specialized medical care for the individual receiving uncompensated care and that the individual has a medical diagnosis requiring assistance with activities of daily living for at least 20 hours per week. The individual claiming the credit shall have the medical professional execute the form prior to claiming the credit, shall retain the executed form for a period of at least three years, and shall provide the form to the Commissioner on request.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, this act shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 60.

Senator Major, for the Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to establishing the Farm Security Special Fund to provide grants for farm losses due to weather conditions.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) In 2023 and 2024, Vermont experienced extreme flooding and other climate-fueled disasters that devastated farms and other working lands businesses across the State.

(2) Many existing State and federal programs that are designed to support farms are difficult to access, are administratively burdensome, and currently do not meet the needs of Vermont farmers in a holistic way.

(3) In particular, because federal crop insurance programs are not designed to serve the needs of smaller scale or more diversified farming operations, many Vermont farmers are not covered by crop insurance.

(4) The State should establish a permanent funding support program to:

(A) maintain the viability of farms in Vermont in order to ensure food security, climate resilience, rural economic vitality, and environmental health;

(B) continuously invest in farms in a way that makes them more resilient to current and future challenges; and

(C) provide a source of relief funds permanently available to farmers impacted by climate emergencies and extreme weather.

Sec. 2. 6 V.S.A. chapter 207 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 207. PROMOTION ~~AND~~, MARKETING, AND SUPPORT OF VERMONT FARMS, FOODS, AND PRODUCTS

* * *

Subchapter 4. Farm Security Special Fund

§ 4631. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Eligible weather condition" means any of the following weather conditions that are found to be closely correlated with agricultural income losses:

(A) high winds;

(B) excessive moisture, intense precipitation, or flooding;

(C) extreme heat;

(D) abnormal freeze conditions;

(E) widespread fire event;

(F) hail;

(G) drought; or

(H) any other severe weather or growing conditions impacting agricultural income, as determined by the Review Board.

(2) "Farm" means a parcel or parcels of land owned, leased, or managed by a person and devoted primarily to farming and that is subject to regulation under the Required Agricultural Practices.

(3) "Farm Security Special Fund Review Board" or "Review Board" means the Board established under section 4634 of this title.

(4) "Farming" has the same meaning as in section 2.16 of the Required Agricultural Practices.

§ 4632. FARM SECURITY SPECIAL FUND

(a) There is established the Farm Security Special Fund to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and that shall be managed in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5. The Fund shall consist of:

(1) funds appropriated by the General Assembly;

(2) funds from public and private sources that the Secretary accepts for the Fund; and

(3) funds from federal government aid for State support of farmers suffering income loss due to weather conditions.

(b) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall ensure language accessibility of the Fund through procurement and provision of interpretation and translation services.

(c) All balances in the Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward and remain part of the Fund.

§ 4633. FARM SECURITY SPECIAL FUND; GRANTS

(a) The Secretary, after consultation with the Review Board, shall award grants from the Farm Security Special Fund to farms that have incurred financial losses or expenses due to an eligible weather condition.

(1) Grants from the fund shall be in an amount that reimburses a farm for up to 50 percent of uninsured or otherwise uncovered losses due to eligible weather conditions, up to a maximum award of $150,000.00 total per year per qualified applicant farm.

(2) The Secretary shall establish criteria for the amount of an award based on the annual net income of the farm in relation to the median net income of all farms in Vermont.

(3) The Secretary may verify the occurrence of an eligible weather condition claimed under this section through a site visit or through use of available data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, from other federal or State certified weather data sources, or from other public or private weather or satellite data or models.

(4) Losses reimbursable by a grant under this section include:

(A) wages or compensation;

(B) replacement of lost income from destroyed crops or impacted livestock;

(C) debt payments or other ongoing expenses;

(D) costs of replanting;

(E) livestock feed replacement costs;

(F) infrastructure or equipment repair and replacement;

(G) repair of farm roads and roads necessary to access farms; or

(H) other losses as determined by the Secretary after consultation with the Review Board.

(b) The Secretary shall develop a streamlined application for awards under this section that shall include:

(1) a brief description of the damage that occurred;

(2) attestation of an eligible weather condition or event;

(3) an estimate of losses; and

(4) a year-end report of farm income and expenses from Schedule F of U.S. Internal Revenue Form 1040.

(c) An application for an award under this section may be made at any time, and the Fund may only close the application process upon award of all appropriated funds for the relevant fiscal year.

(d) Applications for an award under this section shall be processed in the order received, but an application shall not be ready for evaluation until the Secretary determines that the application is administratively complete and includes all documentation required by the Secretary.

(e) All administratively complete applications shall be evaluated by the Review Board. Within 15 days following receipt of an administratively complete application, the Review Board by majority vote shall recommend to the Secretary whether to issue a grant to the applicant. If the Review Board recommends an award under this section, the Secretary shall issue the award within 15 days following the date of the Review Board's recommendation.

§ 4634. FARM SECURITY SPECIAL FUND REVIEW BOARD

(a) Creation. There is created the Farm Security Special Fund Review Board, which for administrative purposes shall be attached to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

(b) Organization of Board. The Board shall be composed of:

(1) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee, who shall serve as chair;

(2) the State Chief Recovery Officer or designee;

(3) representatives of three agricultural organizations who can demonstrate expertise in dealing with all sizes and types of farms in Vermont, whether through granting funds, offering technical assistance or advocacy and have a proven track record of working with farmers, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets; and

(4) two farmers who have received relief funding, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

(c) Member terms. The members designated in subdivision (b)(3) of this section shall be appointed to initial terms of two years. Thereafter, each appointed member shall serve a term of three years or until the member's earlier resignation or removal. The members designated in subdivision (b)(4) of this section shall be appointed to initial terms of one year. Thereafter, each appointed member shall serve a term of three years or until the member's earlier resignation or removal. A vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority for the remainder of the unexpired term. An appointed member shall not serve more than three consecutive three-year terms.

(d) Powers.

(1) The Review Board shall review applications for assistance under this section, assess the accuracy and validity of the applications, and recommend to the Secretary applicants who should receive assistance under this section.

(2) The Board annually shall report to the House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and the Senate Committee on Agriculture the total documented Vermont farm financial losses from eligible weather conditions averaged over the previous three calendar years.

(3) In order to ensure that the Fund is meeting the needs of Vermont's agricultural community, the Review Board annually shall review the application process, eligibility criteria, distribution, and accessibility of the Fund. The Review Board annually shall recommend to the House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and the Senate Committee on Agriculture ways to improve the effectiveness of the Fund.

(e) Officers; committees. The Board may elect officers, establish one or more committees or subcommittees, and adopt such procedural rules as it shall determine necessary and appropriate to perform its work.

(f) Quorum; meetings; voting. A majority of the sitting members shall constitute a quorum, and action taken by the Board may be authorized by a majority of the members present and voting at any regular or special meeting at which a quorum is present. The Board may meet as an advisory body under 1 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 2.

(g) Compensation. Private sector members shall be entitled to per diem compensation authorized under 32 V.S.A. § 1010(b) for each day spent in the performance of their duties, and each member shall be reimbursed from the Fund for the member's actual and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out the member's duties.

Sec. 3. APPROPRIATION

In addition to other funds appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets in fiscal year 2026, the sum of $7,500,000.00 is appropriated to the Agency from the General Fund in fiscal year 2026 for the purpose of implementing the Farm Security Special Fund established under 6 V.S.A. chapter 207, subchapter 4.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Agriculture, with the following amendments thereto:

First: In Sec. 2, 6 V.S.A. chapter 207, in subchapter 4, in section 4632, in subdivision (a)(1), by striking out the word "appropriated" where it appears and inserting in lieu thereof "transferred"

Second: By striking out Secs. 3, appropriation, and 4, effective date, in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 3 to read as follows:

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the recommendation of amendment of the Committee on Agriculture was amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Agriculture, as amended? was agreed to and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 109.

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

An act relating to miscellaneous judiciary procedures.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 164 is amended to read:

§ 164. ADULT COURT DIVERSION PROGRAM

(a) Purpose.

(1) The Attorney General shall develop and administer an adult court diversion program, for both pre-charge and post-charge referrals, available in all counties.

(2) The program shall be designed to provide a restorative option for persons alleged to have caused harm in violation of a criminal statute or who have been charged with violating a criminal statute as well as for victims or those acting on a victim's behalf who have been allegedly harmed by the ~~responsible party~~ person referred to the program. The diversion program can accept referrals to the program as follows:

* * *

(c) Adult diversion program policy and referral requirements.

* * *

(3) Adult post-charge diversion requirements. Each State's Attorney, in cooperation with the Office of the Attorney General and the adult post-charge diversion program, shall develop clear criteria for deciding what types of offenses and offenders will be eligible for diversion; however, the State's Attorney shall retain final discretion over the referral of each case for diversion. All adult post-charge diversion programs receiving financial assistance from the Attorney General shall adhere to the following:

(A) The post-charge diversion program for adults shall only accept persons against whom charges have been filed and the court has found probable cause, but are not adjudicated.

(B) A prosecutor may refer a person to diversion either before or after arraignment and shall notify in writing the diversion program and the court of the prosecutor's ~~of the~~ referral to diversion.

* * *

Sec. 2. 4 V.S.A. § 71 is amended to read:

§ 71. APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF SUPERIOR JUDGES

(a) ~~There shall be 34 Superior judges, whose term of office shall,~~ The number of Superior Judges shall be as determined by the General Assembly. The term of office of a Superior Judge shall, except in the case of an appointment to fill a vacancy or unexpired term, begin on April 1 in the year of their appointment or retention and continue for six years.

* * *

Sec. 3. 4 V.S.A. § 1102 is amended to read:

§ 1102. JUDICIAL BUREAU; JURISDICTION

(a) The Judicial Bureau is created within the Judicial Branch under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

(b) The Judicial Bureau shall have jurisdiction of the following matters:

* * *

(4) Violations of 7 V.S.A. § 1005, relating to possession and procurement of tobacco products by a person under 21 years of age.

* * *

Sec. 4. 4 V.S.A. § 1106 is amended to read:

§ 1106. HEARING

* * *

(d) ~~A~~ Unless otherwise provided by law, a law enforcement officer may void or amend a complaint issued by that officer by so marking the complaint and returning it to the Bureau, regardless of whether the amended complaint is a lesser included violation. At the hearing, a law enforcement officer may, unless otherwise provided by law, void or amend a complaint issued by that officer in the discretion of that officer.

* * *

Sec. 5. 7 V.S.A. § 1005(c) is amended to read:

(c) A person under 21 years of age who misrepresents ~~his or her~~ the person's age by presenting false identification to purchase tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco paraphernalia shall be ~~fined~~ subject to a civil penalty of not more than $50.00 or provide up to 10 hours of community service, or both.

Sec. 6. 12 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. DISSEMINATION OF ELECTRONIC CASE RECORDS

(a) The Court shall not permit public access via the ~~Internet~~ internet to criminal, family, or probate case records. The Court may permit criminal justice agencies, as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a, ~~Internet~~ internet access to criminal case records for criminal justice purposes, as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the Court shall provide licensed Vermont attorneys in good standing with access via the internet, through the Judiciary's Public Portal website or otherwise, to nonconfidential criminal, family, and probate case records.

(c) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the Court from providing electronic access to:

(1) court schedules of the Superior Court or opinions of the Criminal Division of the Superior Court;

(2) State agencies in accordance with data dissemination contracts entered into under Rule 12 of the Vermont Rules for Public Access to Court Records; or

(3) decisions, recordings of oral arguments, briefs, and printed cases of the Supreme Court.

Sec. 7. 12 V.S.A. § 4937 is amended to read:

§ 4937. ATTORNEY'S FEES

When a mortgage contains an agreement on the part of the mortgagor to pay the mortgagee, in the event of foreclosure, the attorney's fees incident thereto, and claim is made therefor in the complaint, ~~upon hearing,~~ the court in which the complaint is brought shall allow such fee as in its judgment is just.

Sec. 8. 13 V.S.A. § 4013 is amended to read:

§ 4013. ZIP GUNS~~; SWITCHBLADE KNIVES~~

A person who possesses, sells, or offers for sale a weapon commonly known as a "zip" gun~~, or a weapon commonly known as a switchblade knife, the blade of which is three inches or more in length,~~ shall be imprisoned not more than 90 days or fined not more than $100.00, or both.

Sec. 9. EXPUNGEMENT OF CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS

The court shall order the expungement of criminal history records of convictions of 13 V.S.A. § 4013 for possessing, selling, or offering for sale a switchblade knife that occurred prior to July 1, 2025. The process and effect for expungement of these records shall be as provided for in 13 V.S.A. § 7606

and shall be completed by the court and all entities subject to the order not later than July 1, 2026.

Sec. 10. 13 V.S.A. § 5351(7) is amended to read:

(7) "Victim" means:

(A) a person who sustains injury or death as a direct result of the commission or attempted commission of a crime;

(B) an intervenor who is physically injured or killed in an attempt to assist the person described in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (7) or the police;

(C) a surviving immediate family member of a homicide victim, including a spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, or other survivor who may suffer severe emotional harm as a result of the victim's death as determined on a case-by-case basis in the discretion of the Board; or

(D) a resident of this State who is injured or killed as the result of a crime committed outside the United States.

Sec. 11. 13 V.S.A. § 7282 is amended to read:

§ 7282. SURCHARGE

* * *

(c) ~~SIU surcharge.~~ In addition to any penalty or fine imposed by the court for a criminal offense committed after July 1, 2009, the clerk of the court shall levy an additional surcharge of $100.00 to be deposited in the General Fund, in support of the Specialized Investigative Unit Grants Board created in 24 V.S.A. § 1940(c), and used to pay for the costs of Specialized Investigative Units.

Sec. 12. 12 V.S.A. § 5135(b) is amended to read:

(b) A defendant who attends a hearing held under section 5133 or 5134 of this title at which a temporary or final order under this chapter is issued and who receives notice from the court on the record that the order has been issued shall be deemed to have been served. A defendant notified by the court on the record shall be required to adhere immediately to the provisions of the order. ~~However, even when the court has previously notified the defendant of the order, the court shall transmit the order for additional service by a law enforcement agency.~~ The clerk shall mail a copy of the order to the defendant at the defendant's last known address.

Sec. 13. 14 V.S.A. § 2 is amended to read:

§ 2. DEPOSIT OF WILL FOR SAFEKEEPING; DELIVERY; FINAL DISPOSITION

(a) A will may be deposited for safekeeping in the Probate Division of the Superior Court for the district in which the testator resides on payment to the court of the applicable fee required by ~~32 V.S.A. § 1434(a)(17)~~ 32 V.S.A. § 1434(a)(18). The register shall give to the testator a receipt, shall safely keep each will so deposited, and shall keep an index of the wills so deposited.

* * *

Sec. 14. 14 V.S.A. § 3068 is amended to read:

§ 3068. HEARING

* * *

(e)(1) If upon completion of the hearing and consideration of the record the court finds that the respondent is not a person in need of guardianship, it shall dismiss the petition and seal the records of the proceeding.

(2) If a motion to withdraw the petition is made before the final hearing, the court shall dismiss the petition and seal the records of the proceeding.

(f) If upon completion of the hearing and consideration of the record the court finds that the petitioner has proved by clear and convincing evidence that the respondent is a person in need of guardianship or will be a person in need of guardianship on attaining 18 years of age, it shall enter judgment specifying the powers of the guardian pursuant to sections 3069 and 3070 of this title and the duties of the guardian pursuant to section 3071 of this title.

(g) Any party to the proceeding before the court may appeal the court's decision in the manner provided in section 3080 of this title.

Sec. 15. 14 V.S.A. § 4051 is amended to read:

§ 4051. STATUTORY FORM POWER OF ATTORNEY

A document substantially in the following form may be used to create a statutory form power of attorney that has the meaning and effect prescribed by this chapter.

VERMONT STATUTORY FORM POWER OF ATTORNEY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

* * *

GRANT OF SPECIFIC AUTHORITY (OPTIONAL)

My agent MAY NOT do any of the following specific acts for me UNLESS I have INITIALED the specific authority listed below:

(CAUTION: Granting any of the following will give your agent the authority to take actions that could significantly reduce your property or change how your property is distributed at your death. INITIAL ONLY the specific authority you WANT to give your agent.)

( ) An agent who is not an ancestor, spouse, or descendant may exercise authority under this power of attorney to create in the agent or in an individual to whom the agent owes a legal obligation of support an interest in my property whether by gift, rights of survivorship, beneficiary designation, disclaimer, or otherwise

( ) Create, amend, revoke, or terminate an inter vivos, family, living, irrevocable, or revocable trust

( ) Consent to the modification or termination of a noncharitable irrevocable trust under 14A V.S.A. § 411

( ) Make a gift, subject to the limitations of 14 V.S.A. § 4047 (gifts) and any special instructions in this power of attorney

~~( ) Consent to the modification or termination of a noncharitable irrevocable trust under 14A V.S.A. § 411~~

( ) Create, amend, or change rights of survivorship

( ) Create, amend, or change a beneficiary designation

( ) Waive the principal's right to be a beneficiary of a joint and survivor annuity, including a survivor benefit under a retirement plan

( ) Exercise fiduciary powers that the principal has authority to delegate

( ) Authorize another person to exercise the authority granted under this power of attorney

( ) Disclaim or refuse an interest in property, including a power of appointment

( ) Exercise authority with respect to elective share under 14 V.S.A. § 319

( ) Exercise waiver rights under 14 V.S.A. § 323

( ) Exercise authority over the content and catalogue of electronic communications and digital assets under 14 V.S.A. chapter 125 (Vermont Revised Uniform Fiduciary Access to Digital Assets Act)

( ) Exercise authority with respect to intellectual property, including, without limitation, copyrights, contracts for payment of royalties, and trademarks

( ) Convey, or revoke or revise a grantee designation, by enhanced life estate deed pursuant to 27 V.S.A. chapter 6 or under common law.

* * *

Sec. 16. 14A V.S.A. § 1316 is amended to read:

§ 1316. OFFICE OF TRUST DIRECTOR

Unless the terms of a trust provide otherwise, the rules applicable to a trustee apply to a trust director regarding the following matters:

(1) acceptance under section 701 of this title;

(2) giving of bond to secure performance under section 702 of this title;

(3) reasonable compensation under section 708 of this title;

(4) resignation under section 705 of this title;

(5) removal under section 706 of this title; and

(6) vacancy and appointment of successor under section 704 of this title.

Sec. 17. 33 V.S.A. § 5204(b)(2)(A) is amended to read:

(2)(A)(i) The Family Division of the Superior Court shall hold a hearing under subsection (c) of this section to determine whether jurisdiction should be transferred to the Criminal Division under subsection (a) of this section if the delinquent act set forth in the petition is:

(I) [Repealed.]

(II) human trafficking or aggravated human trafficking in violation of 13 V.S.A. § 2652 or 2653;

(III) defacing a firearm's serial number in violation of ~~13 V.S.A. § 4024~~ 13 V.S.A. § 4026; or

(IV) straw purchasing of firearm in violation of 13 V.S.A. § 4025; and

(ii) the child had attained 16 years of age but not 19 years of age at the time the act was alleged to have occurred.

Sec. 18. 33 V.S.A. § 5225 is amended to read:

§ 5225. PRELIMINARY HEARING; RISK ASSESSMENT

(a) Preliminary hearing. A preliminary hearing shall be held at the time and date specified on the citation or as otherwise ordered by the court. If a child is taken into custody prior to the preliminary hearing, the preliminary

hearing shall be at the time of the temporary care hearing. Counsel for the child shall be assigned prior to the preliminary hearing.

(b) Risk and needs screening.

(1) Prior to the preliminary hearing, the child shall be afforded an opportunity to undergo a risk and needs screening, which shall be conducted by the Department or by a community provider that has contracted with the Department to provide risk and need screenings for children alleged to have committed delinquent acts.

(2) If the child participates in such a screening, the Department or the community provider shall report the risk level result of the screening, the number and source of the collateral contacts made, and the recommendation for charging or other alternatives to the State's Attorney. The State's Attorney shall consider the results of the risk and needs screening in determining whether to file a charge. In lieu of filing a charge, the State's Attorney may refer a child directly to a youth-appropriate community-based provider that has been approved by the Department, which may include pre-charge diversion pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 163, a community justice center, or a balanced and restorative justice program. Referral to a community-based provider pursuant to this subsection shall not require the State's Attorney to file a charge. If the community-based provider does not accept the case or if the child fails to complete the program in a manner deemed satisfactory and timely by the provider, the child's case shall return to the State's Attorney for charging consideration.

* * *

Sec. 19. 27 V.S.A. § 348 is amended to read:

§ 348. INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING REAL PROPERTY VALIDATED

(a) When an instrument of writing shall have been on record in the office of the clerk in the proper town for a period of 15 years, and there is a defect in the instrument because it omitted to state any consideration or was not sealed, witnessed, acknowledged, validly acknowledged, or because a license to sell was not issued or is defective, the instrument shall, from and after the expiration of 15 years from the filing thereof for record, be valid. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any rights acquired by grantees, assignees, or encumbrancers under the instruments described in the preceding sentence, nor shall this section apply to conveyances or other instruments of writing, the validity of which is brought in question in any suit now pending in any courts of the State.

* * *

(d) A release, discharge, or assignment of mortgage interest executed by a commercial lender with respect to a one- to four-family residential real property, including a residential unit in a condominium or in a common interest community as defined in Title 27A, that recites authority to act on behalf of the record holder of the mortgage under a power of attorney but where the power of attorney is not of record shall have the same effect as if executed by the record holder of the mortgage unless, within three years after the instrument is recorded, an action challenging the release, discharge, or assignment is commenced and a copy of the complaint is recorded in the land records of the town where the release, discharge, or assignment is recorded. This subsection shall not apply to releases, discharges, or assignments obtained by fraud or forgery.

(e) A power of attorney made for the purpose of conveying, leasing, mortgaging, or affecting any interest in real property that has been acknowledged and signed in the presence of at least one witness shall be valid, notwithstanding its failure to comply with 14 V.S.A. § 3503 or the requirements of the Emergency Administrative Rules for Remote Notarial Acts adopted by the Vermont Secretary of State, unless within three years after recording, an action challenging its validity is commenced and a copy of the complaint is recorded in the land records of the town where the power of attorney is recorded. This subsection shall not apply to a power of attorney obtained by fraud or forgery.

(f) Notwithstanding section 305 of this title, a deed, mortgage, lease, or other instrument executed for the purpose of conveying or encumbering real property executed by a person purporting to act as the agent or attorney-in-fact for the party named in the deed, mortgage, lease, or other instrument that has been recorded for at least 15 years in the land records where the real property is located shall be valid even if no power of attorney authorizing and empowering an agent or attorney-in-fact appears of record, unless, within 15 years after recording, an action challenging the validity of the deed, mortgage, lease, or other instrument is commenced and a copy of the complaint is recorded in the land records of the town where the property is located.

Sec. 20. 32 V.S.A. § 1003 is amended to read:

§ 1003. STATE OFFICERS

* * *

(c) The officers of the Judicial Branch named in this subsection shall be entitled to annual salaries as follows:

	Annual Salary as of July 14, 2024	Annual Salary as of July 13, 2025
(1) Chief Justice of Supreme Court	$214,024	$225,581
(2) Each Associate Justice	$204,264	$215,294
(3) ~~Administrative~~ Chief Superior Judge	$204,264	$215,294
(4) Each Superior Judge	$194,185	$204,671
(5) [Repealed.]		
(6) Each Magistrate	$146,413	$154,319
(7) Each Judicial Bureau hearing officer	$146,413	$154,319

* * *

Sec. 21. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 27, Sec. 5 (forensic facility report) is amended to read:

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 22. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 40, Sec. 4 is amended to read:

Sec. 4. REPEALS

* * *

(c) 28 V.S.A. § 126 (Coordinated Justice Reform Advisory Council) is repealed on ~~July 1, 2028~~ July 1, 2025.

Sec. 23. REPEAL

2019 Acts and Resolves No. 6, Secs. 99 and 100 (amendments to 18 V.S.A. §§ 4810(d)–(j) and 4811 that prohibited public inebriates from being incarcerated in a Department of Corrections' facility) are repealed.

Sec 24. 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 6, Sec. 105 is amended to read:

Sec. 105. EFFECTIVE DATES

* * *

(c) ~~Secs. 99 and 100 (amending 18 V.S.A. §§ 4910 and 4811) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.~~ [Deleted.]

* * *

Sec. 25. FIREARM SURRENDER ORDER COMPLIANCE WORKING GROUP; REPORT

(a) The Office of the Attorney General shall convene a Firearm Surrender Order Compliance Working Group to develop a uniform process to ensure compliance with court orders to surrender firearms. The Working Group shall study what statutory or policy changes are needed to create a uniform process to monitor compliance, support entities charged with storing surrendered firearms, and identify a stable and reliable funding source for any additional resources needed to monitor compliance.

(b) The Working Group shall include any stakeholders deemed necessary by the Attorney General, and shall include:

(1) the Commissioner of Public Safety or designee;

(2) a member of the Vermont State Police, appointed by the Commissioner of Public Safety;

(3) the Commissioner of Corrections or designee;

(4) the Chief Superior Court Judge or designee;

(5) two family law practitioners, appointed by the Vermont Bar Association;

(6) the Defender General or designee;

(7) one State's Attorney or designee, appointed by the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs;

(8) a member, appointed by the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence;

(9) a member, appointed by the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence;

(10) a member, appointed by the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services;

(11) a member who is a federal firearms licensee, appointed by the State Police representative overseeing the current firearms storage program for the Department of Public Safety;

(12) a member, appointed by the Vermont Office of the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms;

(13) a member, appointed by the Vermont Medical Society;

(14) the Commissioner of Mental Health or designee;

(15) a sheriff, appointed by the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs; and

(16) a police chief, appointed by the Vermont Association of Chiefs of Police.

(c) Report. On or before November 15, 2025, the Working Group shall report its recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary and to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee. The report shall include:

(1) a workable statewide compliance model that is adaptable to both the Family and Criminal Divisions of the Superior Courts and that ensures accountability of respondents and defendants while addressing safety needs of the plaintiffs and victims; and

(2) recommendations for any legislative changes necessary to support the model.

Sec. 26. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 1 shall take effect on July 2, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until ten o'clock in the forenoon on Thursday, March 20, 2025.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 28

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 137. An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

H. 266. An act relating to the 340B prescription drug pricing program.

H. 463. An act relating to technical corrections for the 2025 legislative session.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Senate Resolution Referred

S.R. 11.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senators Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Westman and White,

S.R. 11. Senate resolution relating to supporting warm and cooperative relations on the part of both the United States and the State of Vermont with Canada and urging President Trump to remove all tariffs that he has imposed against Canadian imports and to refrain from subsequently imposing any new tariffs against Canadian imports.

Whereas, the United States and Canada have been military and diplomatic allies and economic partners, even though episodes of commercial disagreement, since Canadian confederation in 1867, and

Whereas, perhaps no American state has a closer and more active two-way relationship with our northern neighbor than the State of Vermont, and

Whereas, these ties entail personal, cultural, and economic relationships, and

Whereas, many Vermonters enjoy travel to Montreal and Quebec City while Canadians, especially Quebecers, reciprocate with journeys to Vermont to take advantage of the State's outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities, and

Whereas, on the economic front, for 2023, the Canadian Consulate in Boston reported that Vermont exported $680 million in goods and $165 million in services to Canada, and that same year, Vermont imported $2.6 billion in goods from Canada, and Canadian investments in the State supported over 17,000 Vermont jobs, and

Whereas, according to the Department of Public Service, in 2023, 24 percent of Vermont's electric supply portfolio was served by Hydro-Québec,

aside from any renewable energy credits, and Vermont Gas Systems receives 100 percent of its gas from Canada, and

Whereas, in recent years, Governor Philip Scott has repeatedly traveled to Montreal on trade missions and has strived to enhance Vermont-Quebec trade ties, and

Whereas, on the national level, according to TD Bank, during the first three quarters of 2024, approximately $683 billion in combined goods and services was shipped in both directions across the United States-Canada border, and

Whereas, the same report also noted that Canada is the United States' number one export market, and significant elements of this trade are integrated commerce, especially in the automobile manufacturing sector, and

Whereas, Governor Philip Scott has established an interagency task force to prepare for the implementation of tariffs on Canadian goods, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont supports warm and cooperative relations on the part of both the United States and the State of Vermont with Canada and urges President Trump to remove all tariffs that he has imposed against Canadian imports and to refrain from subsequently imposing any new tariffs against Canadian imports, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Donald J. Trump, Governor Philip B. Scott, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, Quebec Premier François Legault, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Thereupon, the President, in his discretion, treated the joint resolution as a bill and referred it to the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 129.

By Senator Cummings,

An act relating to the regulation of virtual-currency kiosk operators.

To the Committee on Finance.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 137.

An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

To the Committee on Finance.

H. 266.

An act relating to the 340B prescription drug pricing program.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 463.

An act relating to technical corrections for the 2025 legislative session.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Consideration Interrupted by Recess

S. 23.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the use of synthetic media in elections.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Ram Hinsdale moved to amend the bill in Sec. 1, 17 V.S.A. chapter 35, subchapter 4, in section 2032, by striking out subsection (a) and inserting in lieu thereof:

"(a) Disclosure. A person shall not, within 90 days before an election in Vermont, publish, communicate, or otherwise distribute synthetic media that the person knows or should have known is deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media unless the person includes a disclosure in the synthetic media stating: "This media has been created or intentionally manipulated by digital technology or artificial intelligence.""

But leaving subdivisions (1) - (2) intact.

Recess

On motion of Senator Baruth the Senate recessed until the fall of the gavel.

Joint Assembly

At ten o'clock and thirty minutes in the morning, the hour having arrived for the meeting of the two Houses in Joint Assembly pursuant to:

J.R.S. 16. Joint resolution providing for a Joint Assembly to vote on the retention of seven Superior Court Judges and one Magistrate.

The Senate repaired to the hall of the House.

Having returned therefrom, at twelve o'clock in the afternoon, the President assumed the Chair.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Consideration Resumed; Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 23.

Consideration was resumed on Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the use of synthetic media in elections.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by Senator Ram Hinsdale?, was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bills Passed

Senate bills of the following titles were severally read the third time and passed:

S. 27. An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

S. 51. An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 59.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to amendments to Vermont’s Open Meeting Law.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Hart, Collamore, Vyhovsky and White moved to amend the bill in Sec. 2 V.S.A. 312, in subdivision (d)(3), by striking out the second sentence in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Whenever a public body includes an executive session as an item on a posted meeting agenda, the public body shall list the agenda item as “proposed executive session.”

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Passed

S. 60.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to establishing the Farm Security Special Fund to provide grants for farm losses due to weather conditions.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Vyhovsky moved to amend the bill in Sec. 2, 6 V.S.A. chapter 207, in subchapter 4, in section 4633, by striking out subdivision (a)(2) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (a)(2) to read as follows:

(2) The Secretary shall establish criteria for awards under the program, including:

(A) determining the amount of an award based on the annual net income of the farm in relation to the median net income of all farms in Vermont;

(B) limiting the number of awards an individual applicant may receive under program to not more than three awards in any previous 10-year period;

(C) prioritizing awards to applicants who have not previously received an award under the program; and

(D) requiring applicants to demonstrate that assistance from other sources is unavailable to provide reimbursement for the losses claimed in an application.

Which was disagreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Passed

S. 109.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to miscellaneous judiciary procedures.

Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

S.R. 10.

Senate resolution of the following title was read the third time and adopted:

Senate resolution relating to the disapproval of Executive Order 01-25.

Proposed Amendment to the Constitution Concurred In

Proposed Amendment to the Constitution designated as Proposal 3 having appeared on the Calendar for seven legislative days pursuant to Rule 83,

Was taken up.

Thereupon, Proposal 3 was read the third time and is as follows:

PROPOSAL 3

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

This proposal would amend the Constitution of the State of Vermont to provide that the citizens of the State have a right to collectively bargain.

Sec. 2. Article 23 of Chapter I of the Vermont Constitution is added to read:

Article 23. [Right to collectively bargain]

That employees have a right to organize or join a labor organization for the purpose of collectively bargaining with their employer through an exclusive representative of their choosing for the purpose of negotiating wages, hours, and working conditions and to protect their economic welfare and safety in the workplace. Therefore, no law shall be adopted that interferes with, negates, or diminishes the right of employees to collectively bargain with respect to wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment and workplace safety, or that prohibits the application or execution of an agreement between an employer and a labor organization representing the employer's employees that requires membership in the labor organization as a condition of employment.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

The amendment set forth in this proposal shall become a part of the Constitution of the State of Vermont on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November 2026 when ratified and adopted by the people of this State in accordance with the provisions of 17 V.S.A. chapter 32.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the Senate concur in the adoption by the preceding General Assembly of Proposal 3 for the amendment of the Constitution of the State of Vermont, and request the concurrence of the House? was decided in the affirmative on roll call pursuant to the Vermont Constitution and Rule 83, Yeas, 29 Nays 0 (the necessary majority vote having been attained).

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Bongartz,

Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Beck.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock in the forenoon on Friday, March 21, 2025.

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 29

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 125. An act relating to reporting on the energy transition.

H. 231. An act relating to technical corrections to fish and wildlife statutes.

H. 259. An act relating to preventing workplace violence in hospitals.

H. 396. An act relating to the creation of the Mollie Beattie Distinguished Service Award.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted joint resolution of the following title:

J.R.H. 3. Joint resolution authorizing the Green Mountain Boys State and Green Mountain Girls State educational programs to use the State House facilities on June 26, 2025.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 18. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on March 21, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Message from the House No. 30

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 482. An act relating to Green Mountain Care Board authority to adjust a hospital's reimbursement rates and to appoint a hospital observer.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

S. 65.

Senate 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 energy efficiency utility jurisdiction.

Senate Resolution Referred

S.R. 12.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senators Clarkson, Brock, Cummings, Ingalls, Major, Ram Hinsdale, Weeks and White,

S.R. 12. Senate resolution relating to reaffirming the friendship between the State of Vermont and Taiwan and supporting enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations.

Whereas, the United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan) share a vibrant, mutually beneficial bilateral relationship based on our common values of freedom and a free-market economy, and the relationship is as strong as it has ever been, and

Whereas, the January 2024 election of Dr. Lai Ching-te as the President of Taiwan demonstrates the vibrancy of Taiwan's democracy, and

Whereas, the United States is Taiwan's second-largest trading partner and Taiwan is the United States' seventh-largest trading partner; in 2024, the two-way trade in goods between the United States and Taiwan totaled in excess of $157 billion; and the United States is also the largest supplier of agricultural products to Taiwan, and

Whereas, in 2022, the United States and Taiwan launched, and in 2023 signed, the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade, which, in part, "is intended to develop concrete ways to deepen the economic and trade relationship," and the first agreement under the Initiative became effective in December 2024, and

Whereas, Taiwan is the second-largest export destination for Vermont goods, worth approximately $254 million, and Vermont imported an estimated $55.3 million in goods from Taiwan, and

Whereas, the Government of Taiwan has expressed a desire to reach an avoidance of double taxation agreement with the United States, which could increase Vermont's exports to Taiwan, bilateral investment, and jobs in Vermont, and

Whereas, Vermont and Taiwan have enjoyed a long history of productive bilateral relations, including entering into a driver's license reciprocity agreement in 2020, and the Government of Taiwan desires to establish a memorandum of understanding with the State of Vermont to further increase educational exchanges and cooperation, and

Whereas, United States policy toward Taiwan is not based on United Nations Resolution 2758 of 1971, but rather the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, which "provides for the continued membership of the people on Taiwan in any international financial institution or any other international organization," and

Whereas, Taiwan's participation and contributions in international organizations, such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Health Organization, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would greatly benefit both the United States and the international community*, now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont reaffirms the friendship between the State of Vermont and Taiwan and supports enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Donald J. Trump, President Lai Ching-te of the Republic of China (Taiwan), Director-General Charles Liao of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston, Governor Philip B. Scott, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Thereupon, the President, in his discretion, treated the joint resolution as a bill and referred it to the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Joint Resolution Placed on Calendar

J.R.H. 3.

Joint resolution originating in the House of the following title was read the first time and is as follows:

Joint resolution authorizing the Green Mountain Boys State and Green Mountain Girls State educational programs to use the State House facilities on June 26, 2025

Whereas, the American Legion Department of Vermont and the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Vermont respectively sponsor the Green Mountain Boys State and Green Mountain Girls State educational programs, providing groups of boys and girls entering the 12th grade a special opportunity to study the workings of State government, including conducting a mock legislative session at the State House, and

Whereas, this special experience is a unique civic lesson of lasting value for the participants, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That subject to the determination of and limitations established by the Sergeant at Arms, the Green Mountain Boys State and Girls State educational programs are authorized to use the chambers and committee rooms of the State House on Thursday, June 26, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the American Legion Department of Vermont and the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Vermont.

Thereupon, in the discretion of the President, under Rule 51, the joint resolution was placed on the Calendar for action the next legislative day.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 130.

By Senators Ram Hinsdale and Weeks,

An act relating to expanding the National Guard Tuition Benefit Program.

To the Committee on Education.

S. 131.

By Senator Baruth,

An act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington relating to the possession of firearms.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 125.

An act relating to reporting on the energy transition.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

H. 231.

An act relating to technical corrections to fish and wildlife statutes.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

H. 259.

An act relating to preventing workplace violence in hospitals.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 396.

An act relating to the creation of the Mollie Beattie Distinguished Service Award.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

H. 482.

An act relating to Green Mountain Care Board authority to adjust a hospital's reimbursement rates and to appoint a hospital observer.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Third Reading Ordered

S. 117.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Senator Brennan, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 12.

Senator Hashim, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to sealing criminal history records.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. chapter 230 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 230. EXPUNGEMENT AND SEALING OF CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS

§ 7601. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Court" means the Criminal Division of the Superior Court.

(2) "Criminal history record" means all information documenting an individual's contact with the criminal justice system, including data regarding identification, arrest or citation, arraignment, judicial disposition, custody, and supervision.

(3) ~~"Predicate offense" means a criminal offense that can be used to enhance a sentence levied for a later conviction and includes operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other substance in violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201, domestic assault in violation of section 1042 of this title, and stalking in violation of section 1062 of this title. "Predicate offense" shall not include misdemeanor possession of cannabis, a disorderly conduct offense under section 1026 of this title, or possession of a controlled substance in~~

~~violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a), 4231(a), 4232(a), 4233(a), 4234(a), 4234a(a), 4234b(a), 4235(b), or 4235a(a)~~ "Criminal justice purposes" means the investigation, apprehension, detention, adjudication, or correction of persons suspected, charged, or convicted of criminal offenses. "Criminal justice purposes" also includes criminal identification activities; the collection, storage, and dissemination of criminal history records; and screening for criminal justice employment.

(4) "Qualifying crime" means:

~~(A) a misdemeanor offense that is not:~~

~~(i) a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;~~

~~(ii) an offense involving sexual exploitation of children in violation of chapter 64 of this title;~~

~~(iii) an offense involving violation of a protection order in violation of section 1030 of this title;~~

~~(iv) prostitution as defined in section 2632 of this title, or prohibited conduct under section 2601a of this title; or~~

~~(v) a predicate offense;~~

~~(B) a violation of subsection 3701(a) of this title related to criminal mischief;~~

~~(C) a violation of section 2501 of this title related to grand larceny;~~

~~(D) a violation of section 1201 of this title related to burglary, excluding any burglary into an occupied dwelling, as defined in subdivision 1201(b)(2) of this title;~~

~~(E) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4223 related to fraud or deceit;~~

~~(F) a violation of section 1802 of this title related to uttering a forged or counterfeited instrument;~~

~~(G) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a) related to possession and cultivation of cannabis;~~

~~(H) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4231(a) related to possession of cocaine;~~

~~(I) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4232(a) related to possession of LSD;~~

~~(J) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4233(a) related to possession of heroin;~~

~~(K) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234(a) related to possession of depressant, stimulant, and narcotic drugs;~~

~~(L) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234a(a) related to possession of methamphetamine;~~

~~(M) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234b(a) related to possession of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine;~~

~~(N) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235(b) related to possession of hallucinogenic drugs;~~

~~(O) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235a(a) related to possession of ecstasy; or~~

~~(P) any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.~~

(A) all misdemeanor offenses except:

(i) a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;

(ii) a violation of chapter 64 of this title relating to sexual exploitation of children;

(iii) a violation of section 1030 of this title relating to a violation of an abuse prevention order, an order against stalking or sexual assault, or a protective order concerning contact with a child;

(iv) a violation of chapter 28 of this title related to abuse, neglect, and exploitation of a vulnerable adult;

(v) a violation of subsection 2605(b) or (c) of this title related to voyeurism;

(vi) a violation of subdivisions 352(1)–(10) of this title related to cruelty to animals;

(vii) a violation of section 5409 of this title related to failure to comply with sex offender registry requirements;

(viii) a violation of section 1455 of this title related to hate motivated crimes;

(ix) a violation of subsection 1304(a) of this title related to cruelty to a child;

(x) a violation of section 1305 of this title related to cruelty by person having custody of another;

(xi) a violation of section 1306 of this title related to mistreatment of persons with impaired cognitive function;

(xii) a violation of section 3151 of this title related to female genital mutilation;

(xiii) a violation of subsection 3258(b) of this title related to sexual exploitation of a minor;

(xiv) a violation of subdivision 4058(b)(1) of this title related to violation of an extreme risk protection order;

(xv) an offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4 by a person who is the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39; and

(xvi) any offense that would require registration as a sex offender pursuant to chapter 167, subchapter 3 of this title; and

(B) the following felonies:

(i) a violation of section 1201 of this title related to burglary, excluding any burglary into an occupied dwelling, unless the person was 25 years of age or younger at the time of the offense and did not carry a dangerous or deadly weapon during the commission of the offense;

(ii) designated felony property offenses as defined in subdivision (5) of this section;

(iii) offenses relating to possessing, cultivating, selling, dispensing, or transporting regulated drugs, including violations of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a) and (b), 4231(a) and (b), 4232(a) and (b), 4233(a) and (b), 4233a(a), 4234(a) and (b), 4234a(a) and (b), 4234b(a) and (b), 4235(b) and (c), or 4235a(a) and (b); and

(iv) any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.

(5) "Designated felony property offense" means:

(A) section 1801 of this title related to forgery and counterfeiting;

(B) section 1802 of this title related to uttering a forged or counterfeited instrument;

(C) section 1804 of this title related to counterfeiting paper money;

(D) section 1816 of this title related to possession or use of credit card skimming devices;

(E) section 2001 of this title related to false personation;

(F) section 2002 of this title related to false pretenses or tokens;

(G) section 2029 of this title related to home improvement fraud;

(H) section 2030 of this title related to identity theft;

(I) section 2501 of this title related to grand larceny;

(J) section 2531 of this title related to embezzlement;

(K) section 2532 of this title related to embezzlement by officers or servants of an incorporated bank;

(L) section 2533 of this title related to embezzlement by a receiver or trustee;

(M) section 2561 of this title related to receiving stolen property;

(N) section 2575 of this title related to retail theft;

(O) section 2582 of this title related to theft of services;

(P) section 2591 of this title related to theft of rented property;

(Q) section 2592 of this title related to failure to return a rented or leased motor vehicle;

(R) section 3016 of this title related to false claims;

(S) section 3701 of this title related to unlawful mischief;

(T) section 3705 of this title related to unlawful trespass;

(U) section 3733 of this title related to mills, dams, or bridges;

(V) section 3761 of this title related to unauthorized removal of human remains;

(W) section 3766 of this title related to grave markers and ornaments;

(X) chapter 87 of this title related to computer crimes; and

(Y) 18 V.S.A. § 4223 related to fraud or deceit in obtaining a regulated drug.

§ 7602. EXPUNGEMENT AND SEALING OF RECORD, POSTCONVICTION; PROCEDURE

~~(a)(1) A person may file a petition with the court requesting expungement or sealing of the criminal history record related to the conviction if:~~

~~(A) the person was convicted of a qualifying crime or qualifying crimes arising out of the same incident or occurrence;~~

~~(B) the person was convicted of an offense for which the underlying conduct is no longer prohibited by law or designated as a criminal offense;~~

~~(C) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (g) of this section, the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) or~~

~~§ 1091 related to operating under the influence of alcohol or other substance, excluding a violation of those sections resulting in serious bodily injury or death to any person other than the operator, or related to operating a school bus with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.02 or more or operating a commercial vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.04 or more; or~~

~~(D) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (h) of this section, the person was convicted under 1201(c)(3)(A) of a violation of subdivision 1201(a) of this title related to burglary when the person was 25 years of age or younger, and the person did not carry a dangerous or deadly weapon during commission of the offense.~~

~~(2) The State's Attorney or Attorney General shall be the respondent in the matter.~~

~~(3) The court shall grant the petition without hearing if the petitioner and the respondent stipulate to the granting of the petition. The respondent shall file the stipulation with the court, and the court shall issue the petitioner an order of expungement and provide notice of the order in accordance with this section.~~

~~(4) This section shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39 seeking to seal or expunge a record of a conviction for a felony offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4.~~

~~(b)(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged pursuant to section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(A) At least five years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or if the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least five years previously.~~

~~(B) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted for the qualifying crime.~~

~~(C) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

~~(D) The court finds that expungement of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.~~

~~(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), and (C) of this subsection are met and the court finds that:~~

~~(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of justice than expungement; and~~

~~(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years of age.~~

~~(c)(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged pursuant to section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(A) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction.~~

~~(B) The person has not been convicted of a felony arising out of a new incident or occurrence in the last seven years.~~

~~(C) The person has not been convicted of a misdemeanor during the past five years.~~

~~(D) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

~~(E) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense, the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.~~

~~(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), (C), and (D) of this subsection are met and the court finds that:~~

~~(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of justice than expungement; and~~

~~(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years of age.~~

~~(d) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section, unless the court finds that expungement would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be~~

~~expunged in accordance with section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(1) The petitioner has completed any sentence or supervision for the offense.~~

~~(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

~~(e) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section for a conviction for possession of a regulated drug under 18 V.S.A. chapter 84, subchapter 1 in an amount that is no longer prohibited by law or for which criminal sanctions have been removed:~~

~~(1) The petitioner shall bear the burden of establishing that his or her conviction was based on possessing an amount of regulated drug that is no longer prohibited by law or for which criminal sanctions have been removed.~~

~~(2) There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the amount of the regulated drug specified in the affidavit of probable cause associated with the petitioner's conviction was the amount possessed by the petitioner.~~

~~(f) Prior to granting an expungement or sealing under this section for petitions filed pursuant to subdivision 7601(4)(D) of this title, the court shall make a finding that the conduct underlying the conviction under section 1201 of this title did not constitute a burglary into an occupied dwelling, as defined in subdivision 1201(b)(2) of this title. The petitioner shall bear the burden of establishing this fact.~~

~~(g) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section, only petitions to seal may be considered or granted by the court. This subsection shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39. Unless the court finds that sealing would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed in accordance with section 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(1) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or if the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 10 years previously.~~

~~(2) At the time of the filing of the petition:~~

~~(A) the person has only one conviction of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201, which shall be construed in accordance with 23 V.S.A. § 1211; and~~

~~(B) the person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a).~~

~~(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.~~

~~(4) The court finds that sealing of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.~~

~~(h) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(D) of this section, unless the court finds that expungement or sealing would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged or sealed in accordance with section 7606 or 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(1) At least 15 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 15 years previously.~~

~~(2) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted of a violation of subdivision 1201(c)(3)(A) of this title.~~

~~(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.~~

~~(4) The court finds that expungement or sealing of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.~~

(a) Petition.

(1) A person may file a petition with the court requesting expungement of a criminal history record related to a conviction if the person was convicted of an offense for which the underlying conduct is no longer prohibited by law or designated as a criminal offense.

(2) A person may file a petition with the court requesting sealing of a criminal history record related to a conviction if the person was convicted of a qualifying crime or qualifying crimes arising out of the same incident or occurrence.

(3) Whichever office prosecuted the offense resulting in the conviction, the State's Attorney or Attorney General, shall be the respondent in the matter unless the prosecuting office authorizes the other to act as the respondent.

(4) The court shall grant the petition without hearing if the petitioner and the respondent stipulate to the granting of the petition. The respondent shall file the stipulation with the court, and the court shall issue the petitioner

an order of sealing and provide notice of the order in accordance with this section.

(5) This section shall not apply to an individual who is the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39 seeking to seal a record of a conviction for a misdemeanor or felony offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4.

(b) Offenses that are no longer prohibited by law. For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged if the following conditions are met:

(1) The petitioner has completed any sentence or supervision for the offense.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(c) Qualifying misdemeanors. For petitions filed to seal a qualifying misdemeanor pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(1) At least three years have elapsed since the date on which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(3) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(d) Qualifying felony offenses. For petitions filed to seal a qualifying felony pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(1) At least seven years have elapsed since the date on which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(3) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(e) Qualifying DUI misdemeanor. For petitions filed to seal a qualifying DUI misdemeanor pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(1) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(3) The person is not the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39.

(4) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(f) Fish and Wildlife Offenses. Sealing a criminal history record related to a fish and wildlife offense shall not void any fish and wildlife license suspension or revocation imposed pursuant to the accumulation of points related to the sealed offense. Points accumulated by a person shall remain on the person's license and, if applicable, completion of the remedial course shall be required, as set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 4502.

§ 7603. ~~EXPUNGEMENT AND~~ SEALING OF RECORD, NO CONVICTION; PROCEDURE

(a) Unless either party objects in the interests of justice, the court shall issue an order sealing the criminal history record related to the citation or arrest of a person:

(1) within 60 days after the final disposition of the case if:

(A) the court does not make a determination of probable cause at the time of arraignment; ~~or~~

(B) the charge is dismissed before trial with or without prejudice; or

(C) the defendant is acquitted of the charges; or

(2) at any time if the prosecuting attorney and the defendant stipulate that the court may grant the petition to seal the record.

(b) If a party objects to sealing ~~or expunging~~ a record pursuant to this section, the court shall schedule a hearing to determine if sealing ~~or expunging~~

the record serves the interests of justice. The defendant and the prosecuting attorney shall be the only parties in the matter.

(c), (d) [Repealed.]

(e) ~~Unless either party objects in the interests of justice, the court shall issue an order expunging a criminal history record related to the citation or arrest of a person:~~

~~(1) within 60 days after the final disposition of the case if:~~

~~(A) the defendant is acquitted of the charges; or~~

~~(B) the charge is dismissed with prejudice;~~

~~(2) at any time if the prosecuting attorney and the defendant stipulate that the court may grant the petition to expunge the record.~~ [Repealed.]

(f) ~~Unless either party objects in the interests of justice, the court shall issue an order to expunge a record sealed pursuant to subsection (a) or (g) of this section eight years after the date on which the record was sealed.~~ [Repealed.]

(g) A person may file a petition with the court requesting sealing ~~or expungement~~ of a criminal history record related to the citation or arrest of the person at any time. The court shall grant the petition and issue an order sealing ~~or expunging~~ the record if it finds that sealing ~~or expunging~~ the record serves the interests of justice~~,~~ or if the parties stipulate to sealing ~~or expungement~~ of the record.

(h) ~~The court may expunge any records that were sealed pursuant to this section prior to July 1, 2018 unless the State's Attorney's office that prosecuted the case objects. Thirty days prior to expunging a record pursuant to this subsection, the court shall provide to the State's Attorney's office that prosecuted the case written notice of its intent to expunge the record.~~ [Repealed.]

§ 7604. NEW CHARGE

If a person ~~is charged with a criminal offense after he or she has filed a petition for expungement pursuant to this chapter~~ has a criminal charge pending at the time the petition for sealing or expungement is before the court, the court shall not act on the petition until disposition of the new charge.

§ 7605. DENIAL OF PETITION

If a petition for expungement or sealing is denied by the court pursuant to this chapter, no further petition shall be brought for at least two years, unless a shorter duration is authorized by the court.

§ 7606. EFFECT OF EXPUNGEMENT

(a) Order and notice. Upon finding that the requirements for expungement have been met, the court shall issue an order that shall include provisions that its effect is to annul the record of the arrest, conviction, and sentence and that such person shall be treated in all respects as if the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense. The court shall provide notice of the expungement to the respondent, Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, the Restitution Unit of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, and any other entity that may have a record related to the order to expunge. The VCIC shall provide notice of the expungement to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center.

(b) Effect.

(1) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if ~~he or she~~ the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense.

(2) In any application for employment, license, or civil right or privilege or in an appearance as a witness in any proceeding or hearing, a person may be required to answer questions about a previous criminal history record only with respect to arrests or convictions that have not been expunged.

(3) The response to an inquiry from any person regarding an expunged record shall be that "NO CRIMINAL RECORD EXISTS."

(4) Nothing in this section shall affect any right of the person whose record has been expunged to rely on it as a bar to any subsequent proceedings for the same offense.

(c) Process.

(1) The court shall remove the expunged offense from any accessible database that it maintains.

(2) Until all charges on a docket are expunged, the case file shall remain publicly accessible.

(3) When all charges on a docket have been expunged, the case file shall be destroyed pursuant to policies established by the Court Administrator.

(d) Special index.

(1) The court shall keep a special index of cases that have been expunged together with the expungement order. The index shall list only the name of the person convicted of the offense, ~~his or her~~ the person's date of

birth, the docket number, and the criminal offense that was the subject of the expungement.

(2) The special index and related documents specified in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be confidential and shall be physically and electronically segregated in a manner that ensures confidentiality and that limits access to authorized persons.

(3) Inspection of the expungement order may be permitted only upon petition by the person who is the subject of the case. The Chief Superior Judge may permit special access to the index and the documents for research purposes pursuant to the rules for public access to court records.

(4) ~~[Repealed].~~ [Repealed.]

(5) The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this subsection.

§ 7607. EFFECT OF SEALING

(a) Order and notice. Upon entry of an order to seal, the ~~order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is sealed shall be treated in all respects as if the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense and that its effect is to annul the record of arrest, conviction, and sentence. The~~ court shall ~~provide notice of the sealing to the respondent, Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, the Restitution Unit of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, and any other entity that may have a record related to the order to seal~~ send a copy of any order sealing a criminal history record to all of the parties and attorneys representing the parties, including to the prosecuting agency that prosecuted the offense, the Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, and any other entity that may have a record subject to the sealing order. VCIC shall provide notice of the sealing order to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center. ~~The VCIC shall provide notice of the sealing to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center.~~

(b) Effect.

(1) Except as provided in ~~subdivision~~ subsection (c) of this section, upon entry of a sealing order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is sealed shall be treated in all respects as if ~~he or she~~ the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense.

(2) In any application for employment, license, or civil right or privilege or in an appearance as a witness in any proceeding or hearing, a person may be

required to answer questions about a previous criminal history record only with respect to arrests or convictions that have not been sealed.

(3) The response to an inquiry from any member of the public regarding a sealed record shall be that "NO CRIMINAL RECORD EXISTS."

(4) Nothing in this section shall affect any right of the person whose record has been sealed to rely on it as a bar to any subsequent proceeding for the same offense.

(c) Exceptions. A party seeking to use a sealed criminal history record in a court proceeding shall, prior to any use of the record in open court or in a public filing, notify the court of the party's intent to do so. The court shall thereafter determine whether the record may be used prior its disclosure in the proceeding. This shall not apply to the use of a sealed record pursuant to subdivision (2), (3), (4), or (7) of this subsection. Use of a sealed document pursuant to an exception shall not change the effect of sealing under subsection (b) of this section. Notwithstanding any other provision of law or a sealing order:

(1) An entity or person that possesses a sealed record may continue to use it for any litigation or claim arising out of the same incident or occurrence ~~or involving the same defendant~~.

(2)(A) A criminal justice agency as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a and the Attorney General may ~~use the criminal history record sealed in accordance with section 7602 or 7603 of this title without limitation for criminal justice purposes as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a~~ apply to access a sealed criminal history record by filing a petition, supported by a written affidavit, with the court. The court shall grant access to the record upon a finding that reasonable suspicion exists that a sealed record contains information that will aid in criminal justice purposes. The court may grant the petition ex parte or upon hearing at the court's discretion.

(B) A defense attorney may apply to access a sealed criminal history record by filing a petition, supported by a written affidavit, with the court. The court may grant access to the sealed record upon a finding that the sealed record may be of assistance to the attorney in representing the defendant. The court may grant the petition ex parte or upon hearing at the court's discretion.

(3) A law enforcement officer as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2351a may access a sealed record under exigent circumstances. As used in this subdivision (3), "exigent circumstances" means a compelling need to act swiftly to prevent imminent danger to life or serious damage to property, to prevent the imminent destruction of evidence, or to prevent a suspect from fleeing. For an alleged violation of this subdivision (3), a complaint may be

filed with the Vermont Criminal Justice Council. A violation of this subdivision (3) shall be subject to the penalty provided in section 7611 of this title.

(4) A sealed record of a prior violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) shall be admissible as a predicate offense for the purpose of imposing an enhanced penalty for a subsequent violation of that section, in accordance with the provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 1210.

(5) A person or a court in possession of an order issued by a court regarding a matter that was subsequently sealed may file or cite to that decision in any subsequent proceeding. The party or court filing or citing to that decision shall ensure that information regarding the identity of the defendant in the sealed record is redacted.

(6) The Vermont Crime Information Center and Criminal Justice Information Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall have access to sealed criminal history records without limitation for the purpose of responding to queries to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System regarding firearms transfers and attempted transfers.

(7) The State's Attorney and Attorney General shall disclose information contained in a sealed criminal history record when required to meet discovery obligations.

(8) The person whose criminal history records have been sealed pursuant to this chapter and the person's attorney may access and use the sealed records in perpetuity.

(9) A law enforcement agency may inspect and receive copies of the sealed criminal history records of any applicant who applies to the agency to be a law enforcement officer or a current employee for the purpose of internal investigation.

(10) Persons or entities conducting research shall have access to a sealed criminal history record to carry out research pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 2056b in perpetuity and shall not be subject to the 10-year limitation.

(11) Information and materials gathered by the Department for Children and Families during a joint investigation with law enforcement, including law enforcement affidavits and related references to such information and materials, are not case records as defined in section 7601(2) of this title, and are considered Department records that shall be maintained and may be utilized as statutorily prescribed by 33 V.S.A. chapter 49 and produced in response to a court order.

(12) Information and materials gathered by Adult Protective Services during a joint investigation with law enforcement, including law enforcement affidavits and other investigative materials, are not case records as defined in subdivision 7601(2) of this title, and are considered records of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, which shall be maintained and may be utilized as authorized by 33 V.S.A. chapter 69 and produced in response to a court order.

(d) Process.

(1) The court shall bar viewing of the sealed offense in any accessible database that it maintains.

(2) Until all charges on a docket have been sealed, the case file shall remain publicly accessible.

(3) When all charges on a docket have been sealed, the case file shall become exempt from public access.

(4) When a sealing order is issued by the court, any person or entity, except the court, that possesses criminal history records shall:

(A) bar viewing of the sealed offense in any accessible database that it maintains or remove information pertaining to the sealed records from any publicly accessible database that the person or entity maintains; and

(B) clearly label the criminal history record as "SEALED" to ensure compliance with this section.

(e) Special index.

(1) The court shall keep a special index of cases that have been sealed together with the sealing order. The index shall list only the name of the person convicted of the offense, ~~his or her~~ the person's date of birth, the docket number, and the criminal offense that was the subject of the sealing.

(2) The special index and related documents specified in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be confidential and shall be physically and electronically segregated in a manner that ensures confidentiality and that limits access to authorized persons.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, inspection of the sealing order may be permitted only upon petition by the person who is the subject of the case. The Chief Superior Judge may permit special access to the index and the documents for research purposes pursuant to the rules for public access to court records.

~~(4) The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this subsection.~~

(f) Victims Compensation Program. Upon request, the ~~Victim's~~ Victims Compensation Program shall be provided with a copy, redacted of all information identifying the offender, of the affidavit for the sole purpose of verifying the expenses in a victim's compensation application submitted pursuant to section 5353 of this title.

(g) Restitution. The sealing of a criminal record shall not affect the authority of the Restitution Unit to enforce a restitution order in the same manner as a civil judgment pursuant to subdivision 5362(c)(2) of this title.

§ 7608. VICTIMS

(a) At the time a petition is filed pursuant to this chapter, the respondent shall give notice of the petition to any victim of the offense who is known to the respondent. The victim shall have the right to offer the respondent a statement prior to any stipulation or to offer the court a statement. The disposition of the petition shall not be unnecessarily delayed pending receipt of a victim's statement. The respondent's inability to locate a victim after a reasonable effort has been made shall not be a bar to granting a petition.

(b) As used in this section, "reasonable effort" means attempting to contact the victim by first-class mail at the victim's last known address ~~and,~~ by telephone at the victim's last known phone number, and by email at the victim's last known email address.

§ 7609. ~~EXPUNGEMENT OF~~ SEALING CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS OF ~~AN INDIVIDUAL~~ A PERSON 18–21 YEARS OF AGE

(a)(1) ~~Procedure~~ Petition. ~~Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the record of the criminal proceedings for an individual who was 18–21 years of age at the time the individual committed a qualifying crime shall be expunged within 30 days after the date on which the individual successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction of the qualifying crime, absent a finding of good cause by the court. The court shall issue an order to expunge all records and files related to the arrest, citation, investigation, charge, adjudication of guilt, criminal proceedings, and probation related to the sentence. A copy of the order shall be sent to each agency, department, or official named in the order. Thereafter, the court, law enforcement officers, agencies, and departments shall reply to any request for information that no record exists with respect to such individual. Notwithstanding this subsection, the record shall not be expunged until restitution and surcharges have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title~~ Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person who was 18–21 years of age at the time the person committed

a qualifying crime may file a petition with the court requesting sealing of the criminal history record related to the qualifying crime after 30 days have elapsed since the person completed the terms and conditions for the sentence for the qualifying crime. The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(A) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(B) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interest of justice.

(2) Effect. Order, notice, and effect of sealing shall comply with the provisions of subsections 7607(a) and (b) of this title.

(b) Exceptions.

(1) A criminal history record that includes both qualifying and nonqualifying offenses shall not be eligible for ~~expungement~~ sealing pursuant to this section.

(2) ~~The Vermont Crime Information Center shall retain a special index of sentences for sex offenses that require registration pursuant to chapter 167, subchapter 3 of this title. This index shall only list the name and date of birth of the subject of the expunged files and records, the offense for which the subject was convicted, and the docket number of the proceeding that was the subject of the expungement. The special index shall be confidential and shall be accessed only by the Director of the Vermont Crime Information Center and an individual designated for the purpose of providing information to the Department of Corrections in the preparation of a presentence investigation in accordance with 28 V.S.A. §§ 204 and 204a.~~ [Repealed.]

(c) ~~Petitions. An individual who was 18–21 years of age at the time the individual committed a qualifying crime may file a petition with the court requesting expungement of the criminal history record related to the qualifying crime after 30 days have elapsed since the individual completed the terms and conditions for the sentence for the qualifying crime. The court shall grant the petition and issue an order sealing or expunging the record if it finds that sealing or expunging the record serves the interests of justice.~~ [Repealed.]

§ 7610. CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD SEALING SPECIAL FUND

There is established the Criminal History Record Sealing Special Fund, which shall be managed in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5. Fees collected pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1431(e) for the filing of a petition to

seal a criminal history record of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) shall be deposited into and credited to this Fund. This Fund shall be available to the

Office of the Court Administrator, the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Vermont Crime Information Center to offset the administrative costs of sealing such records. Balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward and remain in the Fund.

§ 7611. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE

A State or municipal employee or contractor or any agent of the court, including an attorney and an employee or contractor of the attorney, or a law enforcement officer as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2351a who knowingly accesses or discloses sealed criminal history record information without authorization shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than $1,000.00. Each unauthorized disclosure shall constitute a separate civil violation.

Sec. 2. 24 V.S.A. § 2296b is added to read:

§ 2296b. EXPUNGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL VIOLATION RECORDS

(a) Expungement. Two years following the satisfaction of a judgment resulting from an adjudication of a municipal violation, the Judicial Bureau shall make an entry of "expunged" and notify the municipality of such action, provided the person has not been adjudicated for any subsequent municipal violations during that time. The data transfer to the municipality shall include the name, date of birth, ticket number, and offense. Violations of offenses adopted pursuant to chapter 117 of this title shall not be eligible for expungement under this section.

(b) Effect of expungement.

(1) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the individual whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if the individual had never been adjudicated of the violation.

(2) Upon an entry of expunged, the case will be accessible only by the Clerk of the Court for the Judicial Bureau or the Clerk's designee. Adjudications that have been expunged shall not appear in the results of any Judicial Bureau database search by name, date of birth, or any other data identifying the defendant. Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, any documents or other records related to an expunged adjudication that are maintained outside the Judicial Bureau's case management system shall be destroyed.

(3) Upon receiving an inquiry from any person regarding an expunged record, the Judicial Bureau and the municipality shall respond that "NO RECORD EXISTS."

(c) Exception for research entities. Research entities that maintain adjudication records for purposes of collecting, analyzing, and disseminating criminal justice data shall not be subject to the expungement requirements established in this section. Research entities shall abide by the policies established by the Court Administrator and shall not disclose any identifying information from the records they maintain.

(d) Policies for implementation. The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this section.

(e) Application. This section shall apply to municipal violations that occur on and after July 1, 2025.

Sec. 3. 23 V.S.A. § 2303 is amended to read:

§ 2303. EXPUNGEMENT OF VIOLATION RECORDS

* * *

(e) Application. This section shall apply to motor vehicle violations that occur on and after July 1, 2021.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Mattos, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 56.

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

An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

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

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

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

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

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

(3) one member, appointed by the Executive Director of the Office of Racial Equity; and

(4) five members, appointed by the Governor, one who must be a New American with lived experience, who shall include:

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

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

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

(D) one member, nominated by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation; and

(E) one member, nominated by Migrant Justice.

(c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study and submit a written report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Government Operations concerning recommendations for creating an independent Office of New Americans, including:

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

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

(3) in consultation with community-based organizations composed of or serving New Americans, the Vermont Asylum Assistance Project, State agencies and departments that provide services to New Americans, the

Secretary of State's Office, municipal government leaders, educational institutions, and business leaders, information on:

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

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

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

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

(5) a definition of the term "New Americans" for the purposes of an Office of New Americans.

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

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

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

(g) Meetings.

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

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

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

(h) Compensation and reimbursement.

(1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee 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 10 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

(2) Other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.

§ 1010 for not more than 10 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Agency of Human Services.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 63.

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

An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 7, 18 V.S.A. § 9456, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 7 to read as follows:

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. § 9456 is amended to read:

§ 9456. BUDGET REVIEW

* * *

(d)(1)(A) Annually, the Board shall establish a budget for each general hospital, as defined in section 1902 of this title, on or before September 15, followed by a written decision ~~by~~ on or before October 1.

(B) Annually, the Board shall establish a budget for each psychiatric hospital, as defined in section 1902 of this title but excluding those conducted, maintained, or operated by the State of Vermont, on or before December 15, followed by a written decision on or before December 31.

(C) Each hospital shall operate within the budget established under this section.

* * *

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Gulick, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 36.

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

An act relating to Medicaid coverage of long-term residential treatment for co-occurring substance use disorder and mental health condition.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 1901n is added to read:

§ 1901n. HIGH-INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FOR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER AND CO-OCCURRING MENTAL CONDITIONS

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall provide coverage for high-intensity, medically monitored residential treatment episodes to Medicaid beneficiaries with substance use disorder and a co-occurring mental health condition when high-intensity, medically monitored residential treatment episodes are prescribed by a health care professional employed by a residential treatment program who is practicing within the scope of the health professional's license and the residential treatment program is participating in Vermont's Medicaid program.

(b) Coverage provided under this section shall be for the entire length of stay prescribed by a health care professional employed by a residential treatment program, who shall take into account current best practices for each level of care within the substance use continuum of care.

Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 1901o is added to read:

§ 1901o. LOW-INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FOR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER AND CO-OCCURRING MENTAL CONDITIONS

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall provide coverage for low-intensity, clinically managed residential treatment episodes to Medicaid beneficiaries with substance use disorder and a co-occurring mental health condition when low-intensity, clinically managed residential treatment episodes are prescribed by a health care professional employed by a residential treatment program who is practicing within the scope of the health care

professional's license and the residential treatment program is participating in Vermont's Medicaid program.

(b) Coverage provided under this section shall be for the entire length of stay prescribed by a health care professional employed by a residential treatment program, who shall take into account current best practices for levels of care within the substance use continuum of care.

Sec. 3. REPORT; MEDICAID PAYMENT MODEL FOR RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT SERVICES

The Agency of Human Services shall conduct a review of the Medicaid payment model for residential substance use disorder treatment services with special consideration given to the actual cost of providing residential treatment services, commensurate with length of stay, co-occurring physical and mental health needs, and postresidential treatment service needs. The results of the review shall be submitted to the House Committee on Human Services and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare on or before December 1, 2025. The review shall include recommendations and proposed legislation to:

(1) align the Medicaid payment model with the clinical needs of individuals receiving residential substance use disorder treatment services; and

(2) ensure coordinated transitions between residential substance use disorder treatment providers offering varying acuity of care.

Sec. 4. REPEAL

2019 Acts and Resolves No. 6, Secs. 99 and 100 (amendments to 18 V.S.A. §§ 4810(d)–(j) and 4811 that prohibited public inebriates from being incarcerated in a Department of Corrections' facility) are repealed.

Sec. 5. 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 6, Sec. 105 is amended to read:

Sec. 105. EFFECTIVE DATES

* * *

(c) ~~Secs. 99 and 100 (amending 18 V.S.A. §§ 4910 and 4811) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.~~ [Deleted.]

* * *

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read:

"An act relating to the Medicaid payment model for residential substance use disorder treatment services"

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Lyons, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

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

Third Reading Ordered

S. 53.

Senator Collamore, for the Committee on Government Operations, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services.

Reported recommending that the bill ought to pass.

Senator Gulick, for the Committee on Health and Welfare, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending the bill be amended as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be Sec. 8 to read as follows:

Sec. 8. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION; APPROPRIATION

The sum of $25,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of Professional Regulation in fiscal year 2026 to establish the certification program for community-based perinatal doulas as set forth in this act.

Second: By renumbering the existing Sec. 8, effective dates, to be Sec. 9 and, in that renumbered section, in subsection (a), preceding "shall take effect on January 1, 2026," by inserting "and 8 (Office of Professional Regulation; appropriation)"

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Gulick, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass without the Committee on Health and Welfare recommendation of amendment.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the pending question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Health and Welfare?, was disagreed to.

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered.

Appointments Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed together as a group by the Senate, without reports given by the Committees to which they were referred and without debate:

Snedeker, David of St. Johnsbury - Member of the State Infrastructure Bank Board - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2030.

Foster, Ted of Vergennes - Member of the Vermont Economic Development Authority - July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2030.

Appointments Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed separately by the Senate, upon full reports given by the Committees to which they were referred:

The nomination of

Tebbetts, Anson of Cabot - Secretary, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Brennan.

The nomination of

Shouldice, William, IV of Stowe - Commissioner, Department of Taxes- March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The nomination of

Greshin, Adam of Warren - Commissioner, Department of Finance and Management - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The nomination of

Harris, Kyle of Montpelier - Member of the Cannabis Control Board - March 1, 2028 to February 29, 2028.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The nominations of

Clark, Sarah of Waterbury Center - Secretary, Agency of Administration-

November 17, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

Clark, Sarah of Waterbury Center - Secretary, Agency of Administration- March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Were confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 30, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Adjourned

On motion of Senator Baruth the Senate adjourned until 3:00 P.M.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Rules Suspended; Bill Referred to the Committee on Appropriations Pursuant to Rule 31

Pending Entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth the rules were suspended and Senate bill entitled:

S. 127. An act relating to housing and housing development.

was committed to the Committee on Appropriations pursuant to Rule 31.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Krowinski and others,

H.C.R. 53.

House concurrent resolution honoring Megan Humphrey for her outstanding leadership of HANDS.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 54.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative, Governor, and Interim University of Vermont President Thomas Paul Salmon.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 55.

House concurrent resolution recognizing April 2025 as the Month of the Military Child in Vermont.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 56.

House concurrent resolution designating April 18, 2025 as USS VERMONT (SSN 792) Day in Vermont.

Offered by House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs,

Offered by Senators Clarkson, Major and White,

H.C.R. 57.

House concurrent resolution recognizing March 25, 2025 as National Medal of Honor Day in Vermont.

Offered by Rep. Noyes,

Offered by Senator Westman,

H.C.R. 58.

House concurrent resolution recognizing April 18, 2025 as Electric Utility Lineworker Appreciation Day in Vermont.

Offered by Rep. Wood,

H.C.R. 59.

House concurrent resolution honoring Linda C. Johnson for her outstanding State and national contributions to the prevention of child abuse.

Offered by All Members of the House,

Offered by Senators Lyons and Gulick,

H.C.R. 60.

House concurrent resolution designating March 25, 2025 as Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Day at the State House.

Offered by Reps. Hango and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris and Vyhovsky,

H.C.R. 61.

House concurrent resolution recognizing March 2025 as National Athletic Training Month in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Greer and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 62.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Black Music Division at Bennington College.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 18.

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Thomas Harty of Bethel.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Message from the House No. 31

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 80. An act relating to the Office of the Health Care Advocate.

H. 209. An act relating to intranasal epinephrine in schools.

H. 219. An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

H. 222. An act relating to civil orders of protection.

H. 243. An act relating to the regulation of business organizations.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 53. House concurrent resolution honoring Megan Humphrey for her outstanding leadership of HANDS.

H.C.R. 54. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative, Governor, and Interim University of Vermont President Thomas Paul Salmon.

H.C.R. 55. House concurrent resolution recognizing April 2025 as the Month of the Military Child in Vermont.

H.C.R. 56. House concurrent resolution designating April 18, 2025 as USS VERMONT (SSN 792) Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 57. House concurrent resolution recognizing March 25, 2025 as National Medal of Honor Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 58. House concurrent resolution recognizing April 18, 2025 as Electric Utility Lineworker Appreciation Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 59. House concurrent resolution honoring Linda C. Johnson for her outstanding State and national contributions to the prevention of child abuse.

H.C.R. 60. House concurrent resolution designating March 25, 2025 as Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 61. House concurrent resolution recognizing March 2025 as National Athletic Training Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 62. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Black Music Division at Bennington College.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 19.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 19. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on March 28, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, March 28, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, April 1, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 132.

By Senators White, Clarkson, Gulick, Major and Vyhovsky,

An act relating to annual reporting on health care sharing plans and arrangements.

To the Committee on Finance.

S. 133.

By Senators Ram Hinsdale, Chittenden and Clarkson,

An act relating to land use, housing, and brownfields.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 80.

An act relating to the Office of the Health Care Advocate.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 209.

An act relating to intranasal epinephrine in schools.

To the Committee on Education.

H. 219.

An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

To the Committee on Institutions.

H. 222.

An act relating to civil orders of protection.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 243.

An act relating to the regulation of business organizations.

To the Committee on Finance.

Bill Passed

S. 12.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to sealing criminal history records.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 36.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to Medicaid coverage of long-term residential treatment for co-occurring substance use disorder and mental health condition.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Lyons moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 33 V.S.A. § 1901n, in subsection (a), by inserting the phrase "medically necessary" before the phrase "high-intensity" in both instances in which it appears

Second: In Sec. 2, 33 V.S.A. § 1901o, in subsection (a), by inserting the phrase "medically necessary" before the phrase "low-intensity" in both instances in which it appears

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bills Passed

Senate bills of the following titles were severally read the third time and passed:

S. 53. An act relating to certification of community-based perinatal doulas and Medicaid coverage for doula services.

S. 56. An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

S. 63. An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board.

S. 117. An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

Bill Amended; Consideration Interrupted

S. 123.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Finance, reported the bill ought to pass.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Appropriations, reported the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and, pending the question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, Senators Chittenden, Beck, Brock, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy and Mattos moved that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 13, 23 V.S.A. § 634, fee for examination, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 13 to read:

Sec. 13. 23 V.S.A. § 634 is amended to read:

§ 634. FEE FOR EXAMINATION

* * *

(b)(1) ~~A~~ Beginning on or before July 1, 2026, a scheduling fee of $29.00 shall be paid by the applicant before the applicant may schedule the road test required under section 632 of this title. ~~Unless an applicant gives the Department at least 48 hours' notice of cancellation, if~~

(2) If the applicant does not appear as scheduled, the $29.00 scheduling fee ~~is~~ shall be forfeited, unless either:

(A) the applicant gives the Department at least 48 hours' notice; or

(B) the applicant shows good cause for the cancellation, as determined by the Commissioner.

(3) If the applicant appears for the scheduled road test, the fee shall be applied toward the license examination fee. ~~The Commissioner may waive the scheduling fee until the Department is capable of administering the fee electronically.~~

* * *

Which was agreed to and consideration was interrupted by a recess.

Recess

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate recessed until 10:30 A.M.

Called to Order

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Consideration Resumed; Third Reading Ordered

S. 123.

Consideration was resumed on Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the bill be read a third time?, was agreed to.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 122.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to economic and workforce development.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

The Senate *pro tempore* Assumes the Chair

Senator Brock, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported the bill ought to pass.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill be amended as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be Sec. 10a to read as follows:

Sec. 10a. CONTINGENCY ON FUNDING

The duty to implement Secs. 2–5 of this act is contingent upon an appropriation in fiscal year 2026 from the General Fund for the specific purposes described in this act.

Second: In Sec. 6, 9 V.S.A. chapter 111B, in section 4129, by striking out subsection (h) in its entirety.

Third: In Sec. 10, task force to explore development of convention center and performance venue, by striking out subsection (g) in its entirety.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

The bill was read the second time and pending the question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations?, Senator Perchlik, moved to substitute a recommendation of amendment for the recommendation of amendment of the Committee on Appropriations as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be Sec. 10a to read as follows:

Sec. 10a. CONTINGENCY ON FUNDING

The duty to implement Secs. 1–5 of this act is contingent upon an appropriation in fiscal year 2026 from the General Fund for the specific purposes described in this act.

Second: In Sec. 6, 9 V.S.A. chapter 111B, in section 4129, by striking out subsection (h) in its entirety.

Third: In Sec. 10, task force to explore development of convention center and performance venue, by striking out subsection (g) in its entirety.

Which was agreed to.

The President Resumes the Chair

Thereupon, the recommendation of amendment, as substituted, was agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 125.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to workers' compensation and collective bargaining rights.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 6, Vermont Labor Relations Board; appropriation, in its entirety and by renumbering the remaining section to be numerically correct.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 18.

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

An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. chapter 53 is added to read:

CHAPTER 53. BIRTH CENTER LICENSING

§ 2351. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Birth center" means a facility the primary purposes of which are to provide midwifery care, low-risk deliveries, and newborn care immediately after delivery, for a stay of generally less than 24 hours. The term does not include a facility that is a hospital, is part of a hospital, or is owned by a hospital; a facility that is an ambulatory surgical center; or the residence of the individual giving birth. A birth center may be located on the grounds of a hospital.

(2) "Certified nurse midwife" means a professional licensed in accordance with 26 V.S.A. chapter 28, subchapter 2.

(3) "Change of ownership" means a change in the majority or controlling interest in an established birth center to another person.

(4) "Corrective action plan" means a written strategy for correcting an issue of partial compliance, deficiency, or violation of this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter.

(5) "Licensed maternity care provider" means a licensed provider whose professional scope of practice, as established under Vermont law, includes preconception, prenatal, labor, birth, and postpartum care and early care of a newborn and who may be the primary attendant during the perinatal period.

(6) "Licensed midwife" means a professional licensed in accordance with 26 V.S.A. chapter 85.

(7) "Licensed provider" means an individual licensed or certified in Vermont to provide specific health care-related services within a scope of practice defined by licensing statutes and rules, and may include certified nurse midwives, licensed midwives, advanced practice registered nurses, physician assistants, naturopathic physicians with a childbirth endorsement in accordance with 26 V.S.A. §§ 4122(b) and 4125(b), doctors of nursing practice, and physicians.

§ 2352. LICENSE; PROHIBITIONS

(a) No person shall establish, maintain, or operate a birth center in this State without first obtaining a license for the birth center in accordance with this chapter.

(b) A birth center may be independently owned and operated by a licensed maternity care provider.

(c) No person shall represent itself as a "birth center" or use the term "birth center" in its title or in its advertising, publications, or other form of communication unless the person has been licensed as a birth center in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(d) A license is not transferable or assignable and shall be issued only for the premises and persons named in the application.

§ 2353. APPLICATION; FEE

(a) An application for licensure of a birth center shall be made to the Department of Health in the manner specified by the Department and shall include all information required by the Department.

(b)(1) Each application for an initial license, renewal of a license, or a change of ownership shall be accompanied by a fee of $250.00.

(2) Fees collected under this section shall be credited to the Hospital Licensing Fees Special Fund and shall be available to the Department of Health to offset the costs of licensing birth centers.

§ 2354. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Upon receipt of an application for a license and the licensing fee, the Department of Health shall issue a license if it determines, after an inspection conducted by the Department or its designee, that the applicant is able to operate a birth center in accordance with rules adopted by the Department.

§ 2355. REVOCATION OF LICENSE; HEARING

The Department of Health, after notice and opportunity for hearing to the applicant or licensee, is authorized to condition, deny, suspend, or revoke a license in any case in which it finds that there has been a substantial failure to comply with the requirements established under this chapter. Such notice shall be served by registered mail or by personal service, shall set forth the reasons for the proposed action, and shall set a date not less than 60 days from the date of the mailing or service on which the applicant or licensee shall be given opportunity for a hearing. After the hearing, or upon default of the applicant or licensee, the Department shall file its findings of fact and conclusions of law. A copy of the findings and decision shall be sent by registered mail or served personally upon the applicant or licensee. The procedure governing hearings authorized by this section shall be set forth in the rules adopted pursuant to section 2359 of this chapter and shall not be subject to the contested case provisions of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, subchapter 2.

§ 2356. APPEAL

Any applicant or licensee, or the State acting through the Attorney General, aggrieved by the decision of the Department of Health after a hearing may appeal the decision in accordance with section 128 of this title. Pursuant to section 129 of this title, an appeal pursuant to this section shall not stay the effectiveness of an order entered in accordance with section 2355 of this chapter, but any party is permitted to seek a stay order in the Superior Court in which the appeal is being heard.

§ 2357. INSPECTIONS

(a) The Department of Health or its designee shall make or cause to be made such inspections and investigations as the Department or its designee deems necessary.

(b) A birth center, including its building and grounds and, in accordance with applicable law, its records, shall be subject to inspection by the Department and its designee at all times.

(c) If a birth center is found to be out of compliance with any requirement of this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter, the Department may condition, deny, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew the birth center's license or may ask the birth center to develop and implement a corrective action plan.

(d) If the Department finds a violation as the result of an inspection or investigation, the Department shall post a report on the Department's website summarizing the violation and any corrective action required.

§ 2358. RECORDS

(a) Information received by the Department of Health through filed reports, inspections, or as otherwise authorized by law shall:

(1) not be disclosed publicly in a manner that identifies or may lead to the identification of one or more individuals or birth centers;

(2) be exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act; and

(3) be kept confidential except as it relates to a proceeding regarding licensure of a birth center.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to the summary reports of violations required to be posted on the Department's website pursuant to section 2357 of this chapter.

§ 2359. RULES

The Department of Health shall adopt rules in accordance with 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 as needed to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The rules shall be based on the national birth center standards published by the American Association of Birth Centers and shall, at a minimum, include provisions regarding:

(1) requirements for operating a birth center, including requirements for safety, sanitation, and health;

(2) obtaining, storing, and dispensing pharmaceuticals consistent with State and federal laws;

(3) requirements for notice to the Department of Health when there is a change in ownership of a birth center and any additional licensing requirements related to a change in ownership;

(4) the scope of services that may be provided at a birth center, including risk factors that preclude a patient from receiving labor and delivery services at a birth center;

(5) appropriate staffing for a birth center, including the types of licensed providers who may practice at a birth center;

(6) birth center complaint processes;

(7) birth center facility, equipment, and supply requirements, including requirements for the maintenance of safety, sanitation, and health;

(8) record retention and confidentiality;

(9) quality assurance and improvement;

(10) processes for the development, submission, approval, and implementation of corrective action plans; and

(11) a requirement for written practice guidelines and policies that include procedures for transferring a patient to a hospital if circumstances warrant.

§ 2360. NO EFFECT ON SCOPE OF SERVICES

(a) Nothing in this chapter or in rules adopted pursuant to this chapter shall be construed to expand or limit the scope of the services that a licensed midwife, certified nurse midwife, or other provider may offer at a birth center or perform in a space that is shared with or adjacent to a birth center.

(b) A birth center may serve as a location for additional services offered in shared or adjacent spaces, including outpatient gynecologic care, primary care, and education and support services, provided that any licensed provider

providing services in those spaces shall only provide those services that are within the licensed provider's authorized scope of practice.

Sec. 2. 8 V.S.A. § 4099d is amended to read:

§ 4099d. MIDWIFERY COVERAGE; HOME BIRTHS

(a) A health insurance plan or health benefit plan providing maternity benefits shall also provide coverage:

(1) for services rendered by a midwife licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 85 or an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 28 who is certified as a nurse midwife for services within the licensed midwife's or certified nurse midwife's scope of practice and provided in a hospital, birth center, or other health care facility or at home; and

(2) for prenatal, maternity, postpartum, and newborn services provided at a birth center licensed pursuant to 18 V.S.A. chapter 53, including birth center facility fees.

* * *

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 9435(a) is amended to read:

(a) Excluded from this subchapter are offices of physicians, dentists, or other practitioners of the healing arts, meaning the physical places that are occupied by such providers on a regular basis in which such providers perform the range of diagnostic and treatment services usually performed by such providers on an outpatient basis unless they are subject to review under subdivision 9434(a)(4) of this title. The exclusion provisions of this subsection shall also apply to birth centers licensed pursuant to chapter 53 of this title.

Sec. 4. AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; MEDICAID; REQUEST FOR FEDERAL APPROVAL

The Agency of Human Services shall seek approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to allow Vermont Medicaid to cover prenatal, maternity, postpartum, and newborn services provided at a licensed birth center and to allow Vermont Medicaid to reimburse separately for birth center services, including birth center facility fees, and for professional services.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 1 (birth center licensing) shall take effect on January 1, 2027 or the effective date of the birth center rules adopted by the Department of Health, whichever comes first.

(b) Sec. 2 (8 V.S.A. § 4099d) shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

(c) Sec. 3 (18 V.S.A. § 9435a) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(d) Sec. 4 (Agency of Human Services; Medicaid; request for federal approval) shall take effect on passage and the Agency of Human Services shall submit its request for approval of Medicaid coverage of birth center services to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on or before July 1, 2025, and the Medicaid coverage shall begin on the later of the date of approval or the effective date of the birth center rules adopted by the Department of Health.

(e) This section shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Gulick, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

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

Joint Resolution Adopted in Concurrence

J.R.H. 3.

Joint House resolution entitled:

Joint resolution authorizing the Green Mountain Boys State and Green Mountain Girls State educational programs to use the State House facilities on June 26, 2025.

Having been placed on the Calendar for action, was taken up and adopted in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, March 26, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Rabbi Tobie Weisman of Montpelier.

Message from the House No. 32

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 398. An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

H. 461. An act relating to expanding employee access to unpaid leave.

H. 480. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to education law.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 398.

An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

To the Committee on Finance.

H. 461.

An act relating to expanding employee access to unpaid leave.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

H. 480.

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to education law.

To the Committee on Education.

Bill Passed

S. 18.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 122.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to economic and workforce development.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Hardy moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 3, Vermont Arts Council; Vermont film and creative media industry initiative, in subsection (b), by striking out "for the purpose of supporting the Vermont film and creative media industry initiative, which will build the basic industry structure needed to grow Vermont's film and creative media sector" and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"for the purpose of supporting and growing the Vermont film and creative media community and industry, including academic, educational, creative, commercial, and exhibition resources"

Second: In Sec. 3, Vermont Arts Council; Vermont film and creative media industry initiative, by striking out subdivision (b)(1) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (b)(1) to read as follows:

"(1) build and maintain an online database of film and creative media that includes assets, opportunities, professionals, resources, and events; and"

Third: In Sec. 3, Vermont Arts Council; Vermont film and creative media industry initiative, by striking out subdivision (b)(2) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (b)(2) to read as follows:

"(2) support a part-time staff position within the Vermont Arts Council to manage the database project set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection and to serve as the point of contact for film and creative media creators, exhibitioners, and industry professionals."

Fourth: In Sec. 6, 9 V.S.A. chapter 111B, in section 4129, by striking out subsection (a) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (a) to read as follows:

(a) The Vermont-Ireland Trade Commission is established within the State Treasurer's office to advance bilateral trade and investment between Vermont and Ireland. The Commission shall consist of seven members as follows:

(1) two members, appointed by the Governor;

(2) two members, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3) two members, appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees; and

(4) the State Treasurer or designee.

Fifth: In Sec. 6, 9 V.S.A. chapter 111B, in section 4129, by striking out subsection (c) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c) The members of the Commission, except for the State Treasurer or designee, shall be appointed for terms of four years each and shall continue to serve until their successors are appointed, except that in order to achieve staggered terms, the two members appointed by the Governor shall serve initial terms of two years each and the two members appointed by the Speaker of the House shall serve initial terms of two years each. Members may be reappointed. A member serves at the pleasure of the member's appointing authority. Not more than two members serving on the Commission may be members of the General Assembly.

Sixth: By adding a new section to be Sec. 10b to read as follows:

Sec. 10b. 3 V.S.A. § 23 is amended to read:

§ 23. THE COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

(a) Definitions. For the purposes of this section: "International Trade Agreement" means a trade agreement between the federal government and a foreign country or between Vermont and a foreign country. ~~International Trade Agreement does not include a trade agreement between the State and a foreign country to which the federal government is not a party.~~

* * *

(c) Powers and duties.

(1) The Commission shall conduct an annual assessment of the legal and economic impacts of International Trade Agreements on State and local laws, State sovereignty, and the business environment.

(2) It shall provide a mechanism for citizens and legislators to voice their concerns, which it shall use to make policy recommendations to the General Assembly, to the Governor, to Vermont's congressional delegation, or to the trade representatives of the United States government. Recommendations shall be designed to protect Vermont's job and business environment, and State sovereignty from any negative impacts of trade agreements.

(3) It may recommend legislation or preferred practices and shall work with interested groups in other states to develop means to resolve the conflicting goals and tension inherent in the relationship between international trade and State sovereignty.

(4) As provided for in 9 V.S.A. chapter 111A, the Commission shall consider and develop formal recommendations with respect to how the State should best respond to challenges and opportunities posed by a particular International Agreement.

(5) The Commission shall be consulted when a trade commission pursuant to 9 V.S.A. chapter 111B is proposed to be established by the General Assembly and shall provide a recommendation as to whether the trade commission shall be established.

* * *

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 123.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Westman, Brennan, Harrison, Perchlik and White moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 6, 23 V.S.A. § 376, State, municipal, fire department, and rescue organization motor vehicles, by striking out subdivision (h)(2) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (h)(2) to read as follows:

(2) The EV infrastructure fee, required pursuant subsections 361(b) and (c) of this subchapter, shall not be charged for vehicles that are owned by any county or municipality in the State and used by that county or municipality or another county or municipality in this State for county or municipal purposes.

Second: In the reader assistance heading for Sec. 43, used motor vehicles; purchase and use tax; inspections; study committee; report, by striking out the words "Used Motor Vehicles" and inserting in lieu thereof the words "Purchase and Use"

Third: In Sec. 43, used motor vehicles; purchase and use tax; inspections; study committee; report, in the section heading, by striking out the word "Used"

Fourth: In Sec. 43, in subsection (a), by striking out the word "Used" preceding "Motor Vehicle" and inserting the words "Purchase and Use" thereafter

Fifth: In Sec. 43, in subsection (a), by striking out the word "used" preceding "motor vehicles and"

Sixth: In Sec. 43, in subsection (c), by striking out the word "used" preceding "motor vehicles and"

Seventh: In Sec. 43, in subdivision (c)(2), by striking out the word "and" following "23 V.S.A. § 1222"

Eighth: In Sec. 43, subsection (c), after subdivision (2), by inserting a new subdivision (3) and a subdivision (4) to read:

(3) the assessment of the purchase and use tax on vehicles that were purchased and first registered in another state prior to the vehicle owner moving to Vermont and registering the vehicle in Vermont, including any potential impacts that the current manner in which the purchase and use tax is assessed on such vehicles may have on vehicle owners' decisions to move to Vermont or register their vehicles in Vermont, or both;

(4) potential changes to the statutes and rules governing the purchase and use tax that could mitigate any negative impacts on vehicle owners' decisions to relocate to Vermont or register their vehicles in Vermont, or both, that are identified pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection; and

and by renumbering the remaining subdivision of subsection (c) to be numerically correct.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 125.

Senate bill of the following title:

An act relating to workers' compensation and collective bargaining rights

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Ram Hinsdale, Chittenden and Clarkson moved that the bill be amended as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be Sec. 5a to read as follows:

Sec. 5a. 3 V.S.A. § 941 is amended to read:

§ 941. UNIT DETERMINATION, CERTIFICATION, AND REPRESENTATION

* * *

(c)(1) A petition may be filed with the Board, in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Board by an employee or group of employees, or any individual or employee organization purporting to act on their behalf, alleging by filing a petition or petitions bearing signatures of not less than 30 percent of the employees that they wish to form a bargaining unit and be represented for collective bargaining~~, or that the individual or employee organization currently certified as the bargaining agent is no longer supported by at least 51 percent of the employees in the bargaining unit,~~ or that they are now included in an approved bargaining unit and wish to form a separate bargaining unit under Board criteria for purposes of collective bargaining. The employee, group of employees, individual, or employee organization that files the petition, shall, at the same time that the petition is filed with the Board, provide a copy of the petition to the employer and, if appropriate, the current bargaining agent.

(2) A petition may be filed with the Board, in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Board, by an employee or group of employees, or any individual or employee organization purporting to act on their behalf, alleging by filing a petition or petitions bearing signatures of not less than 50 percent plus one of the employees that the individual or employee organization currently certified as the bargaining agent is no longer supported by a majority of the employees in the bargaining unit. The employee, group of employees, individual, or employee organization that files the petition shall, at the same time that the petition is filed with the Board, provide a copy of the petition to the employer and, if appropriate, the current bargaining agent.

(A)(i) An employer shall, not more than seven business days after receiving a copy of the petition, file any objections to the appropriateness of the proposed bargaining unit and raise any other unit determination issues with the Board and provide a copy of the filing to the employee, group of employees, individual, or employee organization that filed the petition.

* * *

(d) The Board, a Board member, or a person or persons designated by the Board shall investigate the petition and do one of the following:

(1) Determine that the petition has made a sufficient showing of interest pursuant to ~~subdivision~~ subdivisions (c)(1) and (2) of this section.

* * *

Second: By adding a new section to be Sec. 5b and its reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * State Construction Projects * * *

Sec. 5b. 29 V.S.A. § 161 is amended to read:

§ 161. REQUIREMENTS ON STATE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

* * *

(d) Subsections (a) through (c) and subsection (g) of this section shall not apply to maintenance or construction projects carried out by the Agency of Transportation and by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

* * *

(g) Employers and subcontractors contracting with the State of Vermont pursuant to this section shall keep a true and accurate record of all employees working on the project.

(1) For each employee, the record shall include:

(A) the name of the employee;

(B) the address of the employee;

(C) the hours worked by the employee;

(D) the wages paid to the employee;

(E) the employee's rate of pay; and

(F) the classification of the employee; the licensed trades shall supply proof of classification of journey workers and indentured apprentices.

(2) The records described in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be submitted weekly by U.S. mail or email to the State agency overseeing the construction project. The records shall be accompanied by a signed statement from the employer or subcontractor verifying the accuracy of the records.

(3) Each employer and subcontractor shall preserve the records described in subdivision (1) of this subsection for three years from the date of completion of the State project. The records shall be available for inspection by the Commissioner of Labor at any reasonable time upon request.

(4) The records received pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection shall be subject to inspection or copying pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §§ 315–320.

Third: By striking out Sec. 6, effective date, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 6 and its reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 1–5a shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(b) Sec. 5b shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 71.

Senator Plunkett, for the Committee on Institutions, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to consumer data privacy and online surveillance.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. chapter 61A is added to read:

CHAPTER 61A. VERMONT DATA PRIVACY ACT

§ 2415. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Abortion" means terminating a pregnancy for any purpose other than producing a live birth.

(2)(A) "Affiliate" means a legal entity that shares common branding with another legal entity or controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another legal entity.

(B) As used in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2), "control" or "controlled" means:

(i) ownership of, or the power to vote, more than 50 percent of the outstanding shares of any class of voting security of a company;

(ii) control in any manner over the election of a majority of the directors or of individuals exercising similar functions; or

(iii) the power to exercise controlling influence over the management of a company.

(3) "Authenticate" means to use reasonable means to determine that a request to exercise any of the rights afforded under subdivisions 2418(a)(1)–(4) of this title is being made by, or on behalf of, the consumer who is entitled to exercise the consumer rights with respect to the personal data at issue.

(4)(A) "Biometric data" means personal data generated by automatic measurements of an individual's unique biological patterns or characteristics that are used to identify a specific individual.

(B) "Biometric data" does not include:

(i) a digital or physical photograph;

(ii) an audio or video recording; or

(iii) any data generated from a digital or physical photograph, or an audio or video recording, unless such data is generated to identify a specific individual.

(5) "Business associate" has the same meaning as in HIPAA.

(6) "Child" has the same meaning as in COPPA.

(7)(A) "Consent" means a clear affirmative act signifying a consumer's freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous agreement to allow the processing of personal data relating to the consumer.

(B) "Consent" may include a written statement, including by electronic means, or any other unambiguous affirmative action.

(C) "Consent" does not include:

(i) acceptance of a general or broad terms of use or similar document that contains descriptions of personal data processing along with other, unrelated information;

(ii) hovering over, muting, pausing, or closing a given piece of content; or

(iii) agreement obtained through the use of dark patterns.

(8)(A) "Consumer" means an individual who is a resident of the State.

(B) "Consumer" does not include an individual acting in a commercial or employment context or as an employee, owner, director, officer, or contractor of a company, partnership, sole proprietorship, nonprofit, or government agency whose communications or transactions with the controller occur solely within the context of that individual's role with the company, partnership, sole proprietorship, nonprofit, or government agency.

(9) "Consumer health data" means any personal data that a controller uses to identify a consumer's physical or mental health condition or diagnosis, including gender-affirming health data and reproductive or sexual health data.

(10) "Consumer health data controller" means any controller that, alone or jointly with others, determines the purpose and means of processing consumer health data.

(11) "Controller" means a person who, alone or jointly with others, determines the purpose and means of processing personal data.

(12) "COPPA" means the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998, 15 U.S.C. § 6501–6506, and any regulations, rules, guidance, and exemptions adopted pursuant to the act, as the act and regulations, rules, guidance, and exemptions may be amended.

(13) "Covered entity" has the same meaning as in HIPAA.

(14) "Dark pattern" means a user interface designed or manipulated with the substantial effect of subverting or impairing user autonomy, decision-making, or choice and includes any practice the Federal Trade Commission refers to as a "dark pattern."

(15) "Decisions that produce legal or similarly significant effects concerning the consumer" means decisions made by the controller that result in the provision or denial by the controller of financial or lending services, housing, insurance, education enrollment or opportunity, criminal justice, employment opportunities, health care services, or access to essential goods or services.

(16) "De-identified data" means data that does not identify and cannot reasonably be used to infer information about, or otherwise be linked to, an identified or identifiable individual, or a device linked to the individual, if the controller that possesses the data:

(A) takes reasonable measures to ensure that the data cannot be associated with an individual;

(B) publicly commits to process the data only in a de-identified fashion and not attempt to re-identify the data; and

(C) contractually obligates any recipients of the data to satisfy the criteria set forth in subdivisions (A) and (B) of this subdivision (16).

(17) "Gender-affirming health care services" has the same meaning as in 1 V.S.A. § 150.

(18) "Gender-affirming health data" means any personal data concerning a past, present, or future effort made by a consumer to seek, or a consumer's receipt of, gender-affirming health care services.

(19) "Geofence" means any technology that uses global positioning coordinates, cell tower connectivity, cellular data, radio frequency identification, wireless fidelity technology data, or any other form of location detection, or any combination of such coordinates, connectivity, data, identification, or other form of location detection, to establish a virtual boundary.

(20) "HIPAA" means the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191, as may be amended.

(21) "Identified or identifiable individual" means an individual who can be readily identified, directly or indirectly.

(22) "Institution of higher education" means any individual who, or school, board, association, limited liability company or corporation that, is licensed or accredited to offer one or more programs of higher learning leading to one or more degrees.

(23) "Mental health facility" means any health care facility in which at least 70 percent of the health care services provided in the facility are mental health services.

(24) "Nonprofit organization" means any organization that is qualified for tax exempt status under I.R.C. § 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), 501(c)(6), or 501(c)(12), or any corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as may be amended,

(25) "Person" means an individual, association, company, limited liability company, corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, trust, or other legal entity.

(26)(A) "Personal data" means any information that is linked or reasonably linkable to an identified or identifiable individual.

(B) "Personal data" does not include de-identified data or publicly available information.

(27)(A) "Precise geolocation data" means information derived from technology, including global positioning system level latitude and longitude coordinates or other mechanisms, that directly identifies the specific location of an individual with precision and accuracy within a radius of 1,750 feet.

(B) "Precise geolocation data" does not include:

(i) the content of communications;

(ii) data generated by or connected to an advanced utility metering infrastructure system; or

(iii) data generated by equipment used by a utility company.

(28) "Process" or "processing" means any operation or set of operations performed, whether by manual or automated means, on personal data or on sets of personal data, such as the collection, use, storage, disclosure, analysis, deletion, or modification of personal data.

(29) "Processor" means a person who processes personal data on behalf of a controller.

(30) "Profiling" means any form of automated processing performed on personal data to evaluate, analyze, or predict personal aspects related to an identified or identifiable individual's economic situation, health, personal preferences, interests, reliability, behavior, location, or movements.

(31) "Protected health information" has the same meaning as in HIPAA.

(32) "Pseudonymous data" means personal data that cannot be attributed to a specific individual without the use of additional information, provided the additional information is kept separately and is subject to appropriate technical and organizational measures to ensure that the personal data is not attributed to an identified or identifiable individual.

(33) "Publicly available information" means information that:

(A) is lawfully made available through federal, state, or local government records or widely distributed media; or

(B) a controller has a reasonable basis to believe that the consumer has lawfully made available to the general public.

(34) "Reproductive or sexual health care" means any health care-related services or products rendered or provided concerning a consumer's reproductive system or sexual well-being, including any such service or product rendered or provided concerning:

(A) an individual health condition, status, disease, diagnosis, diagnostic test or treatment;

(B) a social, psychological, behavioral, or medical intervention;

(C) a surgery or procedure, including an abortion;

(D) a use or purchase of a medication, including a medication used or purchased for the purposes of an abortion, a bodily function, vital sign, or symptom;

(E) a measurement of a bodily function, vital sign, or symptom; or

(F) an abortion, including medical or nonmedical services, products, diagnostics, counseling, or follow-up services for an abortion.

(35) "Reproductive or sexual health data" means any personal data concerning an effort made by a consumer to seek, or a consumer's receipt of, reproductive or sexual health care.

(36) "Reproductive or sexual health facility" means any health care facility in which at least 70 percent of the health care-related services or

products rendered or provided in the facility are reproductive or sexual health care.

(37)(A) "Sale of personal data" means the exchange of a consumer's personal data by the controller to a third party for monetary or other valuable consideration.

(B) "Sale of personal data" does not include:

(i) the disclosure of personal data to a processor that processes the personal data on behalf of the controller;

(ii) the disclosure of personal data to a third party for purposes of providing a product or service requested by the consumer;

(iii) the disclosure or transfer of personal data to an affiliate of the controller;

(iv) the disclosure of personal data where the consumer directs the controller to disclose the personal data or intentionally uses the controller to interact with a third party;

(v) the disclosure of personal data that the consumer:

(I) intentionally made available to the general public via a channel of mass media; and

(II) did not restrict to a specific audience; or

(vi) the disclosure or transfer of personal data to a third party as an asset that is part of a merger, acquisition, bankruptcy or other transaction, or a proposed merger, acquisition, bankruptcy, or other transaction, in which the third party assumes control of all or part of the controller's assets.

(38) "Sensitive data" means personal data that includes:

(A) data revealing racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, mental or physical health condition or diagnosis, sex life, sexual orientation, or citizenship or immigration status;

(B) consumer health data;

(C) the processing of genetic or biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying an individual;

(D) personal data collected from a known child;

(E) data concerning an individual's status as a victim of crime; and

(F) an individual's precise geolocation data.

(39)(A) "Targeted advertising" means displaying advertisements to a consumer where the advertisement is selected based on personal data obtained or inferred from that consumer's activities over time and across nonaffiliated websites or online applications to predict the consumer's preferences or interests.

(B) "Targeted advertising" does not include:

(i) an advertisement based on activities within the controller's own commonly branded website or online application;

(ii) an advertisement based on the context of a consumer's current search query, visit to a website, or use of an online application;

(iii) an advertisement directed to a consumer in response to the consumer's request for information or feedback; or

(iv) processing personal data solely to measure or report advertising frequency, performance, or reach.

(40) "Third party" means a person, public authority, agency, or body, other than the consumer, controller, or processor or an affiliate of the processor or the controller.

(41) "Trade secret" has the same meaning as in section 4601 of this title.

§ 2416. APPLICABILITY

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, this chapter applies to a person that conducts business in this State or a person that produces products or services that are targeted to residents of this State and that during the preceding calendar year:

(1) controlled or processed the personal data of not fewer than 100,000 consumers, excluding personal data controlled or processed solely for the purpose of completing a payment transaction; or

(2) controlled or processed the personal data of not fewer than 25,000 consumers and derived more than 25 percent of the person's gross revenue from the sale of personal data.

(b) Section 2426 of this title and the provisions of this chapter concerning consumer health data and consumer health data controllers apply to a person that conducts business in this State or a person that produces products or services that are targeted to residents of this State.

§ 2417. EXEMPTIONS

(a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, this chapter shall not apply to any:

(1) body, authority, board, bureau, commission, district or agency of this State or of any political subdivision of this State;

(2) person who has entered into a contract with an entity described in subdivision (1) of this subsection to process consumer health data on behalf of the entity;

(3) nonprofit organization;

(4) institution of higher education;

(5) national securities association that is registered under 15 U.S.C. 78o-3 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as may be amended;

(6) financial institution or data subject to Title V of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, Pub. L. No. 106-102, and regulations adopted to implement that act;

(7) covered entity or business associate, as defined in 45 C.F.R. § 160.103;

(8) tribal nation government organization; or

(9) air carrier, as:

(A) defined in 49 U.S.C. § 40102, as may be amended; and

(B) regulated under the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, 49 U.S.C. § 40101 et seq. and the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978, 49 U.S.C. § 41713, as may be amended.

(b) The following information, data, and activities are exempt from this chapter:

(1) protected health information under HIPAA;

(2) patient identifying information that is collected and processed in accordance with 42 C.F.R. Part 2 (confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records);

(3) identifiable private information:

(A) for purposes of the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, codified as 45 C.F.R. Part 46 (HHS protection of human subjects) and in various other federal regulations; and

(B) that is otherwise information collected as part of human subjects research pursuant to the good clinical practice guidelines issued by the International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use;

(4) information that identifies a consumer in connection with the protection of human subjects under 21 C.F.R. Parts 6, 50, and 56, or personal data used or shared in research, as defined in 45 C.F.R. § 164.501, that is conducted in accordance with the standards set forth in this subdivision and in subdivision (3) of this subsection, or other research conducted in accordance with applicable law;

(5) information or documents created for the purposes of the Healthcare Quality Improvement Act of 1986, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11101–11152, and regulations adopted to implement that act;

(6) patient safety work product that is created for purposes of improving patient safety under 42 C.F.R. Part 3 (patient safety organizations and patient safety work product);

(7) information derived from any of the health care-related information listed in this subsection that is de-identified in accordance with the requirements for de-identification pursuant to HIPAA;

(8) information originating from and intermingled to be indistinguishable with, or information treated in the same manner as, information exempt under this subsection that is maintained by a covered entity or business associate, program, or qualified service organization, as specified in 42 U.S.C. § 290dd-2, as may be amended;

(9) information used for public health activities and purposes as authorized by HIPAA, community health activities, and population health activities;

(10) the collection, maintenance, disclosure, sale, communication, or use of any personal information bearing on a consumer's credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living by a consumer reporting agency, furnisher, or user that provides information for use in a consumer report, and by a user of a consumer report, but only to the extent that such activity is regulated by and authorized under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., as may be amended;

(11) personal data collected, processed, sold, or disclosed under and in compliance with:

(A) the Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994, 18 U.S.C. § 2721–2725; and

(B) the Farm Credit Act, Pub. L. No. 92-181, as may be amended;

(12) personal data regulated by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, as may be amended;

(13) data processed or maintained:

(A) in the course of an individual applying to, employed by, or acting as an agent or independent contractor of a controller, processor, consumer health data controller, or third party, to the extent that the data is collected and used within the context of that role;

(B) as the emergency contact information of a consumer pursuant to this chapter, used for emergency contact purposes, or

(C) that is necessary to retain to administer benefits for another individual relating to the individual who is the subject of the information pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (b) and used for the purposes of administering such benefits; and

(14) personal data collected, processed, sold, or disclosed in relation to price, route, or service, as such terms are used in the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, 49 U.S.C. § 40101 et seq., as may be amended, and the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978, 49 U.S.C.§ 41713, as may be amended.

(c) Controllers, processors, and consumer health data controllers that comply with the verifiable parental consent requirements of COPPA shall be deemed compliant with any obligation to obtain parental consent pursuant to this chapter.

§ 2418. CONSUMER RIGHTS; COMPLIANCE BY CONTROLLERS; APPEALS

(a) A consumer shall have the right to:

(1) confirm whether or not a controller is processing the consumer's personal data and access the personal data, unless the confirmation or access would require the controller to reveal a trade secret;

(2) correct inaccuracies in the consumer's personal data, taking into account the nature of the personal data and the purposes of the processing of the consumer's personal data;

(3) delete personal data provided by, or obtained about, the consumer;

(4) obtain a copy of the consumer's personal data processed by the controller, in a portable and, to the extent technically feasible, readily usable format that allows the consumer to transmit the data to another controller without hindrance, where the processing is carried out by automated means, provided the controller shall not be required to reveal any trade secret; and

(5) opt out of the processing of the personal data for purposes of:

(A) targeted advertising;

(B) the sale of personal data, except as provided in subsection 2420(b) of this title; or

(C) profiling in furtherance of solely automated decisions that produce legal or similarly significant effects concerning the consumer.

(b)(1) A consumer may exercise rights under this section by a secure and reliable means established by the controller and described to the consumer in the controller's privacy notice.

(2) A consumer may designate an authorized agent in accordance with section 2419 of this title to exercise the rights of the consumer to opt out of the processing of the consumer's personal data for purposes of subdivision (a)(5) of this section on behalf of the consumer.

(3) In the case of processing personal data of a known child, the parent or legal guardian may exercise the consumer rights on the child's behalf.

(4) In the case of processing personal data concerning a consumer subject to a guardianship, conservatorship, or other protective arrangement, the guardian or the conservator of the consumer may exercise the rights on the consumer's behalf.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, a controller shall comply with a request by a consumer to exercise the consumer rights authorized pursuant to this chapter as follows:

(1)(A) A controller shall respond to the consumer without undue delay, but not later than 45 days after receipt of the request.

(B) The controller may extend the response period by 45 additional days when reasonably necessary, considering the complexity and number of the consumer's requests, provided the controller informs the consumer of the extension within the initial 45-day response period and of the reason for the extension.

(2) If a controller declines to take action regarding the consumer's request, the controller shall inform the consumer without undue delay, but not later than 45 days after receipt of the request, of the justification for declining to take action and instructions for how to appeal the decision.

(3)(A) Information provided in response to a consumer request shall be provided by a controller, free of charge, once per consumer during any 12-month period.

(B) If requests from a consumer are manifestly unfounded, excessive, or repetitive, the controller may charge the consumer a reasonable fee to cover

the administrative costs of complying with the request or decline to act on the request.

(C) The controller bears the burden of demonstrating the manifestly unfounded, excessive, or repetitive nature of the request.

(4)(A) If a controller is unable to authenticate a request to exercise any of the rights afforded under subdivisions (a)(1)–(4) of this section using commercially reasonable efforts, the controller shall not be required to comply with a request to initiate an action pursuant to this section and shall provide notice to the consumer that the controller is unable to authenticate the request to exercise the right or rights until the consumer provides additional information reasonably necessary to authenticate the consumer and the consumer's request to exercise the right or rights.

(B) A controller shall not be required to authenticate an opt-out request, but a controller may deny an opt-out request if the controller has a good faith, reasonable, and documented belief that the request is fraudulent.

(C) If a controller denies an opt-out request because the controller believes the request is fraudulent, the controller shall send a notice to the person who made the request disclosing that the controller believes the request is fraudulent, why the controller believes the request is fraudulent, and that the controller shall not comply with the request.

(5) A controller that has obtained personal data about a consumer from a source other than the consumer shall be deemed in compliance with a consumer's request to delete the data pursuant to subdivision (a)(3) of this section by:

(A) retaining a record of the deletion request and the minimum data necessary for the purpose of ensuring the consumer's personal data remains deleted from the controller's records and not using the retained data for any other purpose pursuant to the provisions of this chapter; or

(B) opting the consumer out of the processing of the personal data for any purpose except for those exempted pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

(d)(1) A controller shall establish a process for a consumer to appeal the controller's refusal to take action on a request within a reasonable period of time after the consumer's receipt of the decision.

(2) The appeal process shall be conspicuously available and similar to the process for submitting requests to initiate action pursuant to this section.

(3) Not later than 60 days after receipt of an appeal, a controller shall inform the consumer in writing of any action taken or not taken in response to the appeal, including a written explanation of the reasons for the decisions.

(4) If the appeal is denied, the controller shall also provide the consumer with an online mechanism, if available, or other method through which the consumer may contact the Attorney General to submit a complaint.

§ 2419. AUTHORIZED AGENTS AND CONSUMER OPT-OUT

(a) A consumer may designate another person to serve as the consumer's authorized agent, and act on the consumer's behalf, to opt out of the processing of the consumer's personal data for one or more of the purposes specified in subdivision 2418(a)(5) of this title.

(b) The consumer may designate an authorized agent by way of, among other things, a technology, including an internet link or a browser setting, browser extension, or global device setting, indicating the consumer's intent to opt out of the processing.

(c) A controller shall comply with an opt-out request received from an authorized agent if the controller is able to verify, with commercially reasonable effort, the identity of the consumer and the authorized agent's authority to act on the consumer's behalf.

§ 2420. CONTROLLERS' DUTIES; SALE OF PERSONAL DATA TO THIRD PARTIES; NOTICE AND DISCLOSURE TO CONSUMERS; CONSUMER OPT-OUT

(a) A controller:

(1) shall limit the collection of personal data to what is adequate, relevant, and reasonably necessary in relation to the purposes for which the data is processed, as disclosed to the consumer;

(2) except as otherwise provided in this chapter, shall not process personal data for purposes that are neither reasonably necessary to, nor compatible with, the disclosed purposes for which the personal data is processed, as disclosed to the consumer, unless the controller obtains the consumer's consent;

(3) shall establish, implement, and maintain reasonable administrative, technical, and physical data security practices to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of personal data appropriate to the volume and nature of the personal data at issue;

(4) shall not process sensitive data concerning a consumer without obtaining the consumer's consent or, in the case of the processing of sensitive

data concerning a known child, without processing the data in accordance with COPPA;

(5) shall not process personal data in violation of the laws of this State and federal laws that prohibit unlawful discrimination against consumers;

(6) shall provide an effective mechanism for a consumer to revoke the consumer's consent under this section that is at least as easy as the mechanism by which the consumer provided the consumer's consent and, upon revocation of the consent, cease to process the data as soon as practicable, but not later than 15 days after the receipt of the request;

(7) shall not process the personal data of a consumer for purposes of targeted advertising, or sell the consumer's personal data without the consumer's consent, under circumstances where a controller has actual knowledge, and willfully disregards, that the consumer is at least 13 years of age but younger than 16 years of age; and

(8) shall not discriminate against a consumer for exercising any of the consumer rights contained in this chapter, including denying goods or services, charging different prices or rates for goods or services, or providing a different level of quality of goods or services to the consumer.

(b) Subsection (a) of this section shall not be construed to require a controller to provide a product or service that requires the personal data of a consumer that the controller does not collect or maintain, or prohibit a controller from offering a different price, rate, level, quality, or selection of goods or services to a consumer, including offering goods or services for no fee if the offering is in connection with a consumer's voluntary participation in a bona fide loyalty, rewards, premium features, discounts, or club card program.

(c) A controller shall provide consumers with a reasonably accessible, clear, and meaningful privacy notice that includes:

(1) the categories of personal data processed by the controller;

(2) the purpose for processing personal data;

(3) how consumers may exercise their consumer rights, including how a consumer may appeal a controller's decision with regard to the consumer's request;

(4) the categories of personal data that the controller shares with third parties, if any;

(5) the categories of third parties, if any, with which the controller shares personal data; and

(6) an active email address or other online mechanism that the consumer may use to contact the controller.

(d) If a controller sells personal data to third parties or processes personal data for targeted advertising, the controller shall clearly and conspicuously disclose the processing, as well as the manner in which a consumer may exercise the right to opt out of the processing.

(e)(1) A controller shall establish, and shall describe in a privacy notice, one or more secure and reliable means for consumers to submit a request to exercise their consumer rights pursuant to this chapter.

(2) The means shall take into account the ways in which consumers normally interact with the controller, the need for secure and reliable communication of the requests, and the ability of the controller to verify the identity of the consumer making the request.

(3) A controller shall not require a consumer to create a new account in order to exercise consumer rights but may require a consumer to use an existing account.

(4)(A) The means shall include:

(i) providing a clear and conspicuous link on the controller's website to an web page that enables a consumer, or an agent of the consumer, to opt out of the targeted advertising or sale of the consumer's personal data; and

(ii) not later than January 1, 2026, allowing a consumer to opt out of any processing of the consumer's personal data for the purposes of targeted advertising, or any sale of the personal data, through an opt-out preference signal sent to the controller with the consumer's consent indicating the consumer's intent to opt out of any the processing or sale, by a platform, technology, or other mechanism that shall:

(I) not unfairly disadvantage another controller;

(II) not make use of a default setting, but rather require the consumer to make an affirmative, freely given, and unambiguous choice to opt out of any processing of the consumer's personal data pursuant to this chapter;

(III) be consumer-friendly and easy to use by the average consumer;

(IV) be as consistent as possible with any other similar platform, technology, or mechanism required by any federal or State law or regulation; and

(V) enable the controller to accurately determine whether the consumer is a resident of this State and whether the consumer has made a legitimate request to opt out of any sale of the consumer's personal data or targeted advertising.

(B) If a consumer's decision to opt out of any processing of the consumer's personal data for the purposes of targeted advertising, or any sale of the personal data, through an opt-out preference signal sent in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (A) of this subdivision (e)(4) conflicts with the consumer's existing controller-specific privacy setting or voluntary participation in a controller's bona fide loyalty, rewards, premium features, discounts, or club card program, the controller shall comply with the consumer's opt-out preference signal but may notify the consumer of the conflict and provide to the consumer the choice to confirm the controller-specific privacy setting or participation in the program.

(5) If a controller responds to consumer opt-out requests received pursuant to subdivision (4)(A) of this subsection by informing the consumer of a charge for the use of any product or service, the controller shall present the terms of any financial incentive offered pursuant to subsection (b) of this section for the retention, use, sale, or sharing of the consumer's personal data.

§ 2421. PROCESSORS' DUTIES; CONTRACTS BETWEEN CONTROLLERS AND PROCESSORS

(a) A processor shall adhere to the instructions of a controller and shall assist the controller in meeting the controller's obligations under this chapter, including:

(1) taking into account the nature of processing and the information available to the processor, by appropriate technical and organizational measures, to the extent reasonably practicable, to fulfill the controller's obligation to respond to consumer rights requests;

(2) taking into account the nature of processing and the information available to the processor, by assisting the controller in meeting the controller's obligations in relation to the security of processing the personal data and in relation to the notification of a data broker security breach or security breach, as defined in section 2430 of this title, of the system of the processor, in order to meet the controller's obligations; and

(3) providing necessary information to enable the controller to conduct and document data protection assessments.

(b)(1) A contract between a controller and a processor shall govern the processor's data processing procedures with respect to processing performed on behalf of the controller.

(2) The contract shall be binding and clearly set forth instructions for processing data, the nature and purpose of processing, the type of data subject to processing, the duration of processing, and the rights and obligations of both parties.

(3) The contract shall require that the processor:

(A) ensure that each person processing personal data is subject to a duty of confidentiality with respect to the data;

(B) at the controller's direction, delete or return all personal data to the controller as requested at the end of the provision of services, unless retention of the personal data is required by law;

(C) upon the reasonable request of the controller, make available to the controller all information in its possession necessary to demonstrate the processor's compliance with the obligations in this chapter;

(D) after providing the controller an opportunity to object, engage any subcontractor pursuant to a written contract that requires the subcontractor to meet the obligations of the processor with respect to the personal data; and

(E) make available to the controller upon the reasonable request of the controller, all information in the processor's possession necessary to demonstrate the processor's compliance with this chapter.

(4) A processor shall provide a report of an assessment to the controller upon request.

(c) This section shall not be construed to relieve a controller or processor from the liabilities imposed on the controller or processor by virtue of the controller's or processor's role in the processing relationship, as described in this chapter.

(d)(1) Determining whether a person is acting as a controller or processor with respect to a specific processing of data is a fact-based determination that depends upon the context in which personal data is to be processed.

(2) A person who is not limited in the person's processing of personal data pursuant to a controller's instructions, or who fails to adhere to the instructions, is a controller and not a processor with respect to a specific processing of data.

(3) A processor that continues to adhere to a controller's instructions with respect to a specific processing of personal data remains a processor.

(4) If a processor begins, alone or jointly with others, determining the purposes and means of the processing of personal data, the processor is a

controller with respect to the processing and may be subject to an enforcement action under section 2425 of this title.

§ 2422. CONTROLLERS' DATA PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS; DISCLOSURE TO ATTORNEY GENERAL

(a) A controller shall conduct and document a data protection assessment for each of the controller's processing activities that presents a heightened risk of harm to a consumer, which for the purposes of this section includes:

(1) the processing of personal data for the purposes of targeted advertising;

(2) the sale of personal data;

(3) the processing of personal data for the purposes of profiling, where the profiling presents a reasonably foreseeable risk of:

(A) unfair or deceptive treatment of, or unlawful disparate impact on, consumers;

(B) financial, physical, or reputational injury to consumers;

(C) a physical or other intrusion upon the solitude or seclusion, or the private affairs or concerns, of consumers, where the intrusion would be offensive to a reasonable person; or

(D) other substantial injury to consumers; and

(4) the processing of sensitive data.

(b)(1) Data protection assessments conducted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall identify and weigh the benefits that may flow, directly and indirectly, from the processing to the controller, the consumer, other stakeholders, and the public against the potential risks to the rights of the consumer associated with the processing, as mitigated by safeguards that can be employed by the controller to reduce the risks.

(2) The controller shall factor into any data protection assessment the use of de-identified data and the reasonable expectations of consumers, as well as the context of the processing and the relationship between the controller and the consumer whose personal data will be processed.

(c)(1) The Attorney General may require that a controller disclose any data protection assessment that is relevant to an investigation conducted by the Attorney General, and the controller shall make the data protection assessment available to the Attorney General.

(2) The Attorney General may evaluate the data protection assessment for compliance with the responsibilities set forth in this chapter.

(3) Data protection assessments shall be confidential and shall be exempt from disclosure and copying under the Public Records Act.

(4) To the extent any information contained in a data protection assessment disclosed to the Attorney General includes information subject to attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the disclosure shall not constitute a waiver of the privilege or protection.

(d) A single data protection assessment may address a comparable set of processing operations that include similar activities.

(e) If a controller conducts a data protection assessment for the purpose of complying with another applicable law or regulation, the data protection assessment shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements established in this section if the data protection assessment is reasonably similar in scope and effect to the data protection assessment that would otherwise be conducted pursuant to this section.

(f) Data protection assessment requirements shall apply to processing activities created or generated after July 1, 2025 and are not retroactive.

§ 2423. DE-IDENTIFIED AND PSEUDONYMOUS DATA; CONTROLLERS' DUTIES; EXCEPTIONS; APPLICABILITY OF CONSUMERS' RIGHTS; DISCLOSURE AND OVERSIGHT

(a) A controller in possession of de-identified data shall:

(1) take reasonable measures to ensure that the data cannot be associated with an individual;

(2) publicly commit to maintaining and using de-identified data without attempting to re-identify the data; and

(3) contractually obligate any recipients of the de-identified data to comply with the provisions of this chapter.

(b) This chapter shall not be construed to:

(1) require a controller or processor to re-identify de-identified data or pseudonymous data; or

(2) maintain data in identifiable form, or collect, obtain, retain, or access any data or technology, in order to be capable of associating an authenticated consumer request with personal data.

(c) This chapter shall not be construed to require a controller or processor to comply with an authenticated consumer rights request if the controller:

(1) is not reasonably capable of associating the request with the personal data or it would be unreasonably burdensome for the controller to associate the request with the personal data;

(2) does not use the personal data to recognize or respond to the specific consumer who is the subject of the personal data, or associate the personal data with other personal data about the same specific consumer; and

(3) does not sell the personal data to any third party or otherwise voluntarily disclose the personal data to any third party other than a processor, except as otherwise permitted in this section.

(d) The rights afforded under subdivisions 2418(a)(1)–(4) of this title shall not apply to pseudonymous data in cases where the controller is able to demonstrate that any information necessary to identify the consumer is kept separately and is subject to effective technical and organizational controls that prevent the controller from accessing the information.

(e) A controller that discloses pseudonymous data or de-identified data shall exercise reasonable oversight to monitor compliance with any contractual commitments to which the pseudonymous data or de-identified data is subject and shall take appropriate steps to address any breaches of those contractual commitments.

§ 2424. CONSTRUCTION OF CONTROLLERS' AND PROCESSORS' DUTIES

(a) This chapter shall not be construed to restrict a controller's, processor's, or consumer health data controller's ability to:

(1) comply with federal, state, or municipal laws, ordinances, or regulations;

(2) comply with a civil, criminal, or regulatory inquiry, investigation, subpoena, or summons by federal, state, municipal, or other governmental authorities;

(3) cooperate with law enforcement agencies concerning conduct or activity that the controller, processor, or consumer health data controller reasonably and in good faith believes may violate federal, state, or municipal laws, ordinances, or regulations;

(4) investigate, establish, exercise, prepare for, or defend legal claims;

(5) provide a product or service specifically requested by a consumer;

(6) perform under a contract to which a consumer is a party, including fulfilling the terms of a written warranty;

(7) take steps at the request of a consumer prior to entering into a contract;

(8) take immediate steps to protect an interest that is essential for the life or physical safety of the consumer or another individual, and where the processing cannot be manifestly based on another legal basis;

(9) prevent, detect, protect against, or respond to security incidents, identity theft, fraud, harassment, malicious, or deceptive activities or any illegal activity; preserve the integrity or security of systems; or investigate, report, or prosecute those responsible for the action;

(10) engage in public or peer-reviewed scientific or statistical research in the public interest that adheres to all other applicable ethics and privacy laws and is approved, monitored, and governed by an institutional review board that determines, or similar independent oversight entities that determine:

(A) whether the deletion of the information is likely to provide substantial benefits that do not exclusively accrue to the controller;

(B) the expected benefits of the research outweigh the privacy risks; and

(C) whether the controller or consumer health data controller has implemented reasonable safeguards to mitigate privacy risks associated with research, including any risks associated with re-identification;

(11) assist another controller, processor, consumer health data controller, or third party with any of the obligations under this chapter; or

(12) process personal data for reasons of public interest in the area of public health, community health, or population health, but solely to the extent that the processing is:

(A) subject to suitable and specific measures to safeguard the rights of the consumer whose personal data is being processed; and

(B) under the responsibility of a professional subject to confidentiality obligations under federal, state, or local law.

(b) The obligations imposed on controllers, processors, or consumer health data controllers under this chapter shall not restrict a controller's, processor's, or consumer health data controller's ability to collect, use, or retain data for internal use to:

(1) conduct internal research to develop, improve, or repair products, services, or technology;

(2) effectuate a product recall;

(3) identify and repair technical errors that impair existing or intended functionality; or

(4) perform internal operations that are reasonably aligned with the expectations of the consumer or reasonably anticipated based on the consumer's existing relationship with the controller or consumer health data controller, or are otherwise compatible with processing data in furtherance of the provision of a product or service specifically requested by a consumer or the performance of a contract to which the consumer is a party.

(c)(1) The obligations imposed on controllers, processors, or consumer health data controllers under this chapter shall not apply where compliance by the controller, processor, or consumer health data controller with this chapter would violate an evidentiary privilege under the laws of this State.

(2) This chapter shall not be construed to prevent a controller, processor, or consumer health data controller from providing personal data concerning a consumer to a person covered by an evidentiary privilege under the laws of the State as part of a privileged communication.

(d)(1) A controller, processor, or consumer health data controller that discloses personal data to a processor or third-party controller pursuant to this chapter shall not be deemed to have violated this chapter if the processor or third-party controller that receives and processes the personal data violates this chapter, provided, at the time the disclosing controller, processor, or consumer health data controller disclosed the personal data, the disclosing controller, processor, or consumer health data controller did not have actual knowledge that the receiving processor or third-party controller would violate this chapter.

(2) A third-party controller or processor receiving personal data from a controller, processor, or consumer health data controller in compliance with this chapter is not in violation of this chapter for the transgressions of the controller, processor, or consumer health data controller from which the third-party controller or processor receives the personal data.

(e) This chapter shall not be construed to:

(1) impose any obligation on a controller or processor that adversely affects the rights or freedoms of any person, including the rights of any person:

(A) to freedom of speech or freedom of the press guaranteed in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; or

(B) under 12 V.S.A. § 1615;

(2) apply to any person's processing of personal data in the course of the person's purely personal or household activities; or

(3) require an independent school as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(8) or a private institution of higher education, as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 1001 et seq., to delete personal data or opt out of processing of personal data that would unreasonably interfere with the provision of education services by or the ordinary operation of the school or institution.

(f)(1) Personal data processed by a controller or consumer health data controller pursuant to this section may be processed to the extent that the processing is:

(A) reasonably necessary and proportionate to the purposes listed in this section; and

(B) adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary in relation to the specific purposes listed in this section.

(2)(A) Personal data collected, used, or retained pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall, where applicable, take into account the nature and purpose or purposes of the collection, use, or retention.

(B) The data shall be subject to reasonable administrative, technical, and physical measures to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of the personal data and to reduce reasonably foreseeable risks of harm to consumers relating to the collection, use, or retention of personal data.

(g) If a controller or consumer health data controller processes personal data pursuant to an exemption in this section, the controller or consumer health data controller bears the burden of demonstrating that the processing qualifies for the exemption and complies with the requirements in subsection (f) of this section.

(h) Processing personal data for the purposes expressly identified in this section shall not solely make a legal entity a controller or consumer health data controller with respect to the processing.

§ 2425. ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL; NOTICE OF VIOLATION; CURE PERIOD; REPORT; PENALTY

(a) The Attorney General shall have exclusive authority to enforce violations of this chapter.

(b)(1) During the period beginning on July 1, 2025 and ending on December 31, 2026, the Attorney General shall, prior to initiating any action for a violation of any provision of this chapter, issue a notice of violation to the controller or consumer health data controller if the Attorney General determines that a cure is possible.

(2) If the controller or consumer health data controller fails to cure the violation within 60 days after receipt of the notice of violation, the Attorney General may bring an action pursuant to this section.

(3) Annually, on or before February 1, the Attorney General shall submit a report to the General Assembly disclosing:

(A) the number of notices of violation the Attorney General has issued;

(B) the nature of each violation;

(C) the number of violations that were cured during the available cure period; and

(D) any other matter the Attorney General deems relevant for the purposes of the report.

(c) Beginning on January 1, 2027, the Attorney General may, in determining whether to grant a controller or processor the opportunity to cure an alleged violation described in subsection (b) of this section, consider:

(1) the number of violations;

(2) the size and complexity of the controller or processor;

(3) the nature and extent of the controller's or processor's processing activities;

(4) the substantial likelihood of injury to the public;

(5) the safety of persons or property;

(6) whether the alleged violation was likely caused by human or technical error; and

(7) the sensitivity of the data.

(d) This chapter shall not be construed as providing the basis for, or be subject to, a private right of action for violations of this chapter or any other law.

(e) Subjection to the exception in subsection (f) of this section, a violation of the requirements of this chapter shall constitute an unfair and deceptive act in commerce in violation of section 2453 of this title and shall be enforced solely by the Attorney General, provided that a consumer private right of action under subsection 2461(b) of this title shall not apply to the violation.

(f) The Attorney General shall provide guidance to controllers and processors for compliance with the terms of the Vermont Data Privacy Act. Any processor or controller that, in the opinion of the Attorney General,

materially complies with the guidance provided by the Attorney General shall not constitute an unfair and deceptive act in commerce.

§ 2426. CONSUMER HEALTH DATA PRIVACY

(a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section and subsections 2417(b) and (c) of this title, no person shall:

(1) provide any employee or contractor with access to consumer health data unless the employee or contractor is subject to a contractual or statutory duty of confidentiality;

(2) provide any processor with access to consumer health data unless the person and processor comply with section 2421 of this title;

(3) use a geofence to establish a virtual boundary that is within 1,750 feet of any health care facility, including any mental health facility or reproductive or sexual health facility, for the purpose of identifying, tracking, collecting data from, or sending any notification to a consumer regarding the consumer's consumer health data; or

(4) sell, or offer to sell, consumer health data without first obtaining the consumer's consent.

(b) Notwithstanding section 2416 of this title, subsection (a) of this section, and the provisions of sections 2415–2425 of this title, inclusive, concerning consumer health data and consumer health data controllers, apply to persons that conduct business in this state and persons that produce products or services that are targeted to residents of this state.

(c) Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to any:

(1) body, authority, board, bureau, commission, district or agency of this State or of any political subdivision of this State;

(2) person who has entered into a contract with an entity described in subdivision (1) of this subsection to process consumer health data on behalf of the entity;

(3) institution of higher education;

(4) national securities association that is registered under 15 U.S.C. 78o-3 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as may be amended;

(5) financial institution or data subject to Title V of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, Pub. L. No. 106-102, and regulations adopted to implement that act;

(6) covered entity or business associate, as defined in 45 C.F.R. § 160.103;

(7) tribal nation government organization; or

(8) air carrier, as:

(A) defined in 49 U.S.C. § 40102, as may be amended; and

(B) regulated under the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, 49 U.S.C. § 40101 et seq. and the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978, 49 U.S.C. § 41713, as may be amended.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the recommendation of amendment was agreed to on a roll call, Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

Thereupon third reading of the bill was ordered.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 126.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to health care payment and delivery system reform.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Senator Lyons, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out Secs. 17–19 and their reader assistance headings in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 17 and reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 17. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

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

Third Reading Ordered

H. 2.

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

An act relating to increasing the minimum age for delinquency proceedings.

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.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 46.

Senator Brennan, for the Committee on Transportation, to which was referred Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the taxation of vehicles used for forestry operations.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 32 V.S.A. § 8911 is amended to read:

§ 8911. EXCEPTIONS

The tax imposed by this chapter shall not apply to:

* * *

(23)(A) The following motor vehicles, including their repair parts, used for timber cutting,; timber removal,; and processing ~~of~~ timber or other solid wood forest products intended to be sold ultimately at retail: skidders with grapple and cable, feller bunchers, cut-to-length processors, forwarders, delimbers, loader slashers, log loaders, whole-tree chippers, stationary screening systems, and firewood processors, elevators, and screens.

(B) Fifty percent of the final tax imposed by this chapter on the following motor vehicles, including their repair parts, used for timber cutting,

timber removal, processing timber or other solid wood forest products intended to be sold ultimately at retail, and transportation of timber or equipment: semi-trailers, tractors, truck cranes, truck tractors, trailers, and motor trucks and motor vehicles with a manufacturer's listed gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or more.

(C) The Department of Motor Vehicles may require a purchaser at the time of purchase to certify that a motor vehicle or other equipment is exempt under this section.

(D) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall publish guidance relating to the application of this exemption.

Sec. 2. 32 V.S.A. § 8902 is amended to read:

§ 8902. DEFINITIONS

* * *

(12) "Motor truck" has the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(20).

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when so amended.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and pending the question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Transportation?, Senators Chittenden, Hardy, Gulick, Cummings, Mattos, Brock and Beck moved to amend the recommendation of the Committee on Transportation by striking out Sec. 3, effective date, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof two new sections to be Sec. 3 and Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 8911 is amended to read:

§ 8911. EXCEPTIONS

The tax imposed by this chapter shall not apply to:

* * *

(23) (A) The following motor vehicles~~, including their repair parts,~~ used for timber cutting~~,~~; timber removal~~,~~; and processing ~~of~~ timber or other solid wood forest products intended to be sold ultimately at retail: skidders with grapple and cable, feller bunchers, cut-to-length processors, forwarders,

delimbers, loader slashers, log loaders, whole-tree chippers, stationary screening systems, and firewood processors, elevators, and screens.

(B) ~~Fifty percent of the final tax imposed by this chapter on the following motor vehicles, including their repair parts, used for timber cutting, timber removal, processing timber or other solid wood forest products intended to be sold ultimately at retail, and transportation of timber or equipment: semi-trailers, tractors, truck cranes, truck tractors, trailers, and motor trucks and motor vehicles with a manufacturer's listed gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or more.~~ [Repealed.]

(C) The Department of Motor Vehicles may require a purchaser at the time of purchase to certify that a motor vehicle or other equipment is exempt under this section.

(D) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall publish guidance relating to the application of this exemption.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 1 (purchase and use tax exemption) and 2 (definition of motor truck) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(b) Sec. 3 (sunset of purchase and use tax exemption) shall take effect on July 1, 2028.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the recommendation of amendment of the Committee on Transportation, as amended, was agreed to and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Consideration Postponed

S. 65.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to energy efficiency utility jurisdiction.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending the reading of the report of the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, Senator Baruth moved that consideration of the bill be postponed until Tuesday, April 1, 2025.

Which was agreed to.

Rules Suspended; Bill Passed in Concurrence; Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

H. 2.

On motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and House bill entitled:

An act relating to increasing the minimum age for delinquency proceedings.

Was placed in all remaining stages of its passage in concurrence.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence.

On motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, March 27, 2025.

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Timothy Taylor of Panton.

Message from the House No. 33

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 10. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre.

H. 319. An act relating to miscellaneous environmental subjects.

H. 321. An act relating to miscellaneous cannabis amendments.

H. 484. An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

H. 489. An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 134.

By Senators Hardy and Chittenden,

An act relating to municipal regulation of private airstrips.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

S. 135.

By Senator Perchlik,

An act relating to credit card fees and requiring the acceptance of cash.

To the Committee on Finance.

Bill Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, the following bill having failed to meet crossover and having been granted an exception by the Committee on Rules was read the first time and referred as follows:

H. 10.

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 319.

An act relating to miscellaneous environmental subjects.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

H. 321.

An act relating to miscellaneous cannabis amendments.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

H. 484.

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

To the Committee on Agriculture.

Bill Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, the following bill having failed to meet crossover and having been granted an exception by the Committee on Rules was read the first time and referred as follows:

H. 489.

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

To the Committee on Appropriations.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 127.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to housing and housing development.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Senator Cummings, for the Committee on Finance, reported the bill ought to pass.

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill be amended as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 4, 32 V.S.A. § 5930u, and its reader assistance heading in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 4. [Deleted.]

Second: In Sec. 5, by striking out subsection (g)

Third: By striking out Sec. 15, brownfield funding, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 15 to read as follows:

Sec. 15. [Deleted.]

Fourth: By striking out Secs. 18–21, and their reader assistance headings in their entireties and renumbering the remaining section to be numerically correct.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the recommendation of amendment was agreed to.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the bill be read the third time?, Senators Ram Hinsdale, Clarkson, Brock and Chittenden moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 4 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a reader assistance heading and new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

* * * VHFA Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program * * *

Sec. 4. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 38 is amended to read:

Sec. 38. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

(a) Creation; administration. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall design and implement a Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program and shall create and administer a revolving loan fund to provide subsidized loans for rental housing developments that serve middle-income households.

(b) Loans; eligibility; criteria.

* * *

(7) The Agency shall use one or more legal mechanisms to ensure that:

(A) a subsidized unit remains affordable to a household earning the applicable percent of area median income for the longer of:

(i) seven years; or

(ii) full repayment of the loan plus three years; and

(B) during the affordability period determined pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (7), the annual increase in rent for a subsidized unit does not exceed three percent or an amount otherwise authorized by the Agency.

* * *

Second: By adding a reader assistance heading and two new sections to be Secs. 17a and 17b to read as follows:

* * * Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms * * *

Sec. 17a. 9 V.S.A. chapter 77 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 77. SMOKE ~~DETECTORS~~ ALARMS AND CARBON MONOXIDE ~~DETECTORS~~ ALARMS

§ 2881. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(2) "Smoke ~~detector~~ alarm" means a device that detects visible or invisible particles of combustion and sounds a warning alarm, is operated from a power supply within the unit or wired to it from an outside source, and is

approved or listed for the purpose by Underwriters Laboratory or by another nationally recognized independent testing laboratory.

(3) "Carbon monoxide ~~detector~~ alarm" means a device with an assembly that incorporates a sensor control component and an alarm notification that detects elevations in carbon monoxide levels and sounds a warning alarm, is operated from a power supply within the unit or wired to it from an outside source, and is approved or listed for the purpose by Underwriters Laboratory or by another nationally recognized independent testing laboratory.

§ 2882. INSTALLATION

(a) A person who constructs a single-family dwelling shall install ~~photoelectric-only-type~~ photoelectric-type or UL 217 compliant smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms in the vicinity of any bedrooms and on each level of the dwelling, and one or more carbon monoxide ~~detectors~~ alarms in the vicinity of any bedrooms in the dwelling in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. In a dwelling provided with electrical power, ~~detectors~~ alarms shall be powered by the electrical service in the building and by battery.

(b) Any single-family dwelling when transferred by sale or exchange shall contain ~~photoelectric-only-type~~ photoelectric-type or UL 217 compliant smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms in the vicinity of any bedrooms and on each level of the dwelling installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and one or more carbon monoxide ~~detectors~~ alarms installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. A single-family dwelling constructed before January 1, 1994 may contain smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms powered by the electrical service in the building or by battery, or by a combination of both. In a single-family dwelling newly constructed after January 1, 1994 that is provided with electrical power, smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms shall be powered by the electrical service in the building and by battery. In a single-family dwelling newly constructed after July 1, 2005 that is provided with electrical power, carbon monoxide ~~detectors~~ alarms shall be powered by the electrical service in the building and by battery.

(c) Nothing in this section shall require an owner or occupant of a single-family dwelling to maintain or use a smoke ~~detector~~ alarm or a carbon monoxide ~~detector~~ alarm after installation.

§ 2883. REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSFER OF DWELLING

(a) The seller of a single-family dwelling, including one constructed for first occupancy, whether the transfer is by sale or exchange, shall certify to the buyer at the closing of the transaction that the dwelling is provided with ~~photoelectric-only-type~~ photoelectric-type or UL 217 compliant smoke

~~detectors~~ alarms and carbon monoxide ~~detectors~~ alarms in accordance with this chapter. This certification shall be signed and dated by the seller.

(b) If the buyer notifies the seller within 10 days by certified mail from the date of conveyance of the dwelling that the dwelling lacks any ~~photoelectric-only-type~~ photoelectric-type or UL 217 compliant smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms, or any carbon monoxide ~~detectors~~ alarms, or that any ~~detector~~ alarm is not operable, the seller shall comply with this chapter within 10 days after notification.

* * *

Sec. 17b. 20 V.S.A. § 2731 is amended to read:

§ 2731. RULES; INSPECTIONS; VARIANCES

* * *

(j) ~~Detectors~~ Alarms. Rules adopted under this section shall require that information written, approved, and distributed by the Commissioner on the type, placement, and installation of ~~photoelectric~~ photoelectric-type or UL 217 compliant smoke ~~detectors~~ alarms and carbon monoxide ~~detectors~~ alarms be conspicuously posted in the retail sales area where the ~~detectors~~ alarms are sold.

* * *

Third: By striking out Sec. 18, effective date, and its reader assistance heading in their entireties and inserting in lieu thereof a reader assistance heading and a new section Sec. 18 to read as follows:

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 18. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025, except that Sec. 4 and this section shall take effect on passage.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 154.

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

An act relating to designating November as the Vermont Month of the Veteran.

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.

Bills Passed

Senate bills of the following title were severally read the third time and passed:

S. 46. An act relating to the taxation of vehicles used for forestry operations.

S. 71. An act relating to consumer data privacy and online surveillance.

S. 126. An act relating to health care payment and delivery system reform.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, March 28, 2025.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Rabbi Jan Salzman of Burlington.

Message from the House No. 34

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 401. An act relating to exemptions for food manufacturing establishments.

H. 474. An act relating to miscellaneous changes to election law.

H. 481. An act relating to stormwater management.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 19. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on March 28, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Rules Suspension Refused

H. 489.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, Senator Baruth, moved the rules be suspended and House bill entitled:

H. 489. An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

be taken up for immediate consideration, which was disagreed to on a roll call, Yeas 16 , Nays 13 (3/4ths majority not attained).

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Bongartz, Chittenden, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Beck, Brennan, Brock, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

H. 489.

Senate 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 fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 401.

An act relating to exemptions for food manufacturing establishments.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 474.

An act relating to miscellaneous changes to election law.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 481.

An act relating to stormwater management.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Bill Amended; Bill Passed

S. 127.

Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to housing and housing development.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Cummings, Beck, Brock, Chittenden, Gulick, Hardy and Mattos moved to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1906, in subdivision (6), by striking out the word "affordable"

Second: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1906, in subdivision (10)(A), by striking out "commercial and industrial facilities,"

Third: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1906, by striking out subdivision (1) in its entirety and by renumbering the remaining subdivisions to be numerically correct

Fourth: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, by striking out section 1907 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new section 1907 to read as follows:

§ 1907. PURPOSE

The purpose of housing infrastructure tax increment financing is to provide revenues for improvements and related costs to encourage the development of primary residences for households of low or moderate income.

Fifth: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1910, by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) Review. The Vermont Economic Progress Council may approve only applications that:

(1) meet the process requirements, the project criterion, and any of the location criteria of this section; and

(2) are submitted on or before December 31, 2035.

Sixth: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1910, in subsection (d), following "the projected housing development includes", by striking out the word "affordable"

Seventh: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1910d, in subsection (b), by inserting a new subdivision (5) to read as follows:

(5) the number and types of housing units for which a permit is being pursued under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 (State land use and development plans) and, for each applicable housing development, the current stage of the permitting process;

and by renumbering the remaining subdivisions to be numerically correct

Eighth: In Sec. 16, 24 V.S.A. chapter 53, subchapter 7, in section 1910d, by adding a new subsection to be subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c) On or before January 15, 2035, the Vermont Economic Progress Council shall submit a report to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Finance and the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Ways and Means evaluating the success of the Community and Housing Infrastructure Program in achieving its purpose, as stated in section 1907 of this chapter, including by identifying the amount and kinds of housing produced through the Program and by determining whether housing development pursued through the Program meets the project criterion and location criteria of section 1910 of this chapter.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 154.

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

An act relating to designating November as the Vermont Month of the Veteran.

Appointments Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed together as a group by the Senate, without reports given by the Committees to which they were referred and without debate:

Ireland, Peter of Waitsfield - Member of the Board of Medical Practice -

May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2029.

Fischer, Bob of Barre - Member of the VT Citizens' Advisory Council on Lake Champlain's Future - May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Weinhagen, Alex of Burlington - Member of the Land Use Review Board - January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028.

Soloman, Hilary of Middletown Springs - Member of the VT Citizens' Advisory Council on Lake Champlain's Future - May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Hurley, Janet M. of Manchester - Chair of the Land Use Review Board - January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027.

Hadd, Sarah H. of St. Albans - Member of the Land Use Review Board - January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2029.

Appointment Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, upon a full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nomination of

Moore, Julie of Middlesex - Secretary, Agency of Natural Resources - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 27, Nays 2.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: White, Williams.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Vyhovsky.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Kornheiser and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 63.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Brattleboro Food Co-op on its 50th anniversary and extending best future wishes.

Offered by Reps. McCann and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz, Cummings, Gulick, Perchlik, Vyhovsky, Watson and Weeks,

H.C.R. 64.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver of Winooski High School on her selection as the 2025 Vermont Teacher of the Year and Jeremy DeMink of Edmunds Middle School in Burlington and Sonya Shedd of Wolcott Elementary School on their recognition as Distinguished Finalists.

Offered by Reps. Demar and others,

Offered by Senator Ingalls,

H.C.R. 65.

House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as Progressive Supranuclear Palsy Awareness Month in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Duke and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz, Clarkson, Douglass, Harrison, Hart, Ingalls, Major, Plunkett, Weeks, Westman, White and Williams,

H.C.R. 66.

House concurrent resolution celebrating the role of tourism in the Vermont economy and designating April 10, 2025 as Tourism Economy Day at the State House.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 67.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of Ethan Allen's planning, in Bennington in 1775, of the successful Vermont initiation of the American War of Independence and the associated expedition to Ticonderoga.

Offered by Reps. Cooper and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz, Brennan, Clarkson, Douglass, Hart, Ingalls, Major, Plunkett, Weeks, Westman, White and Williams,

H.C.R. 68.

House concurrent resolution celebrating the role of the manufacturing industry in the Vermont economy and designating April 2, 2025 as Manufacturing Day at the State House.

Offered by Reps. Marcotte and others,

H.C.R. 69.

House concurrent resolution designating April 2, 2025 as Early College Day at the State House.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 19.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Joan Javier-Duval of Montpelier.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Message from the House No. 35

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 17. An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown.

H. 167. An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

H. 237. An act relating to prescribing by doctoral-level psychologists.

H. 244. An act relating to State contracting standards for advertising.

H. 397. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the statutes

governing emergency management and flood response.

H. 472. An act relating to professions and occupations regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation.

H. 479. An act relating to housing.

H. 488. An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 63. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Brattleboro Food Co-op on its 50th anniversary and extending best future wishes.

H.C.R. 64. House concurrent resolution congratulating Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver of Winooski High School on her selection as the 2025 Vermont Teacher of the Year and Jeremy DeMink of Edmunds Middle School in Burlington and Sonya Shedd of Wolcott Elementary School on their recognition as Distinguished Finalists.

H.C.R. 65. House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as Progressive Supranuclear Palsy Awareness Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 66. House concurrent resolution celebrating the role of tourism in the Vermont economy and designating April 10, 2025 as Tourism Economy Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 67. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of Ethan Allen's planning, in Bennington in 1775, of the successful Vermont initiation of the American War of Independence and the associated expedition to Ticonderoga.

H.C.R. 68. House concurrent resolution celebrating the role of the manufacturing industry in the Vermont economy and designating April 2, 2025 as Manufacturing Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 69. House concurrent resolution designating April 2, 2025 as Early College Day at the State House.

Senate Bill Recommitted

Appearing on the Calendar for action, on motion of Senator Baruth, Senate bill entitled:

S. 65. An act relating to energy efficiency utility jurisdiction.

Was recommitted to the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 20.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 20. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 4, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, April 4, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, April 8, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 136.

By Senator Perchlik,

An act relating to the governance of the Vermont State Colleges and the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College.

To the Committee on Education.

S. 137.

By Senator Perchlik,

An act relating to an option to vote "None of these candidates" on primary and general election ballots.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 138.

By Senator Chittenden,

An act relating to commercial property-assessed clean energy projects.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time:

H. 17. An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown.

And pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A was referred to the Committee on Rules.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 167.

An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

To the Committee on Agriculture.

H. 237.

An act relating to prescribing by doctoral-level psychologists.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 244.

An act relating to State contracting standards for advertising.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 397.

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the statutes governing emergency management and flood response.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 472.

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

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 479.

An act relating to housing.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

H. 488.

An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, April 2, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 36

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 106. An act relating to selling real property within a FEMA mapped flood hazard area.

H. 218. An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

H. 342. An act relating to protecting the personal information of certain public servants.

H. 491. An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate.

H. 493. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 139.

By Senators Watson, Hardy, Harrison, Lyons and White,

An act relating to the management of materials from packaging.

To the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 106.

An act relating to selling real property within a FEMA mapped flood hazard area.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 218.

An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

H. 342.

An act relating to protecting the personal information of certain public servants.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

H. 491.

An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate.

To the Committee on Finance.

H. 493.

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

To the Committee on Appropriations.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 489.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Hardy, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported 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.

Message from the House No. 37

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 494. An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The Governor has informed the House that on March 31, 2025, he approved and signed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 2. An act relating to increasing the minimum age for delinquency proceedings.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, April 3, 2025.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Peter Plagge of Waterbury.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 140.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick, Ram Hinsdale and Watson,

An act relating to implementing second look sentencing and compassionate release.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 141.

By Senators White and Clarkson,

An act relating to prohibiting possession of firearms and dangerous weapons in State buildings.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 142.

By Senators Harrison, Gulick, Hardy, Hashim and Weeks,

An act relating to a pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians and medical graduates.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

S. 143.

By Senator Baruth,

An act relating to expanding the membership and duties of the Advisory Council on Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention in Schools.

To the Committee on Education.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 494.

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

To the Committee on Institutions.

Bill Passed in Concurrence; Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged; Bill Delivered

H. 489.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Beck, moved that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out Sec. 88, amending 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.321, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 88 to read as follows:

Sec. 88. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.321 is amended to read:

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY HOUSING

* * *

(b)(1) General Assistance Emergency Housing shall be provided in a community-based shelter whenever possible. If there is inadequate community-based shelter space available within the Agency of Human Services district in which the household presents itself, the household shall be provided emergency housing in a hotel or motel within the district, if available, until adequate community-based shelter space becomes available in the district. The utilization of hotel and motel rooms pursuant to this subdivision shall be capped at 1,100 rooms per night between September 15, 2024 through November 30, 2024 and between April 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025.

(2) The maximum number of days that an eligible household receives emergency housing in a hotel or motel under this section, per 12-month period, shall not exceed 80 days.

(3) The Department shall provide emergency winter housing to households meeting the eligibility criteria in subsection (a) of this section between December 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025. The Department shall provide emergency winter housing to households meeting the priority eligibility criteria defined in subsection (l) of this section between April 1, 2025 and June 30, 2025. Households meeting the priority eligibility criteria between April 1, 2025 and June 30, 2025 shall be prioritized ahead of households meeting only the eligibility criteria in subsection (a) of this section and who have remaining days on their fiscal year 2025 allocation for emergency housing. Emergency housing in a hotel or motel provided pursuant to this subdivision shall not count toward the maximum days of eligibility per 12-month period provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

* * *

(l) As used in this section:

* * *

(3) "Priority eligibility criteria" means:

(A) the household was housed in a hotel or motel room pursuant to this section on March 31, 2025;

(B) where applicable, the Department has determined there is sufficient medical evidence and documentation that a household member has a medical condition listed in subdivisions (C)(ii) through (vi) of this subsection (l); and

(C) the household has a member who meets one of the following:

(i) is a child 19 years of age or under;

(ii) meets the Medicare definition of "homebound" as defined in 42 C.F.R. § 405.2416(d);

(iii) requires a lifesaving device that requires access to electricity;

(iv) is in active cancer treatment or treatment for severe kidney disease or renal disease, or has severe liver or heart conditions;

(v) is actively receiving Medicaid-eligible or Medicare-eligible "home-based nursing services"; or

(vi) is in the third trimester of pregnancy or who will enter the third trimester of pregnancy between April 1, 2025 and June 30, 2025.

Which was disagreed to, on a roll call, Yeas 14, Nays 16.

Senator Hardy, 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, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

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

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence, on a roll call, Yeas 17, Nays 13.

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

Roll Call

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

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Beck, Brennan, Brock, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

Thereupon, Senator Baruth moved that pursuant to Joint Rule 15, the bill be ordered delivered to the Governor.

Which was agreed to.

Message from the House No. 38

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 91. An act relating to the Vermont Homeless Emergency Assistance and Responsive Transition to Housing Program.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 20. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 4, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, April 4, 2025.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Christie Leary of Windsor.

Message from the House No. 39

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 70. House concurrent resolution designating April 10, 2025 as Alzheimer's Awareness Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 71. House concurrent resolution celebrating the 40th anniversary of the first class at Landmark College and extending best wishes for continued academic success.

H.C.R. 72. House concurrent resolution commemorating May 9, 2025 as the 250th anniversary of Ethan Allen's arrival in Castleton in association with the War for Independence.

H.C.R. 73. House concurrent resolution designating April 10, 2025 as Museums and Libraries Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 74. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Boys & Girls Clubs of Vermont Youth of the Year honorees.

H.C.R. 75. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets girls' gymnastics team on winning a second consecutive State championship.

H.C.R. 76. House concurrent resolution honoring Robin Lunge for her dedicated public service in Vermont State government.

H.C.R. 77. House concurrent resolution recognizing April 2025 as Fair Housing Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 78. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative and Secretary of Administration Kathleen C. Hoyt of Norwich.

H.C.R. 79. House concurrent resolution celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Vermont Arts Exchange and its collaborative artistic endeavors.

H.C.R. 80. House concurrent resolution honoring the Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto for his extraordinary creativity, collaborative artistic leadership, and nomination for the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered concurrent resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

S.C.R. 4. Senate concurrent resolution recognizing the success of the American System of Conservation Funding and commemorating the 75th anniversary of the enactment of federal sport fish restoration legislation.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Pages Honored

In appreciation of their many services to the members of the General Assembly, the President recognized the following-named pages who are completing their services today and presented them with letters of appreciation.

Skyler Barnard of Montpelier
Molly Despathy of Danville
Cecilia Huling of East Thetford
Elliot Olstad of Lincoln
Mary Rogerson of Cabot
Heidi Thompson of Reading
Emanuel Van Fleet of Worcester

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 144.

By Senators Vyhovsky and Gulick,

An act relating to secondary enforcement of certain motor vehicle violations.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time:

H. 91. An act relating to the Vermont Homeless Emergency Assistance and Responsive Transition to Housing Program.

And pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A was referred to the Committee on Rules.

Appointments Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed together as a group by the Senate, without reports given by the Committees to which they were referred and without debate:

Atherton, David J. of Brandon, VT - Member of the Transportation Board - September 26, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Cleveland, Richard of Northfield - Member of the Travel Information Council - April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

Deimling, Beth of Grand Isle - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - August 30, 2024 to February 28, 2030.

Hook, Linda of Brunswick - Member of the Fish and Wildlife Board - August 30, 2024 to February 28, 2030.

Kennett, Elizabeth of Rochester - Member of the Travel Information Council - April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

Miller, Marilyn of Montpelier - Member of the Transportation Board - May 15, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

Pudvar, Tim of Shelburne - Member of the Transportation Board - June 27, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Shatney, Mandy of Barre - Member of the Travel Information Council - April 9, 2024 to February 28, 2025.

Sultan, Kirsten A. of Lyndonville - Member of the Land Use Review Board - January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

Appointments Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed separately by the Senate, upon full reports given by the Committees to which they were referred:

The nomination of

Collier, Andrew of Westford - Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles - December 9, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 28, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Heffernan, Williams.

The nomination of

Flynn, Joseph of South Hero - Secretary, Agency of Transportation- March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 28, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Heffernan, Williams.

The nomination of

Morrison, Jennifer of North Hero - Commissioner, Department of Public Safety - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 28, Nays 0.

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Heffernan, Williams.

Senate Concurrent Resolution

The following joint concurrent resolution, having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, was adopted on the part of the Senate:

Offered By Senators Brennan, Beck, Collamore, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Weeks, Westman and Williams,

Offered by Reps. Austin and others,

S.C.R. 4.

Senate concurrent resolution recognizing the success of the American System of Conservation Funding and commemorating the 75th anniversary of the enactment of federal sport fish restoration legislation.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 70.

House concurrent resolution designating April 10, 2025 as Alzheimer's Awareness Day at the State House.

Offered by Rep. Mrowicki,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 71.

House concurrent resolution celebrating the 40th anniversary of the first class at Landmark College and extending best wishes for continued academic success.

Offered by Rep. Harvey,

Offered by Senators Weeks, Collamore and Williams,

H.C.R. 72.

House concurrent resolution commemorating May 9, 2025 as the 250th anniversary of Ethan Allen's arrival in Castleton in association with the War for Independence.

Offered by Rep. Burke,

H.C.R. 73.

House concurrent resolution designating April 10, 2025 as Museums and Libraries Day at the State House.

Offered by All Members of the House,

H.C.R. 74.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Boys & Girls Clubs of Vermont Youth of the Year honorees.

Offered by Reps. Dodge and others,

H.C.R. 75.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets girls' gymnastics team on winning a second consecutive State championship.

Offered by Reps. Houghton and others,

H.C.R. 76.

House concurrent resolution honoring Robin Lunge for her dedicated public service in Vermont State government.

Offered by Reps. Stevens and others,

Offered by Senators Clarkson, Bongartz, Brock, Gulick, Hardy, Mattos, Perchlik, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks and White,

H.C.R. 77.

House concurrent resolution recognizing April 2025 as Fair Housing Month in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Holcombe and others,

H.C.R. 78.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Representative and Secretary of Administration Kathleen C. Hoyt of Norwich.

Offered by Reps. Greer and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 79.

House concurrent resolution celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Vermont Arts Exchange and its collaborative artistic endeavors.

Offered by Rep. Casey,

H.C.R. 80.

House concurrent resolution honoring the Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto for his extraordinary creativity, collaborative artistic leadership, and nomination for the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 20.

TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Kenzan of East Calais.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

S. 124.

Senate 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 miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 21. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 11, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, April 11, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 145.

By Senators Chittenden, Clarkson, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to collective bargaining for Assistant Attorneys General.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

S. 146.

By Senators White and Harrison,

An act relating to transportation demand management plans.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 80.

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

An act relating to the Office of the Health Care Advocate.

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. 8 V.S.A. § 4062 is amended to read:

§ 4062. FILING AND APPROVAL OF POLICY FORMS AND PREMIUMS

* * *

(c)(1) The Board shall provide information to the public on the Board's website about the public availability of the filings and summaries required under this section.

* * *

(3)(A) In addition to the public comment provisions set forth in this subsection (c), the Office of the Health Care Advocate established in 18 V.S.A. chapter 229, acting on behalf of health insurance consumers in this State, may, within 30 calendar days after the Board receives an insurer's rate request pursuant to this section, submit to the Board, in writing, ~~suggested~~ questions ~~regarding~~ with a substantial relationship to the rate filing ~~for~~ and review criteria that the Board ~~to provide to~~ shall ask the insurer, either directly or through its contracting actuary, if any.

(B) The Office of the Health Care Advocate may also submit to the Board written comments on an insurer's rate request. The Board shall post the comments on its website and shall consider the comments prior to issuing its decision.

~~(d)(1) No later than 60 calendar days after receiving an insurer's rate request pursuant to this section, the Green Mountain Care Board shall make available to the public the insurer's rate filing, the Department's analysis and opinion of the effect of the proposed rate on the insurer's solvency, and the analysis and opinion of the rate filing by the Board's contracting actuary, if any.~~

~~(2) The Board shall post on its website, after redacting any confidential or proprietary information relating to the insurer or to the insurer's rate filing:~~

~~(A) all questions the Board poses to its contracting actuary, if any, and the actuary's responses to the Board's questions; and~~

~~(B) all questions the Board, the Board's contracting actuary, if any, or the Department poses to the insurer and the insurer's responses to those questions~~ The Green Mountain Care Board shall post on its website or otherwise make available to the public through a file-sharing platform all materials in the record of a rate review proceeding after redacting any information or other material that the Board determines to be confidential or otherwise subject to protection from disclosure by law.

* * *

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 9440(c) is amended to read:

(c) The application process shall be as follows:

* * *

(9)(A) The Office of the Health Care Advocate established under chapter 229 of this title or, in the case of nursing homes, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's Office established under 33 V.S.A. § 7502, is authorized but not required to participate in any administrative or judicial review of an application under this subchapter and shall be considered an interested party in such proceedings upon filing a notice of intervention with the Board.

(B) Once either office files a notice of intervention pursuant to this subchapter, ~~the Board shall provide that office with the information necessary to participate in the review process, including information about procedures, copies of all written correspondence, and copies of all entries in the application record for all certificate of need proceedings, regardless of whether expedited status has been granted~~ that office shall have the right to receive copies of all materials related to the certificate of need application review and may:

(i) submit written questions to the Board that the Board will ask of the applicant in advance of any hearing held in conjunction with the Board's review of the certificate of need application;

(ii) submit written comments for the Board's consideration; and

(iii) ask questions and provide testimony in any hearing held in conjunction with the Board's review of the certificate of need application.

(C) The Office of the Health Care Advocate and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's Office shall not further disclose any confidential or proprietary information provided to their respective offices pursuant to this subdivision (9).

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. chapter 229 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 229. OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE

* * *

§ 9602. OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE; COMPOSITION

(a) The Office of the Health Care Advocate is established as an independent voice for Vermonters that is dedicated to promoting access to high-quality, affordable health care for all.

(b) The Agency of Human Services shall maintain the Office of the Health Care Advocate by contract with any nonprofit organization.

~~(b)~~(c) The Office shall be administered by one or more directors, one of whom shall be the Chief Health Care Advocate, who shall be an individual with expertise and experience in the fields of health care and advocacy. The ~~Advocate~~ director or directors may employ legal counsel, administrative staff, and other employees and contractors as needed to carry out the duties of the Office.

§ 9603. DUTIES AND AUTHORITY

(a) The Office of the Health Care Advocate shall:

(1) Assist ~~health insurance consumers~~ Vermonters with health insurance plan selection by providing information, referrals, and assistance to individuals about means of obtaining and paying for health insurance coverage and services. The Office shall accept referrals from the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange and Exchange navigators created pursuant to 33 V.S.A. chapter 18, subchapter 1, to assist ~~consumers~~ individuals experiencing problems related to the Exchange.

(2) Assist ~~health insurance consumers~~ Vermonters to understand their rights and responsibilities under health insurance plans.

(3) Provide information to the public, agencies, members of the General Assembly, and others ~~regarding~~ about Vermonters' problems and concerns ~~of~~ regarding health insurance ~~consumers~~ and access to health care, as well as recommendations for resolving those problems and concerns.

(4) Identify, investigate, and resolve complaints, questions, and inquiries on behalf of individual Vermonters with respect to issues regarding health insurance ~~consumers~~ or access to health care, and assist those ~~consumers~~ Vermonters with filing and ~~pursuit of~~ pursuing complaints and appeals.

(5) Provide ~~information to individuals~~ consumer education to Vermonters regarding their ~~obligations~~ rights and responsibilities under ~~the~~

~~Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Pub. L. No. 111-148)~~ State and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

(6) Analyze and monitor the development and implementation of federal, State, and local laws, rules, and policies relating to ~~patients and health insurance consumers~~ health insurance and health care, with a special focus on patients' rights and eligibility for State and federal health care programs.

(7) ~~Facilitate~~ Ensure policymakers hear directly from Vermonters by facilitating public comment on health care-related laws, rules, processes, and policies~~, including policies and actions of health insurers~~.

(8) Suggest to the Green Mountain Care Board, the Department of Financial Regulation, and other entities in State government policies, procedures, or rules ~~to the Green Mountain Care Board in order to~~ that protect ~~patients' and consumers'~~ and promote the interests of Vermonters in matters related to health insurance and access to health care.

(9) ~~Promote the development of~~ Collaborate with other health care- and health policy-related citizen and consumer organizations to promote affordable and accessible health care for Vermonters.

(10) Ensure that ~~patients and health insurance consumers~~ all Vermonters have timely access to the services provided by the Office.

(11) Submit to the Governor; the House Committees on Health Care, on Ways and Means, and on Appropriations; and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare, on Finance, and on Appropriations, on or before January ~~1~~ 15 of each year, a report on the activities, performance, and fiscal accounts of the Office during the preceding calendar year.

(b) The Office of the Health Care Advocate may:

(1) ~~Review the health insurance records of a consumer who has provided written consent. Based on the written consent of the consumer or his or her guardian or legal representative, a health insurer shall provide the Office with access to records relating to that consumer.~~ [Repealed.]

(2) Pursue administrative, judicial, and other remedies on behalf of any individual ~~health insurance consumer~~ or group of ~~consumers~~ individuals experiencing problems with health insurance or access to health care.

(3) Represent the interests of the people of the State ~~in cases requiring a hearing before~~ of Vermont in matters involving health care and health insurance at the Green Mountain Care Board ~~established in chapter 220 of this title~~, the Department of Financial Regulation, or other State agencies.

(4) Adopt policies and procedures necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

(5) Take any other action necessary to fulfill the purposes of this chapter.

(c) The Office of the Health Care Advocate shall be able to speak to Vermonters and on behalf of the interests of Vermonters in health ~~care~~ care- and health ~~insurance consumers~~ insurance-related matters and to carry out all duties prescribed in this chapter without being subject to any retaliatory action; provided, however, that nothing in this subsection shall limit the authority of the Agency of Human Services to enforce the terms of the contract.

(d) Health care providers and health insurers shall cooperate with the Office of the Health Care Advocate by providing relevant records and information when an individual or the individual's guardian or legal representative has authorized the Office to act on the individual's behalf. A health care provider or health insurer may require the written consent of the individual or the individual's guardian or legal representative prior to providing the records or information to the Office.

§ 9604. DUTIES OF STATE AGENCIES

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that State agencies shall seek input from the Office of the Health Care Advocate when developing or revising significant matters of State policy affecting health care access and affordability in order to ensure that Vermonters' perspectives are heard and considered through the voice of their independent advocate.

(b) ~~All~~ State agencies shall ~~comply~~ facilitate the Office's meaningful participation in health care policymaking by complying with reasonable requests from the Office ~~of the Health Care Advocate~~ for information ~~and~~, assistance, and access. A request shall be considered reasonable if it relates to the Office's statutory duties and authority.

(1) When appropriate, State agencies shall allow the Office to access confidential or proprietary information that is otherwise exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and to participate in meetings, deliberations, and proceedings in which confidential or proprietary information is discussed; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall require a State agency to provide or disclose information that is prohibited from disclosure by State or federal law or that would cause the provider or discloser to violate any statutory or common law privilege.

(2) The Office shall not further disclose any confidential or proprietary information provided to the Office.

(c) The Agency of Human Services may adopt rules necessary to ensure the cooperation of State agencies under this section.

§ 9605. CONFIDENTIALITY

~~In the absence of written consent by a complainant or an individual using the services of the Office or by his or her guardian or legal representative or the absence of a court order, the Office of the Health Care Advocate, its employees, and its contractors shall not disclose the identity of the complainant or individual~~ The Office of the Health Care Advocate shall maintain the confidentiality of information related to individuals using its services in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws, rules, regulations, and policies.

§ 9606. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

(a) The Office of the Health Care Advocate, its employees, and its contractors shall not have any conflict of interest relating to the performance of their responsibilities under this chapter. For the purposes of this chapter, a conflict of interest exists whenever the Office of the Health Care Advocate, its employees, or its contractors or a person affiliated with the Office, its employees, or its contractors:

(1) has a direct involvement in the licensing, certification, or accreditation of a health care facility, health insurer, or health care provider;

(2) has a direct ownership interest or investment interest in a health care facility, health insurer, or health care provider;

(3) is employed by or participating in the management of a health care facility, health insurer, or health care provider; or

(4) receives or has the right to receive, directly or indirectly, remuneration under a compensation arrangement with a health care facility, health insurer, or health care provider.

(b) The Office shall report any potential conflicts of interest to the Agency of Human Services.

(c) It shall not constitute a conflict of interest per se for an employee or contractor of the Office to serve without compensation on the board of directors of a nonprofit health care entity whose primary regulator is not an agency of the State of Vermont.

* * *

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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.

Message from the House No. 40

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 9. An act relating to after-hours access to orders against sexual assault.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The Governor has informed the House that on April 4, 2025, he returned without signature and vetoed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 489. An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments.

Text of Communication from Governor

The text of the communication from His Excellency, the Governor, whereby he vetoed and returned unsigned **House Bill No. 489** is as follows:

"April 4, 2025

The Honorable BetsyAnn Wrask
Clerk of the Vermont House of Representatives
State House
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Ms. Wrask:

Pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution, I'm returning H.489, *An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments,* without my signature.

It's clear, we're at an impasse on a non-budget adjustment-related policy, which has once again, been included in the latest budget adjustment bill. However, nothing prevents us from moving forward with a traditional bill, where we agree on the majority of the mid-year financial true ups.

I'm hopeful, the Legislature will stop sending me bills they know I will veto and instead send me a clean budget adjustment bill without controversial policy, so we can move forward with the many challenges we face.

Sincerely,

/s/Philip B. Scott
Governor

PBS/kp"

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, April 9, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore.*

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bill Referred to the Committee on Finance

H. 96.

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 increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

Bill Referred to the Committee on Appropriations

H. 13.

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 Medicaid payment rates for home- and community-based service providers.

Bills Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A the following bills having failed to meet crossover and being released by the Committee on Rules were referred to their respective committees of jurisdictions:

H. 17. An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

H. 91. An act relating to the Vermont Homeless Emergency Assistance and Responsive Transition to Housing Program.

To the Committee on Health and Welfare.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were severally introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 147.

By Senator Douglass,

An act relating to purchasing drugs from a person under 21 years of age.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 148.

By Senators Vyhovsky, Gulick and White,

An act relating to expanding good samaritan protections concerning immigration.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 149.

By Senator White,

An act relating to indexing the gasoline and diesel fuel taxes for inflation.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 150.

By Senator Vyhovsky,

An act relating to privacy protections for mobile identification and images recorded by automated traffic law enforcement systems.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 80.

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

An act relating to the Office of the Health Care Advocate.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Lyons, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, April 10, 2025.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore*.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

H. 398.

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 the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

Proposals of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 243.

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

An act relating to the regulation of business organizations.

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

First: In Sec. 4, 11 V.S.A. chapter 15, in section 1656, by striking out the section heading in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new section heading to read as follows:

§ 1656. SERVICE OF PROCESS; SECRETARY OF STATE AS AGENT

Second: By adding a new section to be Sec. 4a to read as follows:

Sec. 4a. 11 V.S.A. chapter 15, subchapter 2 is amended to read:

Subchapter 2. Administrative Authority

* * *

§ 1657. CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

Upon request of any person and payment of the applicable fee, the Secretary of State shall issue a certificate of good standing for a business

organization that is authorized to do business in this State, and that is currently active and in good standing as of the date the certificate is issued, as reflected in the records of the Secretary.

Third: By adding a new section to be Sec. 7a to read as follows:

Sec. 7a. 11 V.S.A. § 4028 is amended to read:

§ 4028. ~~CERTIFICATE OF EXISTENCE OR AUTHORIZATION~~ CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

~~(a) A person may request the Secretary of State to furnish a certificate of existence for a limited liability company or a certificate of authorization for a foreign limited liability company.~~

~~(b) A certificate of existence for a limited liability company shall set forth:~~

~~(1) the company's name;~~

~~(2) that it is duly organized under the laws of this State and the date of organization; and~~

~~(3) that articles of termination have not been filed.~~

~~(c) A certificate of authorization for a foreign limited liability company shall set forth:~~

~~(1) the company's name used in this State;~~

~~(2) that it is authorized to transact business in this State; and~~

~~(3) that a certificate of cancellation has not been filed.~~

~~(d) Subject to any qualification stated in the certificate, a certificate of existence or authorization issued by the Secretary of State may be relied upon as conclusive evidence that the domestic or foreign limited liability company is in existence or is authorized to transact business in this State~~ A person may request the Secretary of State to issue a certificate of good standing for a domestic or foreign limited liability company pursuant to section 1657 of this title.

Fourth: By adding a new section to be Sec. 8a to read as follows:

Sec. 8a. 11A V.S.A. § 1.28 is amended to read:

§ 1.28. CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

~~(a) Anyone may apply to the Secretary of State to furnish a certificate of good standing for a domestic corporation or a certificate of authorization for a foreign corporation.~~

~~(b) A certificate of good standing or authorization sets forth:~~

~~(1) the domestic corporation's corporate name or the foreign corporation's corporate name used in this State;~~

~~(2) that:~~

~~(A) the domestic corporation is duly incorporated under the law of this state, the date of its incorporation, and the period of its duration if less than perpetual; or~~

~~(B) the foreign corporation is authorized to transact business in this State;~~

~~(3) that all fees and penalties owed to this state under section 1.22 of this title have been paid if:~~

~~(A) payment is reflected in the records of the Secretary of State; and~~

~~(B) nonpayment affects the existence or authorization of the domestic or foreign corporations;~~

~~(4) that its most recent annual report required by section 16.22 of this title has been delivered to the Secretary of State;~~

~~(5) that articles of dissolution have not been filed; and~~

~~(6) other facts of records in the office of the Secretary of State that may be requested by the applicant.~~

~~(c) Subject to any qualification stated in the certificate, a certificate of good standing or authorization issued by the Secretary of State may be relied upon as conclusive evidence that the domestic or foreign corporation is in existence or is authorized to transact business in this State~~ A person may request the Secretary of State to issue a certificate of good standing for a domestic or foreign corporation pursuant to 11 V.S.A. § 1657.

Fifth: By adding a new section to be Sec. 15a to read as follows:

Sec. 15a. 11B V.S.A. § 1.28 is amended to read:

§ 1.28. CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

~~(a) Any person may apply to the Secretary of State to furnish a certificate of good standing for a domestic or foreign corporation.~~

~~(b) The certificate of good standing sets forth:~~

~~(1) the domestic corporation's corporate name or the foreign corporation's corporate name used in this State;~~

~~(2) that:~~

~~(A) the domestic corporation is duly incorporated under the law of this State, the date of its incorporation, and the period of its duration if less than perpetual; or~~

~~(B) the foreign corporation is authorized to transact business in this State;~~

~~(3) that all fees and penalties owed to this State under section 1.22 of this title have been paid if:~~

~~(A) payment is reflected in the records of the Secretary of State; and~~

~~(B) nonpayment affects the good standing of the domestic or foreign corporation;~~

~~(4) that its most recent biennial report required by section 16.22 of this title has been delivered to the Secretary of State; and~~

~~(5) that articles of dissolution have not been filed.~~

~~(c) Subject to any qualification stated in the certificate, a certificate of good standing issued by the Secretary of State may be relied upon as conclusive evidence that the domestic or foreign corporation is in existence or is authorized to transact business in this State.~~

~~(d) Subject to any qualification stated in the certificate, a certificate of good standing issued by the Secretary of State may be taken as prima facie evidence of the facts stated therein~~ A person may request the Secretary of State to issue a certificate of good standing for a domestic or foreign corporation pursuant to 11 V.S.A. § 1657.

Sixth: In Sec. 23, 11C V.S.A. chapter 2, by striking out section 206 in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new section 206 to read as follows:

§ 206. CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING ~~OR AUTHORIZATION~~

~~(a) The Secretary of State, upon request and payment of the required fee, shall furnish any person that requests it a certificate of good standing for a mutual benefit enterprise if the records filed in the Office of the Secretary of State show that the Secretary of State has filed the enterprise's articles of organization, that the enterprise is in good standing, and that the Secretary of State has not filed a statement of termination.~~

~~(b) The Secretary of State, upon request and payment of the required fee, shall furnish to any person that requests it a certificate of authority for a foreign enterprise if the records filed in the Office of the Secretary of State show that the Secretary of State has filed the foreign enterprise's certificate of authority, has not revoked nor has reason to revoke the certificate of authority, and has not filed a notice of cancellation.~~

~~(c) Subject to any exceptions stated in the certificate, a certificate of good standing or authority issued by the Secretary of State establishes conclusively that the mutual benefit enterprise or foreign enterprise is in good standing or is authorized to transact business in this State~~ A person may request the Secretary of State to issue a certificate of good standing for a domestic or foreign enterprise pursuant to 11 V.S.A. § 1657.

Seventh: In Sec. 27, business services and business organizations; study, by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) Reporting. The Secretary of State shall, based on the task set forth in subsection (a) of this section, submit to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, the House Committee on Ways and Means, the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, and the Senate Committee on Finance an interim report on or before November 15, 2025 and a final report on or before December 1, 2026 including its findings and any proposed legislation for the General Assembly's consideration. The interim report shall provide the General Assembly with any recommended actions to pursue in the 2026 legislative session.

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.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Lyons, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, April 11, 2025.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore*.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Rick Swanson of Stowe.

Message from the House No. 41

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 30. An act relating to updating and reorganizing the health insurance statutes in 8 V.S.A. chapter 107.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 21. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 11, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 243.

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

An act relating to the regulation of business organizations.

Proposal of Amendment; Proposal of Amendment Withdrawn; Third Reading Ordered

H. 259.

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

An act relating to preventing workplace violence in hospitals.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill in Sec. 1, 18 V.S.A. § 1911b, in subdivision (a)(4)(A) by striking out "time" and inserting in lieu thereof "times"

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

Thereupon, without objection, Senator Cummings withdrew the proposal of amendment offered by the Committee on Health and Welfare.

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

Appointment Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, without a report given by the Committee to which it was referred and without debate:

Elwell, Peter of Brattleboro - Member of Vermont Economic Development Authority - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

Appointments Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed separately by the Senate, upon full reports given by the Committees to which they were referred:

The nomination of

Fastiggi, Beth of Burlington - Commissioner, Department of Human Resources - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 27, Nays 0.

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, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent or not voting were: Baruth (presiding), Harrison, Vyhovsky.

The nomination of

Cheney, Margaret of Norwich - Member of the Public Utility Commission - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 26, Nays 0.

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, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Hardy, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent or not voting were: Baruth (presiding), Gulick, Harrison, Vyhovsky.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Krowinski and others,

H.C.R. 81.

House concurrent resolution in memory of former Bakersfield Select Board member Brenda Churchill.

Offered by Reps. Canfield and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Hardy, Heffernan, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 82.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters State championship bowling team.

Offered by All Members of the House,

Offered by All Members of the Senate,

H.C.R. 83.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Green Mountain Council Class of Eagle Scouts.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 84.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Mount Anthony Union High School Patriot wrestling program on winning its 36th consecutive State championship.

Offered by Reps. Page and others,

Offered by Senators Douglass and Ingalls,

H.C.R. 85.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 North Country Union High School Falcons' exemplary snowboarding teams.

Offered by Reps. McCann and others,

Offered by Senators Cummings, Perchlik and Watson,

H.C.R. 86.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Montpelier High School Solons Division II girls' Nordic championship ski team.

Offered by Reps. McCann and others,

Offered by Senators Cummings, Perchlik and Watson,

H.C.R. 87.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Montpelier High School Solons boys' basketball program on winning a fifth consecutive Division II championship.

Offered by Reps. Masland and Holcombe,

H.C.R. 88.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Thetford Academy inductees into the National Technical Honor Society.

Offered by Reps. Canfield and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Hardy, Heffernan, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 89.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters girls' basketball team on winning a second consecutive Division II championship.

Offered by Reps. Rachelson and others,

Offered by Senators Gulick, Baruth, Chittenden, Lyons, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Beck, Brennan, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Weeks, Westman, White and Williams,

H.C.R. 90.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Burlington High School Seahorses Division I championship girls' basketball team.

Offered by Reps. Rachelson and others,

Offered by Senators Gulick, Baruth, Chittenden, Lyons, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Beck, Brennan, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White and Williams,

H.C.R. 91.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Burlington High School Seahorses Division I championship boys' basketball team.

Offered by Reps. Quimby and others,

Offered by Senators Beck, Douglass and Ingalls,

H.C.R. 92.

House concurrent resolution honoring the outstanding achievements of the Federal TRIO Programs in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Branagan and others,

H.C.R. 93.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Kathleen Lynch of Burlington on being named as the 2025 Vermont Mother of the Year.

Offered by Reps. Lipsky and others,

H.C.R. 94.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Tyler Riggs of Fletcher on the Vermont Forest Products Association naming him Vermont's Outstanding Sawmill Operator 2024.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Lyons, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 21.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Beth Ann Maier of Montpelier.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Message from the House No. 42

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 81. House concurrent resolution in memory of former Bakersfield Select Board member Brenda Churchill.

H.C.R. 82. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters State championship bowling team.

H.C.R. 83. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Green Mountain Council Class of Eagle Scouts.

H.C.R. 84. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Mount Anthony Union High School Patriot wrestling program on winning its 36th consecutive State championship.

H.C.R. 85. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 North Country Union High School Falcons' exemplary snowboarding teams.

H.C.R. 86. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Montpelier High School Solons Division II girls' Nordic championship ski team.

H.C.R. 87. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Montpelier High School Solons boys' basketball program on winning a fifth consecutive Division II championship.

H.C.R. 88. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Thetford Academy inductees into the National Technical Honor Society.

H.C.R. 89. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters girls' basketball team on winning a second consecutive Division II championship.

H.C.R. 90. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Burlington High School Seahorses Division I championship girls' basketball team.

H.C.R. 91. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Burlington High School Seahorses Division I championship boys' basketball team.

H.C.R. 92. House concurrent resolution honoring the outstanding achievements of the Federal TRIO Programs in Vermont.

H.C.R. 93. House concurrent resolution congratulating Kathleen Lynch of Burlington on being named as the 2025 Vermont Mother of the Year.

H.C.R. 94. House concurrent resolution congratulating Tyler Riggs of Fletcher on the Vermont Forest Products Association naming him Vermont's Outstanding Sawmill Operator 2024.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 22.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 22. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 18, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, April 18, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, April 22, 2025.

Bill Referred to Committee on Rules

S. 124.

Senate bill of the following title, appearing on the Calendar for notice, under Temporary Rule 44A, was referred to the Committee on Rules:

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 151.

By Senator Clarkson,

An act relating to special motions to strike in an action arising from unpaid volunteer work for a nonprofit organization or governmental entity.

To the Committee on Judiciary.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 259.

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

An act relating to preventing workplace violence in hospitals.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 10.

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

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill in Sec. 2, 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 1, in section 110 (fiscal year), following the words "shall begin on the first day of July", by striking out the words "and end on the last day of June" and inserting in lieu thereof "~~and end on the last day of June~~"

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.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator White addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Ram Hinsdale, her remarks were ordered entered into the Journal, and are as follows:

"Mr. President, I have an announcement and I ask the body to listen to me about an experience I had yesterday, so I ask for your grace in this moment, we normally don't use announcements, but I wanted to share something that happened to me and a friend of mine yesterday.

"A constituent of ours named Mohsen, an Upper Valley resident, a man who resides in White River Junction, Vermont, who is a university student went in for a citizen interview yesterday in Colchester, Vermont. We went to meet with him beforehand, around 10:00 a.m. We had coffee with him and his lawyer and his community of support at the Hampton Inn in Colchester. It was a beautiful sunny day; it was bright and gorgeous.

"He went in at 11:00 a.m. to that meeting. We heard that his interview had started. Within 20 minutes of that interview, while we were outside waiting for him to leave, he was handcuffed inside of that building. He was handcuffed by three men who were wearing face coverings, hoodies that were unmarked and we did not know why they were taking him. They told him his green card had been revoked. They did not tell his lawyer, or the friend he was with, Dave, where he was going, why they were taking him. And then,

vehicles showed up at the parking lot with men in sunglasses and hats who wouldn't tell us who they were or where they were taking him and they took him, physically, in handcuffs from Colchester, Vermont to we didn't know where.

"This is a man who is an Upper Valley resident; this is our constituent. He invited me to come be supportive. He went for a traditional citizenship interview, and he was taken off of the street in Colchester, Vermont, in plain daylight, in open daylight, a gorgeous day and no one could stop them, and no one could prevent them from doing this.

"He is now, thank goodness, being kept in Vermont, because we know what happened to the last person, they were sent from their state and then they were sent to Louisiana. He was not given due process. His lawyer, his mother, his sister, the people who care about him in the Upper Valley were not given any information about where he was going or why he was taken.

"I want the body to know this because this is going to happen to your constituents. This is going to happen to your people, just like it has happened to our people. This is a young man who is a Buddhist, who is peaceful, who is non-violent, who attends and leads lay lead services at a Unitarian Universalist church in Hartland. This is not a bad person; this is not a criminal; this is a waste of our resources. And I wanted to share with the body that information today, because if you are invited to a citizenship interview with a constituent, you better go to that interview, because they are taking people, they are taking people off the street. This is not a joke; this is happening in our state. This is not a joke.

"And I am very emotional, and I am very concerned this happened within the last 24 hours. This happened yesterday. Yesterday he was free, today he is not free, and we do not know why. This is unfathomable. This is happening in Vermont. If they can take this gentleman, they can take any person. They can take any person when they want, and they don't have to tell you where they are going. I want us as a body to think about what this means for our Constitution. Does it matter? Does our Constitution matter anymore when you can be abducted off the street? No, it doesn't matter anymore.

"And the last thing I will just say is this is obviously a tense time in our nation, and I want to communicate that Mohsen, he is so peaceful, he is so kind. When he was arrested and they took him in, I was emotional, I was ready to get in there. His reaction to the whole situation was calm and peaceful and he went in silence."

Message from the House No. 43

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 454. An act relating to transforming Vermont's education governance, quality, and finance systems.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 3. An act relating to the transfer of property to a trust.

And has passed the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, April 16, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 152.

By Senators Clarkson, Harrison and Vyhovsky,

An act relating to requirements for older drivers to renew operator's licenses.

To the Committee on Transportation.

Bill Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, the following bill having failed to meet crossover and having been granted an exception by the Committee on Rules, was read the first time and referred as follows:

H. 454.

An act relating to transforming Vermont's education governance, quality, and finance systems.

To the Committee on Education.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 10.

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

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 118.

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

An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes.

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.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Gulick addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Vyhovsky, her remarks were entered into the Journal, and are as follows:

"I rise with an announcement, following in the footsteps of my colleague from Windsor yesterday.

"Many are feeling helpless right now, not knowing what to do in the face of a cruel and toxic President and administration. We senators can certainly do what is within the scope of the legislature; we can draft policy, write resolutions and pass bills that at least attempt to improve the lives of Vermonters. But we can also use this position of privilege to speak up, and not sit quietly while the President of the United States and his people trigger a constitutional crisis and cause great moral and economic harm to our state.

Crippling tariffs, draining of beloved institutions, mass firings, tax cuts for the wealthy and most terrifying, the unlawful abduction of Vermonters.

"So I invite my Senate colleagues, one on each day until the end of session, to stand and speak in defiance of the President and his administration. And I leave you with these lines from the 5th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution: 'No person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of the law.'"

Message from the House No. 44

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 293. An act relating to health equity data reporting and registry disclosure requirements.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 80. An act relating to the Office of the Health Care Advocate.

And has concurred therein.

The Governor has informed the House that on April 15, 2025, he approved and signed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 154. An act relating to designating November as the Vermont Month of the Veteran.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, April 17, 2025.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Lee Alison Crawford of Northfield.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

H. 218.

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 fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time:

H. 293. An act relating to health equity data reporting and registry disclosure requirements.

And pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A was referred to the Committee on Rules.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 9.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to after-hours access to orders against sexual assault.

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. 12 V.S.A. § 5134 is amended to read:

§ 5134. EMERGENCY RELIEF

(a) In accordance with the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure, a person other than a family or household member as defined in 15 V.S.A. § 1101(2) may file a complaint for a temporary order against stalking or sexual assault. ~~Such complaint~~ Stalking complaints shall be filed during regular court hours. The plaintiff shall submit an affidavit in support of the order. The court may issue a temporary order under this chapter ex parte, without notice to the defendant, upon motion and findings by the court that the defendant has stalked or sexually assaulted the plaintiff. The court may order the defendant to stay away from the plaintiff or the plaintiff's children, or both, and may make any other such order it deems necessary to protect the plaintiff or the plaintiff's children, or both.

* * *

Sec. 2. 12 V.S.A. § 5135(b) is amended to read:

(b) A defendant who attends a hearing held under section 5133 or 5134 of this title at which a temporary or final order under this chapter is issued and who receives notice from the court on the record that the order has been issued shall be deemed to have been served. A defendant notified by the court on the record shall be required to adhere immediately to the provisions of the order. ~~However, even when the court has previously notified the defendant of the order, the court shall transmit the order for additional service by a law enforcement agency.~~ The clerk shall mail a copy of the order to the defendant at the defendant's last known address.

Sec. 3. 12 V.S.A. § 5136(b) is amended to read:

(b)(1) The Court Administrator is authorized to contract with public or private agencies to assist plaintiffs to seek relief and to gain access to Superior Court. Law enforcement agencies shall assist in carrying out the intent of this section.

(2) The Court Administrator shall establish procedures to ensure access to orders against sexual assault after regular court hours or on weekends and holidays in accordance with subdivisions (A)–(D) of this subdivision.

(A) The court shall designate an authorized person to receive requests for ex parte emergency relief orders against sexual assault submitted after regular court hours pursuant to section 5134 of this title, including requests made by reliable electronic means according to the procedures in this subdivision (2).

(B) If a secure setting is not available for processing an ex parte emergency relief order against sexual assault submitted after regular court hours, or if the authorized person determines that electronic submission is appropriate under the circumstances, the authorized person shall inform the applicant that a complaint and affidavit may be submitted electronically.

(C) The affidavit shall be sworn to or affirmed by administration of the oath over the telephone to the applicant by the authorized person and shall conclude with the following statement: "I declare under the penalty of perjury pursuant to the laws of the State of Vermont that the foregoing is true and accurate. I understand that making false statements is a crime subject to a term of imprisonment or a fine, or both, as provided by 13 V.S.A. § 2904." The authorized person shall note on the affidavit the date and time that the oath was administered.

(D) The authorized person shall communicate the contents of the complaint and affidavit to a judicial officer telephonically or by reliable electronic means. The judicial officer shall decide whether to grant or deny

the complaint and issue the order solely on the basis of the contents of the affidavit or affidavits provided. The judicial officer shall communicate the decision to the authorized person, who shall communicate it to the applicant. If the order is issued, it shall be delivered to the appropriate law enforcement agency for service and to the holding station.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on September 1, 2025.

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

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 30.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to updating and reorganizing the health insurance statutes in 8 V.S.A. chapter 107.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 2, 8 V.S.A. chapter 107, in section 4029, by striking out subdivision (2) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (2) to read as follows:

(2) TIME LIMIT ON CERTAIN DEFENSES: (a) After three years from the date of issue of this policy no misstatements, except fraudulent misstatements, made by the applicant in the application for such policy, shall be used to void the policy or to deny a claim for loss incurred or disability (as defined in the policy) commencing after the expiration of such three-year period.

(The foregoing policy provision shall not be so construed as to affect any legal requirement for avoidance of a policy or denial of a claim during such initial three-year period, nor to limit the application of subdivisions 4030(1)–(5) of this title in the event of misstatement with respect to age or occupation or other insurance.) (A policy which the insured has the right to continue in force subject to its terms by the timely payment of premium (1) until at least age 50, or (2) in the case of a policy issued after age 44, for at least five years from its date of issue, may contain in lieu of the foregoing the following provision (from which the clause in parentheses may be omitted at the insurer's option) under the caption "INCONTESTABLE":

After this policy has been in force for a period of three years during the lifetime of the insured (excluding any period during which the insured is disabled), it shall become incontestable as to the statements contained in the application.)

(b) No claim for loss incurred or disability (as defined in the policy) commencing after three years from the date of issue of this policy shall be reduced or denied on the ground that a disease or physical condition not excluded from coverage by name or specific description effective on the date of loss had existed prior to the effective date of coverage of this policy.

Second: In Sec. 2, 8 V.S.A. chapter 107, in section 4030, in subdivision (3), following the first sentence, by inserting after the period, on a new line, "or, in lieu thereof:"

Third: By striking out Sec. 33, effective date, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 33 to read as follows:

Sec. 33. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on September 1, 2025.

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

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 118.

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

An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes.

Third Reading Ordered

S. 124.

Senate committee bill entitled:

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

Having appeared on the Calendar for notice for one day, was taken up.

Senator Hardy, for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, moved to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets Regulation of Agricultural Water Quality * * *

Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. § 4810(d) is amended to read:

(d) Cooperation and coordination. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall coordinate with the Secretary of Natural Resources in implementing and enforcing programs, plans, and practices developed for reducing and eliminating agricultural nonpoint source pollutants and discharges from ~~concentrated animal feeding operations. On or before July 1, 2016, the~~ farms. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets ~~and the Secretary of Natural Resources~~ shall ~~revise the memorandum of understanding for~~ cooperate with the Secretary of Natural Resources in the implementation of the federal Clean Water Act for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall implement the State's comprehensive, complimentary nonpoint source program ~~describing~~. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food, and Markets and the Secretary of Natural Resources shall coordinate regarding program administration~~,~~; grant negotiation~~,~~; grant sharing~~, and how they will coordinate~~; implementation of the antidegradation policy including to new sources of agricultural nonpoint source pollutants, and watershed planning activities to comply with Pub. L. No. 92-500. ~~The memorandum of understanding shall describe how the agencies will implement the antidegradation implementation policy, including how the agencies will apply the antidegradation implementation policy to new sources of agricultural nonpoint source pollutants. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Secretary of Natural Resources shall also develop a memorandum of understanding according to the public notice and comment process of 10 V.S.A. § 1259(i) regarding the implementation of the federal Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation Program and the relationship between the requirements of the federal Program and the State agricultural water quality requirements for large, medium, and small farms under this chapter. The memorandum of understanding shall describe Program administration, permit issuance, an appellate process, and enforcement authority and implementation.~~ In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 1259(i), the Secretary of Natural Resources, in consultation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, shall issue a document that sets forth the respective roles and responsibilities of the Agency of Natural Resources in implementing the federal Clean Water Act on farms and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets' roles and responsibilities in implementing the State's complementary nonpoint source program on farms. The ~~memorandum of understanding~~ document shall be consistent with and equivalent with the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit regulations for discharges from ~~concentrated animal feeding operations~~ CAFOs. The document will replace the memorandum of understanding between the agencies. The allocation of duties under this chapter between the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Secretary of Natural Resources shall be consistent with the Secretary's

duties, established under the provisions of 10 V.S.A. § 1258(b), to comply with Pub. L. No. 92-500. The Secretary of Natural Resources shall be the State lead person in applying for federal funds under Pub. L. No. 92-500 but shall consult with the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets during the process. The agricultural nonpoint source program may compete with other programs for competitive watershed projects funded from federal funds. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall be represented in reviewing these projects for funding. Actions by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets under this chapter concerning agricultural nonpoint source pollution shall be consistent with the water quality standards and water pollution control requirements of 10 V.S.A. chapter 47 and the federal Clean Water Act as amended. In addition, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall coordinate with the Secretary of Natural Resources in implementing and enforcing programs, plans, and practices developed for the proper management of composting facilities when those facilities are located on a farm. ~~On or before January 15, 2016, the~~ The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Secretary of Natural Resources shall each develop three separate measures of the performance of the agencies under the ~~memorandum of understanding required by this subsection. Beginning on January 15, 2017~~ federal Clean Water Act and State nonpoint source regulatory authority, and annually ~~thereafter~~ on or before January 15, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Secretary of Natural Resources shall submit separate reports to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, the House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry, the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, and the House Committee on Environment ~~and Energy~~ regarding the success of each agency in meeting the selected performance measures for the memorandum of understanding.

Sec. 2. 6 V.S.A. § 4810a(a)(6) is amended to read:

(6)(A) Require a farm to comply with standards established by the Secretary for maintaining a vegetative buffer zone of perennial vegetation between annual croplands and the top of the bank of an adjoining water of the State. At a minimum the vegetative buffer standards established by the Secretary shall prohibit the application of manure on the farm within 25 feet of the top of the bank of an adjoining water of the State or within 10 feet of a ditch that is not a surface water under State law and that is not a water of the United States under federal law. The minimum vegetated buffer requirement required under this subdivision (A) shall not apply to a farm that is determined by the Secretary of Natural Resources to be a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation and is required to obtain a CAFO permit as required under 10 V.S.A. § 1353. A farm determined to be a Concentrated Animal Feeding

Operation that requires a CAFO permit shall instead comply with the setback and buffer requirements established in the federal CAFO regulations.

(B) Establish standards for site-specific vegetative buffers that adequately address water quality needs based on consideration of soil type, slope, crop type, proximity to water, and other relevant factors.

Sec. 3. 6 V.S.A. § 4851 is amended to read:

§ 4851. PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR LARGE FARM OPERATIONS

(a) No person shall, without a permit from the Secretary, construct a new barn, or expand an existing barn, designed to house more than 700 mature dairy animals, 1,000 cattle or cow/calf pairs, 1,000 veal calves, 2,500 swine weighing over 55 pounds, 10,000 swine weighing less than 55 pounds, 500 horses, 10,000 sheep or lambs, 55,000 turkeys, 30,000 laying hens or broilers with a liquid manure handling system, 82,000 laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 125,000 chickens other than laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 5,000 ducks with a liquid manure handling system, or 30,000 ducks without a liquid manure handling system. No permit shall be required to replace an existing barn in use for livestock or domestic fowl production at its existing capacity. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in consultation with the Secretary of Natural Resources, shall review any application for a permit under this section with regard to water quality impacts ~~and,~~ prior to approval of a permit under this subsection~~, shall issue a written determination regarding whether the applicant has established that there will be no unpermitted discharge to waters of the State pursuant to the federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations~~. If, upon review of ~~an~~ a large farm application for a permit under this subsection, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets determines that the ~~permit applicant~~ farm may be discharging to waters of the State, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets ~~and the Secretary of Natural Resources~~ shall ~~respond to~~ promptly refer the potential discharge to the Secretary of Natural Resources for response in accordance with ~~the memorandum of understanding~~ the federal Clean Water Act regarding concentrated animal feeding operations ~~under section 4810 of this title~~. The Secretary of Natural Resources ~~may require~~ shall direct a large farm to obtain a permit under 10 V.S.A. § 1263 ~~pursuant to~~ if required by federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations. If the farm is not required to obtain a CAFO permit and is not in violation of federal regulations for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall promptly notify the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

(b) A person shall apply for a permit in order to operate a farm that exceeds 700 mature dairy animals, 1,000 cattle or cow/calf pairs, 1,000 veal

calves, 2,500 swine weighing over 55 pounds, 10,000 swine weighing less than 55 pounds, 500 horses, 10,000 sheep or lambs, 55,000 turkeys, 30,000 laying hens or broilers with a liquid manure handling system, 82,000 laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 125,000 chickens other than laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 5,000 ducks with a liquid manure handling system, or 30,000 ducks ~~if the livestock or domestic fowl are in a barn or adjacent barns owned by the same person or if the barns share a common border or have a common waste disposal system~~ without a liquid manure handling system. Two or more individual farms that are under common ownership and that adjoin each other or use a common area or system for the disposal of wastes shall be considered a single animal feeding operation or "farm" when determining whether the combined number of livestock or domestic fowl qualifies the farm as a Large Farm Operation under this section. In order to receive this permit, the person shall demonstrate to the Secretary that the farm has an adequately sized manure management system to accommodate the wastes generated and a nutrient management plan to dispose of wastes in accordance with Required Agricultural Practices adopted under this chapter and current U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrient management standards.

(c) The Secretary shall approve, condition, or disapprove the application within 45 business days ~~of~~ following the date of receipt of a complete application for a permit under this section. Failure to act within the 45 business days shall be deemed approval.

(d) A person seeking a permit under this section shall apply in writing to the Secretary. The application shall include a description of the proposed barn or expansion of livestock or domestic fowl; a proposed nutrient management plan to accommodate the number of livestock or domestic fowl the barn is designed to house or the farm is intending to expand to; and a description of the manure management system to be used to accommodate agricultural wastes.

(e) The Secretary may condition or deny a permit on the basis of odor, noise, traffic, insects, flies, or other pests.

(f) Before granting a permit under this section, the Secretary shall make an affirmative finding that the animal wastes generated by the construction or expansion will be stored so as not to generate runoff from a 25-year, 24-hour storm event and shall be disposed of in accordance with the Required Agricultural Practices adopted under this chapter and current U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrient management standards.

(g) A farm that is permitted under this section and that withdraws more than 57,600 gallons of groundwater per day averaged over any 30 consecutive-

day period shall annually report estimated water use to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall share information reported under this subsection with the Agency of Natural Resources.

(h) The Secretary may inspect a farm permitted under this section at any time, but ~~no~~ not less frequently than once per year.

(i) A person required to obtain a permit under this section shall submit an annual operating fee of $2,500.00 to the Secretary. During any calendar year in which a person has an active Large Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation permit issued by the Agency of Natural Resources pursuant to the federal Clean Water Act and pays the required associated fee, that person shall not be required to pay the $2,500.00 annual operating fee described in this section. The fees collected under this section shall be deposited in the Agricultural Water Quality Special Fund under section 4803 of this title.

Sec. 4. 6 V.S.A. § 4858 is amended to read:

§ 4858. MEDIUM FARM OPERATION PERMITS

(a) Authorization to operation. No person shall operate a medium farm without authorization from the Secretary pursuant to this section. Under exceptional conditions, specified in subsection (d) of this section, authorization from the Secretary may be required to operate a small farm.

(b) Rules; general and individual permits. The Secretary shall establish by rule, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, requirements for a general permit and individual permit to assure that medium and small farms generating animal waste comply with the water quality standards of the State.

(1) General and individual permits issued under this section shall be consistent with rules adopted under this section, shall include terms and conditions appropriate to each farm size category and each farm animal type as defined by section 4857 of this title, and shall meet standards at least as stringent as those established by federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations. Such standards shall address waste management, waste storage, development of nutrient management plans, carcass disposal, and surface water and groundwater contamination, plus recordkeeping, reporting, and monitoring provisions regarding such matters to ensure that the terms and conditions of the permit are being met. The groundwater contamination rules adopted by the Secretary under this section shall include a process under which the Agency shall receive, investigate, and respond to a complaint that a farm has contaminated the drinking water or groundwater of a property owner.

(2) The rules adopted under this section shall also address permit administration, public notice and hearing, permit enforcement, permit

transition, revocation, and appeals consistent with provisions of sections 4859 and 4861 of this title and subchapter 10 of this chapter.

(3) Each general permit issued pursuant to this section shall have a term of ~~no~~ not more than five years. Prior to the expiration of each general permit, the Secretary shall review the terms and conditions of the general permit and may issue subsequent general permits with the same or different conditions as necessary to carry out the purposes of this subchapter. Each general permit shall include provisions that require public notice of the fact that a medium farm has sought coverage under a general permit adopted pursuant to this section. Each general permit shall provide a process by which interested persons can obtain detailed information about the nature and extent of the activity proposed to receive coverage under the general permit. The Secretary may inspect each farm seeking coverage under the general permit at any time but ~~no~~ not less frequently than once every three years.

(c)~~(1)~~ Medium farm general permit.

(1) The owner or operator of a medium farm seeking coverage under a general permit adopted pursuant to this section shall certify to the Secretary within a period specified in the permit, and in a manner specified by the Secretary, that the medium farm does comply with permit requirements regarding an adequately sized and designed manure management system to accommodate the wastes generated and a nutrient management plan to dispose of wastes in accordance with Required Agricultural Practices adopted under this chapter and current U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrient management standards. Any certification or notice of intent to comply submitted under this subdivision shall be kept on file at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in consultation with the Secretary of Natural Resources, shall review any certification or notice of intent to comply submitted under this subdivision with regard to the water quality impacts of the medium farm for which the owner or operator is seeking coverage, and, for farms that have never been permitted under the prior permit term, within 18 months ~~of~~ after receiving the certification or notice of intent to comply, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall verify whether the owner or operator of the medium farm has established that there will be no unpermitted discharge to waters of the State pursuant to the federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations. If upon review ~~of a medium farm granted coverage under the general permit adopted pursuant to this subsection~~ the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets determines that the ~~permit applicant~~ medium farm may be discharging to waters of the State, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets ~~and~~ shall promptly notify the Secretary of Natural Resources ~~shall respond to the discharge~~ in accordance with ~~the memorandum of understanding~~ the federal Clean Water Act regarding

concentrated animal feeding operations ~~under section 4810 of this title~~. The Secretary of Natural Resources shall direct a medium farm to obtain a permit under 10 V.S.A. § 1263 if required by federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations. If the farm is not required to obtain a CAFO permit and is not in violation of federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations, the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources shall promptly notify the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

(2) The owner or operator of a small farm may seek coverage under the medium farm general permit adopted pursuant to this section by certifying to the Secretary, in a manner specified by the Secretary, that the small farm complies with the requirements and conditions of the medium farm general permit.

(d) Medium and small farms; individual permit. The Secretary may require the owner or operator of a small or medium farm to obtain an individual permit to operate after review of the farm's history of compliance, application of Required Agricultural Practices, the use of an experimental or alternative technology or method to meet a State performance standard, or other factors set forth by rule. The owner or operator of a small farm may apply to the Secretary for an individual permit to operate under this section. To receive an individual permit, an applicant shall in a manner prescribed by rule demonstrate that the farm has an adequately sized and designed manure management system to accommodate the wastes generated and a nutrient management plan to dispose of wastes in accordance with Required Agricultural Practices adopted under this chapter and current U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrient management standards, including setback requirements for waste application. An individual permit shall be valid for ~~no~~ not more than five years. Any application for an individual permit filed under this subsection shall be kept on file at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in consultation with the Agency of Natural Resources, shall review any application for a permit under this subsection ~~and, prior to issuance of an individual permit under this subsection, shall issue a written determination regarding whether the permit applicant has established that there will be no unpermitted discharge to waters of the State pursuant to federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations~~. If, upon review of ~~an application for a permit under this subsection~~ a permit application, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets determines that the permit applicant may be discharging to waters of the State, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets ~~and~~ shall promptly refer the farm to the Secretary of Natural Resources ~~shall respond to the discharge~~ for response in accordance with ~~the memorandum of understanding regarding concentrated animal feeding operations under subsection 4810(b) of this title~~ the federal

Clean Water Act. The Secretary of Natural Resources ~~may require~~ shall direct a medium or small farm to obtain a permit under 10 V.S.A. § 1263 ~~pursuant to~~ if required by federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations. Coverage of a medium farm under a general permit adopted pursuant to this section or an individual permit issued to a medium or small farm under this section is rendered void by the issuance of a permit to a farm under 10 V.S.A. § 1263. If the farm is not required to obtain a CAFO permit and is not in violation of federal regulations for concentrated animal feeding operations, the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources shall promptly refer the matter to the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

(e) Operating fee. A person required to obtain a permit or coverage under this section shall submit an annual operating fee of $1,500.00 to the Secretary. The fees collected under this section shall be deposited in the Agricultural Water Quality Special Fund under section 4803 of this title.

Sec. 5. 6 V.S.A. § 4816 is amended to read:

§ 4816. SEASONAL APPLICATION OF MANURE

(a) Prohibition on application. A person shall not apply manure to land in the State between December 15 and April 1 of any calendar year unless authorized by this section or as authorized under an emergency exemption granted by the Secretary.

(b) Extension of prohibition. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall amend the Required Agricultural Practices by rule in order to establish a process under which the Secretary may prohibit the application of manure to land in the State between December 1 and December 15 and between April 1 and April 30 of any calendar year when the Secretary determines that due to weather conditions, soil conditions, or other limitations, application of manure to land would pose a significant potential of discharge or runoff to State waters.

(c) Seasonal exemption. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall amend the Required Agricultural Practices by rule in order to establish a process under which the Secretary may authorize an exemption to the prohibition on the application of manure to land in the State between December 15 and April 1 of any calendar year or during any period established under subsection (b) of this section when manure is prohibited from application. Any process established for the issuance of an exemption under the Required Agricultural Practices may authorize land application of manure on a weekly, monthly, or seasonal basis or in authorized regions, areas, or fields in the State, provided that any exemption shall:

(1) prohibit application of manure:

(A) in areas with established channels of concentrated stormwater runoff to surface waters, including ditches and ravines;

(B) in nonharvested permanent vegetative buffers;

(C) in a nonfarmed wetland, as that term is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 902(5);

(D) within 50 feet of a potable water supply, as that term is defined in 10 V.S.A. § 1972(6);

(E) to fields exceeding tolerable soil loss; and

(F) to saturated soils;

(2) establish requirements for the application of manure when frozen or snow-covered soils prevent effective incorporation at the time of application;

(3) require manure to be applied according to a nutrient management plan; and

(4) establish the maximum tons of manure that may be applied per acre during any one application.

Sec. 6. 6 V.S.A. § 4871(b) is amended to read:

(b) Required small farm certification. Beginning on July 1, 2017, a person who owns or operates a small farm, as designated by the Secretary consistent with subdivision 4810a(a)(1) of this title, shall, on a form provided by the Secretary, certify compliance with the Required Agricultural Practices. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall establish the requirements and manner of certification of compliance with the Required Agricultural Practices, provided that the Secretary shall require an owner or operator of ~~a~~ any newly eligible or identified small farm to submit ~~an annual~~ a certification of compliance with the Required Agricultural Practices and may require any small farm to regularly certify ongoing compliance with the Required Agricultural Practices.

* * * Agency of Natural Resources Regulation of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations * * *

Sec. 7. 10 V.S.A. § 1251 is amended to read:

§ 1251. DEFINITIONS

Whenever used or referred to in this chapter, unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context:

* * *

(3) "Discharge" means the placing, depositing, or emission of any wastes or pollutants, directly or indirectly, into an injection well or into the waters of the State.

* * *

(11) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Natural Resources or ~~his or her~~ authorized representative.

(12) "Waste" means effluent, sewage, or any substance or material, liquid, gaseous, solid, or radioactive, including heated liquids, whether or not harmful or deleterious to waters; provided, however, the term "sewage" as used in this chapter shall not include the rinse or process water from a cheese manufacturing process.

(13) "Waters" or "waters of the State" includes all rivers, streams, creeks, brooks, reservoirs, ponds, lakes, springs, ~~and~~ all artificial or natural bodies of surface waters~~, artificial or natural,~~ and waters of the United States, as that term is defined under the federal Clean Water Act, that are contained within, flow through, or border upon the State or any portion of it.

* * *

(20) "Direct discharge" means the placing, depositing, or emission of any waste or pollutant directly into waters.

(21) "Pollutant" means dredged spoil; solid waste; incinerator residue; sewage; garbage; sewage sludge; munitions; chemical wastes; biological materials; radioactive materials; heat; wrecked or discarded equipment; rock; sand; cellar dirt; and industrial, municipal, and agricultural waste discharged into water.

Sec. 8. 10 V.S.A. chapter 47, subchapter 3A is added to read:

Subchapter 3A. Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

§ 1351. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Agricultural waste" means material originating or emanating from a farm or imported onto a farm that contains sediments; minerals, including heavy metals; plant nutrients; pesticides; organic wastes, including livestock waste; animal mortalities; compost; feed, litter, and crop debris; waste oils; pathogenic bacteria and viruses; thermal pollution; silage runoff; process wastewater, untreated milk house waste; and any other farm waste as the term "waste" is defined in subdivision 1251(12) of this chapter.

(2)(A) "Animal feeding operation" or "AFO" means a lot or facility, other than an aquatic animal production facility, where the following conditions are met:

(i) animals, other than aquatic animals, have been, are, or will be stabled or confined and fed or maintained for a total of 45 days or more in any 12-month period; and

(ii) crops, vegetation, or forage growth are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the lot or facility.

(B) Two or more individual farms qualifying as an AFO that are under common ownership and that adjoin each other or use a common area or system for the disposal of waste shall be considered to be a single AFO if the combined number of livestock or domestic fowl on the combined farm qualifies the combined farm as a large CAFO as defined in subdivision (11) of this section or as a medium CAFO as defined in subdivision (14) of this section.

(3) "Concentrated animal feeding operation" or "CAFO" means an AFO that is defined as a large CAFO, a medium CAFO, or a small CAFO.

(4) "Land application area" means the area under the control of an AFO or CAFO owner or operator, whether it is owned, rented, or leased, to which manure, litter, or process wastewater may be applied.

(5) "Large concentrated animal feeding operation" or "Large CAFO" means an AFO that houses 700 or more mature dairy animals, 1,000 or more cattle or cow or calf pairs, 1,000 or more veal calves, 2,500 or more swine weighing over 55 pounds, 10,000 or more swine weighing 55 pounds or less, 500 or more horses, 10,000 or more sheep or lambs, 55,000 or more turkeys, 30,000 or more laying hens or broilers with a liquid manure handling system, 82,000 or more laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 125,000 or more chickens other than laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 5,000 or more ducks with a liquid manure handling system, or 30,000 or more ducks without a liquid manure handling system.

(6) "Large farm operation" or "LFO" has the same meaning as in 6 V.S.A. chapter 215.

(7) "Manure" means livestock waste in solid or liquid form that may also contain bedding, compost, and raw materials or other materials commingled with manure or set aside for disposal.

(8) "Medium concentrated animal feeding operation" or "Medium CAFO" means an AFO that:

(A) houses 200 to 699 mature dairy animals, 300 to 999 cattle or cow or calf pairs, 300 to 999 veal calves, 750 to 2,499 swine weighing over 55 pounds, 3,000 to 9,999 swine weighing 55 pounds or less, 150 to 499 horses, 3,000 to 9,999 sheep or lambs, 16,500 to 54,999 turkeys, 9,000 to 29,999 laying hens or broilers with a liquid manure handling system, 25,000 to 81,999 laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 37,500 to 124,999 chickens other than laying hens without a liquid manure handling system, 1,500 to 4,999 ducks with a liquid manure handling system, or 10,000 to 29,999 ducks without a liquid manure handling system; and

(B) either of the following conditions are met:

(i) wastes are discharged into waters through a man-made ditch, flushing system, or other similar man-made device; or

(ii) wastes are discharged directly into waters that originate outside of or pass over, across, or through the facility or otherwise come into direct contact with the animals confined in the operation.

(9) "Medium farm operation" or "MFO" has the same meaning as medium farm operation in 6 V.S.A chapter 215 and rules adopted under the chapter.

(10) "Point source" means any discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, including any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation, or vessel or other floating craft from which pollutants are or may be discharged. This term does not include agricultural stormwater discharges and return flows from irrigated agriculture.

(11) "Process wastewater" means water directly or indirectly used in the operation of an AFO or CAFO for any or all of the following: spillage or overflow from animal or poultry watering systems; washing, cleaning, or flushing pens, barns, manure pits, or other AFO or CAFO facilities; direct contact swimming, washing, or spray cooling of animals; or dust control. Process wastewater also includes any water that comes into contact with any raw materials, products, or byproducts, including manure, litter, feed, milk, eggs, or bedding.

(12) "Production area" means that part of an AFO or CAFO that includes the animal confinement area, the manure storage area, the raw materials storage area, and the waste containment areas. The animal confinement area includes open lots, housed lots, feedlots, confinement houses, stall barns, free stall barns, milkrooms, milking centers, cowyards, barnyards, medication pens, walkers, animal walkways, and stables. The manure storage area includes lagoons, runoff ponds, storage sheds, stockpiles,

under house or pit storages, liquid impoundments, static piles, and composting piles. The raw materials storage area includes feed silos, silage bunkers, and bedding materials. The waste containment area includes settling basins, and areas within berms and diversions that separate uncontaminated storm water. Also included in the definition of production area is any egg washing or egg processing facility and any area used in the storage, handling, treatment, or disposal of mortalities.

(13) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Natural Resources.

(14) "Small animal feeding operation" or "SFO" means an AFO that is not a large CAFO or a medium CAFO.

(15) "Small concentrated animal feeding operation" or "small CAFO" means a small AFO designated as a small CAFO by the Secretary upon determining that the AFO is a significant contributor of pollutants to waters of the State and is defined as a CAFO by the regulations adopted under the federal Clean Water Act.

(16) "Waters of the United States" shall have the same meaning as defined by the federal Clean Water Act.

§ 1352. POWERS OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary has the authority to exercise all of the following:

(1) Implement the federal Clean Water Act to administer a Vermont pollutant discharge elimination system (VPDES) CAFO program that is consistent with and equivalent to the federal Clean Water Act and enabling rules.

(2) Make, adopt, revise, and amend rules as necessary to administer a VPDES CAFO program that is consistent with and equivalent to the federal Clean Water Act and enabling rules.

(3) Make, adopt, revise, and amend procedures, guidelines, inspection checklists, and other documents as necessary for the administration of the CAFO VPDES program.

(4) Designate any AFO that meets the definition of a CAFO under the federal Clean Water Act regulations as a CAFO, in the Secretary's sole discretion.

(5) Require any AFO to obtain a CAFO permit under this chapter upon a determination that the AFO is discharging to waters of the State.

(6) Designate any small AFO as a CAFO if after an on-site inspection, the Secretary determines that the small AFO is discharging into water and is a

significant contributor of pollutants to waters of the State. The Secretary shall consider the following factors:

(A) the size of the AFO and the amount of wastes reaching waters;

(B) the location of the AFO relative to waters;

(C) the means of conveyance of animal wastes and process waste waters into waters;

(D) the slope, vegetation, rainfall, and other factors affecting the likelihood or frequency of discharge of animal wastes manure and process waste waters into waters; and

(E) other relevant factors.

(7) Access private or public property to inspect AFOs and CAFOs, take photos and samples, and review and copy AFO and CAFO land management records, including nutrient management plans, as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this subchapter.

(8) Solicit and receive federal funds to implement the CAFO program.

(9) Cooperate fully with the federal government or other agencies in the operation of any joint federal-state programs concerning the regulation of agricultural pollution.

(10) Appoint assistants or contract with persons with applicable expertise, subject to applicable laws and State policies, to perform or assist in the performance of the duties and functions of the Secretary under this chapter.

§ 1353. CAFO PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND EXEMPTIONS

(a) The discharge of manure, litter, or process wastewater to waters of the State from a permitted CAFO as a result of the application of that manure, litter, or process wastewater by the CAFO to land areas under its control is a discharge from that CAFO subject to VPDES permit requirements, except where it is an agricultural stormwater discharge as provided under the federal Clean Water Act. For purposes of this subsection, where the manure, litter, or process wastewater has been applied in accordance with the federal regulations under the Clean Water Act, a precipitation-related discharge of manure, litter, or process wastewater from land areas under the control of a CAFO is an agricultural stormwater discharge. For unpermitted Large CAFOs, a precipitation-related discharge of manure, litter, or process wastewater from land areas under the control of the CAFO shall be considered an exempt agricultural stormwater discharge only where the manure, litter, or process wastewater has been land applied in accordance with site-specific nutrient management practices that ensure appropriate agricultural utilization of the

nutrients in the manure, litter, or process wastewater, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) All MFOs and LFOs shall maintain documentation of a nutrient management plan and practices on site or at a nearby office and make the documentation readily available to the Secretary upon request.

(c) The presumption in 6 V.S.A. § 4810(b) that farms in compliance with the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets' Required Agricultural Practices Rule are not discharging is not applicable to any AFO determined by the Secretary's decision to be a CAFO.

Sec. 9. COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER GROUP ON AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY

(a) On or before December 1, 2025, the Secretary of Natural Resources, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, shall engage key stakeholder regarding the implementation and transition to a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) program that conforms with the Clean Water Act. The process also shall include public notice and informational hearings to provide updates on the CAFO program and gather broad public input. The stakeholder engagement process shall include opportunities for the following stakeholders to provide input: the agricultural community, including livestock farmers; farm groups; agricultural consultants; and the environmental community, including watershed groups and water quality experts. The Secretary shall solicit input from stakeholders on:

(1) the establishment of a CAFO permitting program administered by the Secretary of Natural Resources that ensures compliance with the Clean Water Act's requirement that no farm discharges in violation of the Clean Water Act's CAFO permit requirements;

(2) how to align the CAFO program most effectively with water quality programs administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food, and Markets;

(3) how to best create regulatory clarity for agricultural producers for the long term that is consistent with the Clean Water Act, whether within a two-agency regulatory system or through a full transfer of regulatory authority to the Agency of Natural Resources;

(4) the resources, technical assistance, and regulatory structure necessary to create a path to compliance for agricultural producers that maintain CAFOs, AFOs, and other farms; and

(5) feedback on implementing regulatory structures similar to other states, including the New York State Department of Environmental Protection CAFO Program.

(b) On or before February 15, 2026, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall file a report with the House Committees on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and on Environment and the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Natural Resources and Energy. The report shall:

(1) summarize the stakeholder process, including public comments received;

(2) summarize public input received during rulemaking;

(3) assess whether the regulatory structure for administering agricultural water quality requirements in the State is sufficient to ensure that water pollution is controlled consistent with the Clean Water Act or whether sole regulation by the Agency of Natural Resources over water quality on farms, should be implemented; and

(4) recommend any statutory amendment or other changes related to implementation of the CAFO program and agricultural water quality regulation more generally.

Sec. 10. 10 V.S.A. § 1259 is amended to read:

§ 1259. PROHIBITIONS

(a) No person shall discharge any waste, substance, or material into waters of the State, nor shall any person discharge any waste, substance, or material into an injection well or discharge into a publicly owned treatment works any waste that interferes with, passes through without treatment, or is otherwise incompatible with those works or would have a substantial adverse effect on those works or on water quality, without first obtaining a permit for that discharge from the Secretary. This subsection shall not prohibit the proper application of fertilizer to fields and crops, nor reduce or affect the authority or policy declared in Joint House Resolution 7 of the 1971 Session of the General Assembly.

* * *

(f) ~~The provisions of subsections (c), (d), and (e) of this section shall not regulate~~ Provided that the introduction of wastes are from sources that do not discharge pollutants from a point source into waters of the State, and comply with the federal Clean Water Act and federal CAFO regulation, the following activities shall not require a VPDES permit under section 1263 of this title:

(1) required agricultural practices, as adopted by rule by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets~~,~~; or

(2) accepted silvicultural practices, as defined by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation, including practices ~~which~~ that are in

compliance with the Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont, as adopted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation~~; nor shall these provisions regulate discharges from concentrated animal feeding operations that require a permit under section 1263 of this title; nor shall those provisions prohibit stormwater runoff or the discharge of nonpolluting wastes, as defined by the Secretary~~.

* * *

(i) The Secretary ~~of Natural Resources, to the extent compatible~~ shall regulate AFOs in accordance with federal requirements, ~~shall delegate to~~ and the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall implement the State ~~agricultural non-point~~ nonpoint source pollution control program planning, implementation, and regulation. ~~A memorandum of understanding shall be adopted for this purpose, which shall address implementation grants, the distribution of federal program assistance, and the development of land use performance standards. Prior to executing the memorandum, the Secretary of State shall arrange for two formal publications of information relating to the proposed memorandum. The information shall consist of a summary of the proposal; the name, telephone number, and address of a person able to answer questions and receive comments on the proposal; and the deadline for receiving comments. Publication shall be subject to the provisions of 3 V.S.A. § 839(d), (e), and (g), relating to the publication of administrative rules~~ This concurrent authority ensures comprehensive water quality protection and implements equivalent State nonpoint source pollution controls on farms not covered by the Clean Water Act. The Agencies shall cooperate and share information to enable effective and consistent regulation and enforcement. Not later than September 1, 2025, the Agency of Natural Resources in consultation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, shall issue a document that sets forth the respective roles and responsibilities of the Agency of Natural Resources in implementing the Clean Water Act on farms and responsibilities of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets in implementing the State's complementary nonpoint source program on farms. The document shall replace the existing memorandum of understanding between the agencies. The Secretary shall post the draft document and information regarding the document on the Agency's website, shall issue public notice by press release and social media, shall submit the draft documents to the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committees on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and on Environment, and shall allow for public comment. The proposed ~~memorandum of understanding~~ document shall be available for 30 days after the final date of publication for public review and comment ~~prior to being executed by the Secretary of Natural Resources and~~

~~the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets~~. The Secretary of Natural Resources ~~and~~ in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets ~~annually~~ shall review ~~the memorandum of understanding~~ the document every five years to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Clean Water Act ~~and the provisions of section 1258 of this title~~. If the ~~memorandum~~ document is substantially revised, it first shall be noticed in the same manner that applies to the initial memorandum. Actions by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets under this section shall be consistent with the water quality standards and water pollution control requirements of chapter 47 of this title and the federal Clean Water Act as amended.

* * *

Sec. 11. 10 V.S.A. § 1263 is amended to read:

§ 1263. DISCHARGE PERMITS

(a) Any person who intends to discharge waste into the waters of the State or who intends to discharge into an injection well or who intends to discharge into any publicly owned treatment works any waste that interferes with, passes through without treatment, or is otherwise incompatible with that works or would have a substantial adverse effect on that works or on water quality, or is required to apply for a CAFO permit, shall make application to the Secretary for a discharge permit. Application shall be made on a form prescribed by the Secretary. An applicant shall pay an application fee in accordance with 3 V.S.A. § 2822.

(b) When an application is filed under this section, the Secretary shall proceed in accordance with chapter 170 of this title. The Secretary may require any applicant to submit any additional information that the Secretary considers necessary ~~and~~, before issuing a permit application completeness determination. The Secretary may take appropriate steps to secure compliance, refuse to grant a permit, or permission to discharge under the terms of a general permit, until the information is furnished and evaluated.

* * *

(g) ~~Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any~~ Any person who owns or operates a concentrated animal feeding operation that requires a permit under the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit regulations shall submit an application to the Secretary for a discharge permit and pay the required fees specified in 3 V.S.A. § 2822. ~~On or before July 1, 2007, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall adopt rules implementing the federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit regulations for discharges from concentrated animal feeding operations. Until such regulations are adopted, the substantive permitting standards and criteria used~~

~~by the Secretary to evaluate applications and issue or deny discharge permits for concentrated animal feeding operations shall be those specified by federal regulations. The Secretary may issue an individual or general permit for these types of discharges in accordance with the procedural requirements of subsection (b) of this section and other State law. For the purposes of this subsection, "concentrated animal feeding operation" means a farm that meets the definition contained in the federal regulations~~ Not later than December 15, 2025, the Secretary shall amend and issue the CAFO General Permit and Notice of Intent. Not later than July 1, 2026, the Secretary shall issue a CAFO application and an individual CAFO permit. The Secretary may request any additional information from a farm as necessary to process a permit and administer the CAFO program. The Secretary may direct a farm to apply for an individual or general permit in accordance with the procedural requirements of subsection (b) of this section.

(h) A large CAFO shall not be required to have a CAFO permit unless one of the following conditions are met:

(1) wastes are discharged into waters via a point source;

(2) wastes are discharged directly into waters that originate outside or pass over, across, or through the facility or otherwise come into direct contact with the animals confined in the operation; or

(3) a precipitation-related discharge of manure, litter, or process wastewater from land areas under the control of a LFO has occurred that was not in accordance with site-specific nutrient management practices that ensure appropriate agricultural utilization of the nutrients in the manure, litter, or process wastewater, as determined by the Secretary.

(i) The Secretary shall require nutrient management plans for all CAFOs and shall include the plans in the permits for public comment in accordance with the process set forth in chapter 170 of this title. The Secretary may amend a permit in accordance with chapter 170 of this title or revoke a permit in accordance with 3 V.S.A. § 814.

(j) Once a CAFO is covered under a CAFO permit, the farm shall be covered for the five year duration of the permit. A farm covered by a CAFO permit shall renew the permit in accordance with its terms, unless the farm wants to opt out and can demonstrate it is not discharging and shall accordingly comply with the federal CWA and the Vermont CAFO rules.

Sec. 12. 10 V.S.A. § 1264(d) is amended to read:

(d) Exemptions.

(1) No permit is required under this section for:

(A) Stormwater runoff from farms in compliance with agricultural practices adopted by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets~~, provided that this~~ and not subject to the federal Clean Water Act and its enabling regulations as determined by the Secretary of Natural Resources. This exemption shall not apply to construction stormwater permits required by subdivision (c)(4) of this section.

(B) Stormwater runoff from concentrated animal feeding operations permitted under subsection 1263(g) of this chapter.

(C) Stormwater runoff from accepted silvicultural practices, as defined by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation, including practices that are in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act as determined by the Secretary of Natural Resources and the Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont, as adopted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

(D) Stormwater runoff permitted under section 1263 of this title.

(2) No permit is required under subdivision (c)(1), (5), or (7) of this section and for which a municipality has assumed full legal responsibility as part of a permit issued to the municipality by the Secretary. As used in this subdivision, "full legal responsibility" means legal control of the stormwater system, including a legal right to access the stormwater system, a legal duty to properly maintain the stormwater system, and a legal duty to repair and replace the stormwater system when it no longer adequately protects waters of the State.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 13. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Senator Hardy, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported that the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and the recommendation of amendment was agreed to, on a roll call Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Heffernan.

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered.

Committee Relieved of Further Consideration; Bill Committed

H. 106.

On motion of Senator Hashim, the Committee on Judiciary was relieved of further consideration of House bill entitled:

An act relating to selling real property within a FEMA mapped flood hazard area.

And the bill was committed to the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Vyhovsky addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator White, her remarks were entered into the Journal, and are as follows:

"This federal administration has been in office only three months and has already sown fear and chaos here and across this globe. This is not by accident. The decision to abandon and again attempt to extort Ukraine is bad for the people of Ukraine, flies in the face of promises that we made to the people of Ukraine in the Budapest Memorandum of 1991, and the Minsk Agreement in 2015. This is however not only about Ukraine; it's about global democracy, and this administration's frightening swing towards aligning with dictators and fascists. It's hard to understand how cutting off our allies to align with the likes of Vladimir Putin and the Russian kleptocracy is good for Americans or the world.

"This administration has shown us that they do not care about the rule of law; they do not care about threats to democracy; they do not care about our allies, our economy, or the people here, living in constant fear of being sent back to a war zone, that this administration seems keen on allowing to continue until the Trump administration and Putin regime can agree on a way

to divide up the assets. To be clear, these assets are people in a sovereign nation that deserves self-determination, and if this is allowed to go forward we are barreling towards a new world order where we will all be looked at as assets to be divided up and exploited by wealthy oligarchs hoping to build a global dictatorship.

"We need each to stand up and say no, to stand up for those who are presently in very real harm's way, and for those who are afraid that they are next in the line of fire. We need to stand up and fight the dangerous swing to global fascism -- yes -- but we cannot simply go back to a time when things were nicer and calmer.

"The rise of fascism did not happen in a vacuum, and we know that for many, the pre-Trump status quo was not working. We need to fight for a better future, a future that puts people and planet first, and combats the dangerous and long-standing swing towards oligarchy. Together we can defeat global authoritarianism and it will be by building a global network of working-class solidarity to build a better future for all of us.

"Thank you."

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, April 18, 2025.

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the House No. 45

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 22. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on April 18, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bill Passed

S. 124.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 398.

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, 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.

Message from the House No. 46

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 18. An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 95. House concurrent resolution designating April 24, 2025 as Vermont Children's Alliance Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 96. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Thetford Academy Panthers Division III boys' basketball team on their second consecutive championship.

H.C.R. 97. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Southern State Correctional Facility's debate team on its National Prison Debate League victory over Wake Forest University.

H.C.R. 98. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets Division I championship girls' ice hockey team.

H.C.R. 99. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Mount Mansfield Union High School Cougars boys' Division I championship Nordic ski team.

H.C.R. 100. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Mount Mansfield Union High School Cougars Division I championship girls' Nordic ski team.

H.C.R. 101. House concurrent resolution congratulating Phoenix Newell on winning two consecutive Vermont State Spelling Bees.

H.C.R. 102. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 8–10 Colchester All-Star Vermont championship Little League Baseball team.

H.C.R. 103. House concurrent resolution commemorating the establishment of the Austine School for the Deaf collection and exhibit at the Vermont Historical Society Library in Barre.

H.C.R. 104. House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as National Foster Care Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 105. House concurrent resolution recognizing April 19, 2025 as World Circus Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 106. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Mount Mansfield Union High School Cougars dance program on winning a 10th consecutive hip-hop State championship.

H.C.R. 107. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Rice Memorial High School Green Knights boys' ice hockey team on winning a second consecutive Division I championship.

H.C.R. 108. House concurrent resolution congratulating the remarkable four-time State high school individual girls' golf champion Namo Seibert.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Rep. Noyes,

H.C.R. 95.

House concurrent resolution designating April 24, 2025 as Vermont Children's Alliance Day at the State House.

Offered by Reps. Holcombe and Masland,

Offered by Senator Hart,

H.C.R. 96.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Thetford Academy Panthers Division III boys' basketball team on their second consecutive championship.

Offered by Committee on Corrections and Institutions,

H.C.R. 97.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Southern State Correctional Facility's debate team on its National Prison Debate League victory over Wake Forest University.

Offered by Reps. Dodge and others,

Offered by Senators Gulick and Vyhovsky,

H.C.R. 98.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Essex High School Hornets Division I championship girls' ice hockey team.

Offered by Reps. Graning and others,

Offered by Senators Chittenden, Lyons and Ram Hinsdale,

H.C.R. 99.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Mount Mansfield Union High School Cougars boys' Division I championship Nordic ski team.

Offered by Reps. Graning and others,

Offered by Senators Chittenden, Lyons and Ram Hinsdale,

H.C.R. 100.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Mount Mansfield Union High School Cougars Division I championship girls' Nordic ski team.

Offered by Reps. Campbell and Dolgin,

Offered by Senator Ingalls,

H.C.R. 101.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Phoenix Newell on winning two consecutive Vermont State Spelling Bees.

Offered by Reps. Austin and others,

Offered by Senators Norris and Brennan,

H.C.R. 102.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 8–10 Colchester All-Star Vermont championship Little League Baseball team.

Offered by Reps. Burke and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 103.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the establishment of the Austine School for the Deaf collection and exhibit at the Vermont Historical Society Library in Barre.

Offered by Committee on Human Services,

H.C.R. 104.

House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as National Foster Care Month in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Kornheiser and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 105.

House concurrent resolution recognizing April 19, 2025 as World Circus Day in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Graning and others,

Offered by Senators Chittenden, Lyons and Ram Hinsdale,

H.C.R. 106.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Mount Mansfield Union High School Cougars dance program on winning a 10th consecutive hip-hop State championship.

Offered by Reps. Krasnow and others,

Offered by Senators Chittenden, Lyons and Ram Hinsdale,

H.C.R. 107.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Rice Memorial High School Green Knights boys' ice hockey team on winning a second consecutive Division I championship.

Offered by Reps. Graning and others,

Offered by Senators Chittenden, Lyons and Ram Hinsdale,

H.C.R. 108.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the remarkable four-time State high school individual girls' golf champion Namo Seibert.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 22.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Bill Referred to Committee on Rules

S. 131.

Senate bill of the following title, appearing on the Calendar for notice, under Temporary Rule 44A, was referred to the Committee on Rules:

An act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington relating to the possession of firearms.

Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

H. 488.

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 the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

Senate Resolution Referred

S.R. 13.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senators White, Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson and Westman,

S.R. 13. Senate resolution relating to strongly objecting to the manner and circumstances under which U.S. immigration authorities arrested and detained Mohsen Mahdawi and strongly advocating that he be afforded due process under the law and released immediately from detention.

Whereas, Mohsen Mahdawi is a resident of White River Junction and has been a U.S. permanent resident (green card holder) for the past decade, and

Whereas, on Monday, April 14, 2025, in the belief that he was to participate in his final interview for U.S. citizenship, Mohsen Mahdawi arrived at the U.S. immigration office in Colchester, and

Whereas, instead of commencing the interview, armed immigration authorities in plain clothes with faces covered arrested Mohsen Mahdawi and refused to provide any information regarding where he was being taken or what would happen to him, and

Whereas, in a joint statement that U.S. Senators Sanders and Welch and U.S. Representative Balint released, they described this action as "immoral, inhumane, and illegal," and

Whereas, Vermont's three federal legislators also demanded that Mohsen Mahdawi be afforded "due process under the law and immediately released from detention," *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont strongly objects to the manner and circumstances under which U.S. immigration authorities arrested and detained Mohsen Mahdawi and strongly advocate that he be afforded due process under the law and released immediately from detention, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem,

Immigration and Customs Enforcement Acting Director Todd Lyons, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Thereupon, the President, in his discretion, treated the resolution as a bill and referred it to the Committee on Judiciary.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 23.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 23. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, April 25, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, April 29, 2025.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 463.

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

An act relating to technical corrections for the 2025 legislative session.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill in Sec. 7, 9 V.S.A. § 206, following "pertaining" by inserting to

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; Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 398.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Chittenden, Beck, Brock, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy and Mattos moved that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 1, 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, in section 254, in the section heading, by striking out the word "STATE" and inserting in lieu thereof "~~STATE~~ AUTHORITY"

Second: In Sec. 1, 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, in section 280gg, by striking out subsection (a) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (a) to read as follows:

(a)(1) There is established within the Authority the Vermont Disaster Recovery Loan Fund, referred to in this subchapter as "the Fund," the purpose of which is to enable the Authority to provide loans and other forms of financial assistance to businesses, including agricultural and forest product enterprises, after disasters.

(2) The Authority shall consult with the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development; the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets; and the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation in determining whether funds shall be made available following a nondeclared disaster event impacting areas of the State. A consultation shall not be required in the event of a disaster declaration declared by the Governor or the President of the United States.

Which was agreed to.

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

Third Reading Ordered

H. 21.

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

An act relating to service of writs of possession.

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.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 206.

Senator Cummings, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to the Uniform Commercial Code.

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. 13.

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

An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for home- and community-based service providers.

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. § 900 is amended to read:

§ 900. DEFINITIONS

~~Unless otherwise required by the context, the words and phrases in this chapter shall be defined as follows~~ As used in this chapter:

* * *

(7) "Community-based services" means the following services provided pursuant to Vermont's Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 Medicaid demonstration or a successor program:

(A) long-term services and supports provided to older adults and adults with disabilities in a home or community setting other than a nursing home, including enhanced residential care services;

(B) home health and hospice services, adult day rehabilitation services, and assistive community care services; and

(C) short- and long-term services and supports provided to individuals with mental conditions, individuals with substance use disorders, individuals with developmental or intellectual disabilities, and individuals with a brain injury, in a home or community setting that is not a clinical residential setting or a private nonmedical residential setting.

Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 911 is added to read:

§ 911. PAYMENT RATES FOR PROVIDERS OF COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

(a) The Secretary of Human Services shall determine payment rates for providers of community-based services that are reasonable and adequate to achieve the required outcomes for the populations they serve. When determining these payment rates, the Secretary:

(1) shall adjust the rate amounts to take into account factors that include:

(A) the reasonable cost of any governmental mandate that has been enacted, adopted, or imposed by any State or federal authority; and

(B) a cost adjustment factor to reflect changes in reasonable costs of goods to and services of providers of community-based services, including those attributed to inflation and labor market dynamics; and

(2) may consider geographic differences in wages, benefits, housing, and real estate costs in each region of the State.

(b) The Secretary shall establish a methodology for determining payment rates for providers of community-based services in accordance with this section. The methodology shall:

(1) provide a schedule for conducting studies of the Medicaid reimbursement rates paid to the providers of community-based services, including the rates' adequacy and their underlying methodologies, that includes studying the rates paid to providers for each type of service at least once every five years;

(2) set forth a predictable timeline for redetermination of base rates;

(3) include a process for determining an annual inflationary rate adjustment;

(4) to the extent permitted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, take into account the financial needs of providers whose reimbursements may be negatively affected by client absences; and

(5) use Vermont labor market rates and Vermont costs of operation.

(c) The Secretary shall establish a process by which a provider of community-based services whose financial condition places it at imminent risk of closure may seek extraordinary financial relief from the Agency.

(d) The Secretary shall redetermine the payment rates for providers of community-based services in accordance with this section at least annually and

shall report those rates, and the amounts necessary to fund them, to the House Committees on Appropriations, on Human Services, and on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare annually as part of the Agency's budget presentation.

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 8914 is amended to read:

§ 8914. RATES OF PAYMENTS TO DESIGNATED AND SPECIALIZED SERVICE AGENCIES

~~(a)~~ The Secretary of Human Services shall ~~have sole responsibility for establishing~~ determine the Departments of Health's, of Mental Health's, and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living's rates of payments for designated and specialized service agencies ~~that are reasonable and adequate to achieve the required outcomes for designated populations~~ in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 911. ~~When establishing rates of payment for designated and specialized service agencies, the Secretary shall adjust rates to take into account factors that include:~~

~~(1) the reasonable cost of any governmental mandate that has been enacted, adopted, or imposed by any State or federal authority; and~~

~~(2) a cost adjustment factor to reflect changes in reasonable costs of goods and services of designated and specialized service agencies, including those attributed to inflation and labor market dynamics.~~

~~(b) When establishing rates of payment for designated and specialized service agencies, the Secretary may consider geographic differences in wages, benefits, housing, and real estate costs in each region of the State.~~

Sec. 4. PAYMENT RATES FOR PROVIDERS OF COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES; UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION; REPORT

On or before January 15, 2026, the Agency of Human Services shall report to the House Committees on Human Services and on Health Care and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare with an update on the Agency's implementation of 33 V.S.A. § 911, as added by Sec. 2 of this act, including the Agency's proposed schedule for Medicaid rate studies and the methodology the Agency developed for determining payment rates for providers of community-based services.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for community-based service providers"

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

Senator Lyons, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Health and Welfare.

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.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Hardy addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Watson, her remarks were entered into the Journal and are as follows:

"Recently, Vermont has become a focal point for disturbing actions against international students. This includes ICE using Vermont as a stopping point for the imprisonment of a Tufts University student, Rümeysa Öztürk; the cancelation of a humanitarian parole program affecting two students at CVU; the arrest of Vermont resident and Columbia University student, Mohsen Mahdawi; and the unjustified visa revocation of a Middlebury College student.

"Over the past few weeks, an estimated 1,500 students from 250 colleges nationwide have had their visas revoked, mostly without notice or reason. What does this inhumane treatment of international students tell us about the value the U.S. government puts on positive relations with foreign countries? On the lives of young people? On education in the United States?

"The United States has long been a destination for international college students and a popular place for high school exchange students. And while here, these students make lasting friendships and contribute deeply to their schools and communities. Some, like Mohsen Mahdawi, stay here with the dream of becoming citizens.

"There are about 35,000 college students in our state, most of them from places other than Vermont. Among my constituents are 2,500 students at Middlebury College, which bills itself as having "one of the most immersive and globally engaged experiences in higher education," with hundreds of international students studying and dozens of international professors teaching on campus throughout the year.

"My district, our state, and our country have long been welcoming and encouraging to international students and professors. Yet now, the Trump

Administration, with reckless and inhumane abandon, is severing the rights of international students, and entrapping and imprisoning these young people without cause or care.

"For the past 20 years, my family has been a local "host" family for Middlebury College international students, providing them a welcoming place to call home while they're at college. These students have become like family to us, and we still keep in touch with each of them.

"My family also spent a year living in Göttingen, Germany where my husband earned a fellowship that brought together scholars from around the world. It was part of a decades-long program to repair the bonds between German universities and academics around the world after World War II and the horrors of facism.

"Now two of my daughters are studying and volunteering abroad, so I know what it's like to send your child far away. I am sure that parents of international students studying here in the U.S. are fearing for the safety of their children in a way they never have before.

"We cannot turn our backs on students from other countries who come to Vermont to live and learn. After my time in a German university town, I know that among the first people the Nazis detained and evicted were students and professors. They drained universities and scarred institutions and academics with false accusations. That is exactly what we are seeing now in America. The dozens of international faculty members who are permanent residents in my district are scared they are next.

"We in Vermont cannot stand by quietly and let national leaders repeat fascist history. We must speak up and act to protect the rights and safety of international students and professors in our towns and on our campuses."

Message from the House No. 47

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 28. An act relating to access to certain legally protected health care services.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, April 23, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025

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 Appropriations

H. 488.

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 the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

Senate Resolution Referred

S.R. 14.

Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Senators Hardy, Collamore, Heffernan, Major and Plunkett,

S.R. 14. Senate resolution relating to strongly urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to expedite the establishment and implementation of an avian influenza vaccine national reserve and distribution system for small-and medium-sized poultry farms.

Whereas, according to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), there is an HPAI (highly pathogenic avian influenza) H5N1 virus present worldwide and outbreaks among U.S. domestic birds (including poultry) are continuing to occur, and

Whereas, as of April 9, 2025, the CDC reported that HPAI H5N1 had stricken 168,771,718 birds in commercial, hobbyist, and backyard poultry flocks in 1,680 outbreaks across the country, and

Whereas, the severity of this avian flu outbreak cannot be minimized, and

Whereas, to date, the CDC has assessed that HPAI H5N1 poses a low risk to humans, but nonetheless, one person has died, 70 cases have been reported, and the potential for additional human impact cannot be ignored, and

Whereas, APHIS has created a five-prong set of responses to the animal health crisis encompassing investment in gold-standard biosecurity measures for all U.S. poultry; increased relief to aid farmers and acceleration of repopulation; removal of unnecessary regulatory burdens on the chicken and egg industry to further innovation and reduce customer prices; the exploration of pathways toward vaccines, therapeutics, and other strategies for the protection of egg-laying chickens to reduce instances of depopulation; and the consideration of temporary import-export options to reduce costs and the evaluation of international best practices, and

Whereas, although these steps attempt to address aspects of the continuing presence of the HPAI H5N1 avian virus in the nation's poultry flocks, there must be a more comprehensive and direct measure to halt the spread and reduce, if not eliminate, the presence of the virus, and

Whereas, on February14, 2025, the USDA issued a conditional license to Zoetis for an avian influenza vaccine, H5N2 Subtype, Killed Virus, intended for use in chickens, and

Whereas, although the approval is conditioned on the "demonstration of safety, purity, and reasonable expectation of efficacy based on serology data," the need for this vaccine is immediate, and

Whereas, this new Zoetis vaccine is an updated version of a vaccine originally issued in 2001 and 2002, when an avian influenza outbreak occurred in Southeast Asia, and

Whereas, in 2014 and 2015, during a prior avian flu outbreak, the federal government created a national avian flu vaccine stockpile, which, while not used, was ready for deployment, and

Whereas, the rapid federal distribution of COVID-19 vaccines demonstrates that, with the necessary planning, the complex logistics required for an accelerated national stockpiling/deployment of an avian flu vaccine is possible, and

Whereas, the continuing avian flu crisis and its impact on commercial, hobby, and backyard poultry flocks demands a decisive and prompt federal response, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont strongly urges the USDA and the CDC to expedite the establishment and implementation of an avian influenza

vaccine national reserve and distribution system for small- and medium-sized poultry farms, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture; the Vermont Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets; the Acting Director of the CDC; and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Thereupon, the President, in his discretion, treated the resolution as a bill and referred it to the Committee on Agriculture.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 17.

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

An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown.

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; Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 13.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for home- and community-based service providers.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Gulick, Cummings, Douglass, Hart and Lyons move to amend the Senate proposal of amendment as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 2, 33 V.S.A. § 911, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 911 is added to read:

§ 911. PAYMENT RATES FOR PROVIDERS OF COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

(a) The Secretary of Human Services shall calculate payment rates for providers of community-based services that are reasonable and adequate to

achieve the required outcomes for the populations they serve. When calculating these payment rates, the Secretary:

(1) for informational purposes, shall ensure that the calculations take into account factors that include:

(A) the reasonable cost of any governmental mandate that has been enacted, adopted, or imposed by any State or federal authority; and

(B) a cost adjustment factor to reflect changes in reasonable costs of goods to and services of providers of community-based services, including those attributed to inflation and labor market dynamics; and

(2) may consider geographic differences in wages, benefits, housing, and real estate costs in each region of the State.

(b) The Secretary shall establish a methodology for calculating payment rates for providers of community-based services in accordance with this section. The methodology shall:

(1) provide a schedule for conducting studies of the Medicaid reimbursement rates paid to the providers of community-based services, including the rates' adequacy and their underlying methodologies, that includes studying the rates paid to providers for each type of service at least once every five years;

(2) set forth a predictable timeline for redetermination of base rates;

(3) include a process for calculating an annual inflationary rate adjustment;

(4) to the extent permitted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, take into account the financial needs of providers whose reimbursements may be negatively affected by client absences; and

(5) use Vermont labor market rates and Vermont costs of operation.

(c) The Secretary shall establish a process by which a provider of community-based services whose financial condition places it at imminent risk of closure may request provider stabilization from the Agency.

(d) The Secretary shall recalculate the payment rates for providers of community-based services in accordance with this section at least annually and shall report those rates, and the amounts necessary to fund them, to the House Committees on Appropriations, on Human Services, and on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare annually as part of the Agency's budget presentation.

Second: In Sec. 3, 18 V.S.A. § 8914, preceding "the Departments of Health's," by striking out "determine" and inserting in lieu thereof "calculate"

Third: In Sec. 4, payment rates for providers of community-based services; update on implementation; report, following "developed for," by striking out "determining" and inserting in lieu thereof "calculating"

Which was agreed to.

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

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 21.

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

An act relating to service of writs of possession.

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

H. 206.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to the Uniform Commercial Code.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senators Cummings, Beck, Brock, Chittenden, Gulick, Hardy, and Mattos move that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended as follows:

First: In Sec. 11, transitional provisions for articles 9 and 12 of the Uniform Commercial Code amendments, in subdivision (b)(1)(A), following "transaction validly entered into", by inserting "before"

Second: In Sec. 11, transitional provisions for articles 9 and 12 of the Uniform Commercial Code amendments, in subdivision (d)(2), following "as amended by this act, on", by striking out "July 1, 2025"

Which was agreed to.

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

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 463.

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

An act relating to technical corrections for the 2025 legislative session.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Major addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Hardy, his remarks were entered into the Journal and are as follows:

"Thank you Mr. President,

"I rise today not just as the Vice Chair of this chamber's Agriculture Committee, but as a proud member of the Vermont community, where generations of farmers have worked the land with grit, heart, and unshakable hope.

"And today, I come to this floor not with hope, but with heartbreak—and with fury. Because what has happened to our farmers over the past few months is not just an unfortunate byproduct of global economics. It's not just 'the way things go.' No, what's happened is nothing short of sabotage.

"And that sabotage came from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

"Under the Trump administration, American farmers were handed a raw deal—over and over again. And no one felt it more than the small, family-owned farms of Vermont.

"Let's talk about facts. Not tweets. Not talking points. Not political theater.

"Let's talk about what actually happened.

"This administration launched a chaotic trade war with China, supposedly in the name of protecting American industry. But guess what? While billionaires flew to Mar-a-Lago, Vermont farmers' work force was devastated by antiquated and often illegal immigration policies. Maple producers watched international orders vanish, tariffs gut their margins, and longstanding relationships dissolve overnight.

"We were told to be patient. That the pain was 'short-term.' But patience doesn't pay the bills. Patience doesn't stop the foreclosure notice. Patience doesn't pass the farm down to the next generation—it buries it.

"In Trump's prior administration he tossed around billion-dollar bailouts like they were doing farmers a favor—like they should be grateful. But let me

be clear: Vermont farmers don't want handouts. They want fair markets, stable policy, and a government that works with them, not against them.

"And then, there's climate policy—or more accurately, the complete abandonment of it. In Vermont, where we are on the front lines of a changing climate, our farmers are seeing floods one month and droughts the next. And what did President Trump do? He pulled us out of the Paris Agreement, rolled back protections, and told us climate change was a hoax. A hoax! You try telling that to a farmer who's lost $55 million over two year period.

"But it didn't stop there.

"USDA programs were gutted. Cooperative Extension funding was slashed. Mental health resources for farmers? Neglected. Rural broadband expansion? Ignored. And now, we have the nerve to wonder why our young people are fleeing family farms, and why more farmers are turning in their boots for good?

"Mr. President, this isn't just bad policy—it's a betrayal.

"It's a betrayal of rural America. A betrayal of the people who grow our food, who steward our land, who do the work nobody else wants to do but everybody relies on.

"I say enough is enough.

"We in this Senate must hold Trump administration accountable. We must reject the politics of photo-ops and start passing policies that actually serve working families—policies that stabilize milk pricing, invest in climate-smart agriculture, expand local food systems, and yes—finally give our farmers the dignity and support they deserve.

"Vermont's agricultural future depends on it.

"And I, for one, won't stand by while more barns go dark, more fields lie empty, and more farmers give up hope.

"Thank you."

Message from the House No. 48

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 27. An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, April 24, 2025.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2025

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 Appropriations

H. 219.

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 Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

Bills Referred to Committee on Finance

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Finance:

H. 481. An act relating to stormwater management.

H. 493. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 18.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

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. 18 V.S.A. chapter 53 is added to read:

CHAPTER 53. BIRTH CENTER LICENSING

§ 2351. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Birth center" means a facility the primary purposes of which are to provide midwifery care, low-risk deliveries, and newborn care immediately after delivery, for a stay of generally less than 24 hours. The term does not include a facility that is a hospital, is part of a hospital, or is owned by a hospital; a facility that is an ambulatory surgical center; or the residence of the individual giving birth. A birth center may be located on the grounds of a hospital.

(2) "Certified nurse midwife" means an advanced practice registered nurse licensed in accordance with 26 V.S.A. chapter 28, subchapter 2 who has specialized training in childbirth, newborn care, and reproductive health care services.

(3) "Change of ownership" means a change in the majority or controlling interest in an established birth center to another person.

(4) "Corrective action plan" means a written strategy for correcting an issue of partial compliance, deficiency, or violation of this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter.

(5) "Licensed maternity care provider" means a licensed provider whose professional scope of practice, as established under Vermont law, includes preconception, prenatal, labor, birth, and postpartum care and early care of a newborn and who may be the primary attendant during the perinatal period.

(6) "Licensed midwife" means a professional licensed in accordance with 26 V.S.A. chapter 85.

(7) "Licensed provider" means an individual licensed or certified in Vermont to provide specific health care-related services within a scope of practice defined by licensing statutes and rules, and may include advanced practice registered nurses, including certified nurse midwives; licensed midwives; physician assistants; naturopathic physicians with a childbirth endorsement in accordance with 26 V.S.A. §§ 4122(b) and 4125(b); and physicians.

§ 2352. LICENSE; PROHIBITIONS

(a) No person shall establish, maintain, or operate a birth center in this State without first obtaining a license for the birth center in accordance with this chapter.

(b) A birth center may be independently owned and operated by a licensed maternity care provider or any other person who complies with the requirements of this chapter.

(c) A birth center shall not offer or provide epidural anesthesia or a cesarean delivery.

(d) No person shall represent itself as a "birth center" or use the term "birth center" in its title or in its advertising, publications, or other form of communication unless the person has been licensed as a birth center in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(e) A license is not transferable or assignable and shall be issued only for the premises and persons named in the application.

§ 2353. APPLICATION; FEE

(a) An application for licensure of a birth center shall be made to the Department of Health in the manner specified by the Department and shall include all information required by the Department.

(b)(1) Each application for an initial license, renewal of a license, or a change of ownership shall be accompanied by a fee of $250.00.

(2) Fees collected under this section shall be credited to the Hospital Licensing Fees Special Fund and shall be available to the Department of Health to offset the costs of licensing birth centers.

§ 2354. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Upon receipt of an application for a license and the licensing fee, the Department of Health shall issue a license if it determines, after an inspection conducted by the Department or its designee, that the applicant is able to operate a birth center in accordance with rules adopted by the Department.

§ 2355. REVOCATION OF LICENSE; HEARING

The Department of Health, after notice and opportunity for hearing to the applicant or licensee, is authorized to condition, deny, suspend, or revoke a license in any case in which it finds that there has been a substantial failure to comply with the requirements established under this chapter. Such notice shall be served by registered mail or by personal service, shall set forth the reasons for the proposed action, and shall set a date not less than 60 days from the date of the mailing or service on which the applicant or licensee shall be given opportunity for a hearing. After the hearing, or upon default of the applicant or licensee, the Department shall file its findings of fact and conclusions of law. A copy of the findings and decision shall be sent by registered mail or served personally upon the applicant or licensee. The procedure governing

hearings authorized by this section shall be set forth in the rules adopted pursuant to section 2359 of this chapter and shall not be subject to the contested case provisions of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, subchapter 2.

§ 2356. APPEAL

Any applicant or licensee, or the State acting through the Attorney General, aggrieved by the decision of the Department of Health after a hearing may appeal the decision in accordance with section 128 of this title. Pursuant to section 129 of this title, an appeal pursuant to this section shall not stay the effectiveness of an order entered in accordance with section 2355 of this chapter, but any party is permitted to seek a stay order in the Superior Court in which the appeal is being heard.

§ 2357. INSPECTIONS

(a) The Department of Health or its designee shall make or cause to be made such inspections and investigations as the Department or its designee deems necessary.

(b) A birth center, including its building and grounds and, in accordance with applicable law, its records, shall be subject to inspection by the Department and its designee at all times.

(c) If a birth center is found to be out of compliance with any requirement of this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter, the Department may condition, deny, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew the birth center's license or may ask the birth center to develop and implement a corrective action plan.

(d) If the Department finds a violation as the result of an inspection or investigation, the Department shall post a report on the Department's website summarizing the violation and any corrective action required.

§ 2358. RECORDS

(a) Information received by the Department of Health through filed reports, inspections, or as otherwise authorized by law shall:

(1) not be disclosed publicly in a manner that identifies or may lead to the identification of one or more individuals or birth centers;

(2) be exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act; and

(3) be kept confidential except as it relates to a proceeding regarding licensure of a birth center.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to the summary reports of violations required to be posted on the Department's website pursuant to section 2357 of this chapter.

§ 2359. RULES

The Department of Health shall adopt rules in accordance with 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 as needed to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The rules shall be based on the national birth center standards published by the American Association of Birth Centers and shall, at a minimum, include provisions regarding:

(1) requirements for operating a birth center, including requirements for safety, sanitation, and health;

(2) obtaining, storing, and dispensing pharmaceuticals consistent with State and federal laws;

(3) requirements for notice to the Department of Health when there is a change in ownership of a birth center and any additional licensing requirements related to a change in ownership;

(4) the scope of services that may be provided at a birth center, including risk factors that preclude a patient from receiving labor and delivery services at a birth center;

(5) appropriate staffing for a birth center, including the types of licensed providers who may practice at a birth center;

(6) birth center complaint processes;

(7) birth center facility, equipment, and supply requirements, including requirements for the maintenance of safety, sanitation, and health;

(8) record retention and confidentiality;

(9) quality assurance and improvement;

(10) processes for the development, submission, approval, and implementation of corrective action plans;

(11) a requirement for written practice guidelines and policies that include procedures for transferring a patient to a hospital if circumstances warrant; and

(12)(A) requirements for written policies and procedures for collaboration with hospitals, other agencies and facilities, and individuals to provide services to patients as appropriate, including:

(i) laboratory and diagnostic services;

(ii) childbirth education and parenting education support services;

(iii) obstetric consultation services;

(iv) pediatric consultation services;

(v) transport services;

(vi) obstetric and newborn acute care in licensed hospitals; and

(vii) home health care services;

(B) a requirement that the policies and procedures established pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (12) are provided to the relevant service providers upon request; and

(C) a requirement that the birth center provide the health record of the patient or the newborn, or both, to the receiving service provider upon referral or transfer, in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

§ 2360. NO EFFECT ON SCOPE OF SERVICES

(a) Nothing in this chapter or in rules adopted pursuant to this chapter shall be construed to expand or limit the scope of the services that a licensed midwife, certified nurse midwife, or other provider may offer at a birth center or perform in a space that is shared with or adjacent to a birth center.

(b) A birth center may serve as a location for additional services offered in shared or adjacent spaces, including outpatient gynecologic care, primary care, and education and support services, provided that any licensed provider providing services in those spaces shall only provide those services that are within the licensed provider's authorized scope of practice.

Sec. 2. 8 V.S.A. § 4099d is amended to read:

§ 4099d. MIDWIFERY COVERAGE~~; HOME BIRTHS~~

(a) A health insurance plan or health benefit plan providing maternity benefits shall also provide coverage for services rendered by a midwife licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 85 or an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 28 who is certified as a nurse midwife for services within the licensed midwife's or certified nurse midwife's scope of practice and provided in a hospital, birth center, or other health care facility or at home.

* * *

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 9435 is amended to read:

§ 9435. EXCLUSIONS

* * *

(i) Excluded from this subchapter are birth centers that are licensed pursuant to chapter 53 of this title or are proposed to be established and licensed pursuant to chapter 53 of this title.

Sec. 4. AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES; MEDICAID; REQUEST FOR FEDERAL APPROVAL

The Agency of Human Services shall seek approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to allow Vermont Medicaid to cover prenatal, maternity, postpartum, and newborn services provided at a licensed birth center and to allow Vermont Medicaid to reimburse separately for birth center services, including birth center facility fees, and for professional services.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 1 (birth center licensing) shall take effect on January 1, 2027 or the effective date of the birth center rules adopted by the Department of Health, whichever comes first.

(b) Sec. 2 (8 V.S.A. § 4099d) shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

(c) Sec. 3 (18 V.S.A. § 9435) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(d) Sec. 4 (Agency of Human Services; Medicaid; request for federal approval) shall take effect on passage, and the Medicaid coverage shall begin on the later of the date of approval or the effective date of the birth center rules adopted by the Department of Health.

(e) This section shall take effect on passage.

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

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 17.

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

An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 218.

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

An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Lyons, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, 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.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S. 131.

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

An act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington relating to the possession of firearms.

Reported recommending that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. CHARTER AMENDMENT APPROVAL

The General Assembly approves the amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington as set forth in this act. Voters approved the proposal of amendment on March 4, 2025.

Sec. 2. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 3 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 3. CITY OF BURLINGTON

* * *

§ 510. BAN ON FIREARMS IN PREMISES LICENSED TO SERVE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

(a) Statutes superseded. This section expressly supersedes 24 V.S.A. §§ 2291(8) and 2295 and authorizes the City to regulate the possession and carrying of firearms pursuant to this section.

(b) Ban. Within the City of Burlington, no person may knowingly possess a firearm, as defined by 13 V.S.A. § 4016(a)(3), in any premises licensed to serve alcoholic beverages.

(c) Exceptions. This provision shall not apply to:

(1)(A) a second-class licensed premises, including premises used for a retail alcoholic beverage tasting permit;

(B) sidewalks or public highways that pass through an outside premises for which a licensee holds an outside consumption permit;

(C) the premises for which a licensee holds a limited event permit, special event permit, or special event serving permit; or

(D) a dining car for which a licensee holds a promotional railroad tasting permit; or

(2) a firearm possessed by:

(A) any federal, State, or local law enforcement officer acting within the scope of that officer's official duties;

(B) any member of the armed forces of the United States or the Vermont National Guard acting within the scope of that person's military duties;

(C) any government officer, agent, or employee authorized to carry a weapon and acting within the scope of that person's duties; or

(D) the holder of the license for the premises, provided that person is not prohibited from possessing or carrying that weapon under any other federal, State, or local law.

(d) Penalties. The penalty for any violation of this section shall be as follows:

(1) Criminal offense. Any violation of this section may be considered a criminal offense, which shall be punishable by a fine of not more than $1,000.00 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days.

(2) Civil offense. Any violation of this section may also be considered a civil ordinance violation punishable by a civil penalty of not less than $200.00 and not more than $500.00.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

And that when so amended the bill ought to pass.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43.

Pending the question, Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Government Operations?, Senator Williams moved that the bill be committed to the Committee on Judiciary, which was disagreed to.

Thereupon, the recommendation of amendment was agreed to, on a roll call, Yeas 17, Nays 12.

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: Baruth, Bongartz, Chittenden, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Beck, Brennan, Brock, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Heffernan.

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered.

Appointment of Senate Member to the Agriculture Fairs and Field Days Capital Program Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 5608(b), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Agriculture Fairs and Field Days Capital Program Advisory Committee during the biennium:

Senator Collamore

Appointment of Senate Member to the Building Energy Code Working Group

Pursuant to the provisions of Act 151 § 2(b) (2023 Adjourned Session), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to service on the Building Energy Code Study Committee during this biennium:

Senator Bongartz

Appointment of Senate Member to Recreational Facilities Grants Program

Pursuant to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 5605(b), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Recreational Facilities Grants Program during this biennium:

Senator Westman

Appointment of Senate Member to Regional Economic Development Grant Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 5607(b), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Regional Economic Development Grant Advisory Committee during this biennium:

Senator Clarkson

Appointment of Senate Member to the Vermont Veterans' Memorial Cemetery Advisory Board

Pursuant to the provisions of 20 V.S.A. §1581(a)(2), the President, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, announced the appointment of the following Senator to serve on the Vermont Veterans' Memorial Cemetery Advisory Board during this biennium:

Senator Major

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Chittenden addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator White, his remarks were entered into the Journal and are as follows:

"Mr. President, I rise today to make a statement as part of a point of personal privilege.

"May the times we inherit be interesting and worthy of the historical record. These times are certainly that and I rise with this statement because of how interesting these times certainly are.

"I do not rise seeking the spotlight nor to score political points. Nor do I rise to cast shade or stone – there is enough of that in the world today. I rise today because of concerns with actions in this country fostering ill will and diminishing our standing in the world. I rise today because two days ago in this building I ran into a former colleague who I hadn't seen in awhile. I used to work with him and in the four years I knew him, his cultural heritage and citizenship had never come up in conversation. But this time, he said to me 'Tom, I am no longer welcome here. I am Palestinian and this country does not want me here.' I saw in his eyes not fear, not hatred, not disappointment but realism. I saw in his eyes a resignation that this country is no longer what it was to him. That is why I rise today.

"I said to my friend that I want him here. That I want his family here and that we have always been a country of immigrants made stronger with our diversity of background and heritage. And I told him that I am sorry.

"I grew up in the 80s and I grew up a Republican. Most of my family still are Republicans – these days, I'm a bit of a black sheep at family parties. I offer this because I want to close with a quote from a famous Republican who often spoke of America as the Shining City Upon the Hill. This is from his farewell to the nation that he offered back in 1989 and his words ring as true today as they did then.

"'I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind, it was a

tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That's how I saw it, and see it still.' - Ronald Reagan.

"That is the America I want to see in the world today and it is how I want my friend to one day see America again."

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Ms. Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the 24th day of April, 2025 he approved and signed a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 3. An act relating to the transfer of property to a trust.

Message from the House No. 49

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposals of amendment to the following House bills:

H. 10. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre.

H. 243. An act relating to the regulation of business organizations.

And has severally concurred therein.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 23. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The Governor has informed the House that on April 23, 2025, he approved and signed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 80. An act relating to the Office of the Health Care Advocate.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, April 25, 2025.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025

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 Appropriations

H. 494.

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 capital construction and State bonding.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 28.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to access to certain legally protected health care services.

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. 1 V.S.A. § 150 is amended to read:

§ 150. LEGALLY PROTECTED HEALTH CARE ACTIVITY

* * *

(b)(1) "Legally protected health care activity" means:

* * *

(4) The protections applicable to persons who engage in "legally protected health care activity" shall also apply to a person who has previously undertaken one or more acts or omissions while in another U.S. jurisdiction to aid or encourage, or attempt to aid or encourage, any person in the exercise and enjoyment, or attempted exercise and enjoyment, of rights to reproductive health care services or gender-affirming health care services that would have been protected by this State if they had been undertaken in this State, provided

that the acts or omissions were permissible under the laws of the jurisdiction in which the person was located at the time they were undertaken.

* * *

Sec. 2. 1 V.S.A. § 317(c) is amended to read:

(c) The following public records are exempt from public inspection and copying:

* * *

(44) Records held by the Office of Professional Regulation, Board of Medical Practice, or another public agency that issues one or more licenses, certificates, or registrations to engage in a State-regulated profession or occupation if the records contain the telephone number, email address, physical address, or mailing address, or a combination of these, of an individual who has applied for or has been granted a license, certificate, or registration to practice a profession or occupation in this State, except that the public agency shall disclose any address that the individual has designated as a public address in the record.

Sec. 3. 3 V.S.A. § 129a is amended to read:

§ 129a. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) In addition to any other provision of law, the following conduct by a licensee constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of a license or other disciplinary action. Any one of the following items or any combination of items, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, shall constitute unprofessional conduct:

(1) Fraudulent or deceptive procurement or use of a license.

(2) Advertising, including advertising about health care services, that is intended or has a tendency to deceive or mislead.

* * *

(6) Delegating professional responsibilities, including the delivery of health care services, to a person whom the licensed professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform them, or knowingly providing professional supervision or serving as a preceptor to a person who has not been licensed or registered as required by the laws of that person's profession.

* * *

(21) Permitting one's name or license to be used by a person, group, or corporation when not actually in charge of ~~or~~ responsible for, or actively overseeing the professional services provided.

* * *

(f)(1) Health care providers. Notwithstanding subsection (e) of this section or any other law to the contrary, no health care provider who is certified, registered, or licensed in Vermont shall be subject to professional disciplinary action by a board or the Director, nor shall a board or the Director take adverse action on an application for certification, registration, or licensure of a qualified health care provider, based solely on:

* * *

(2) Definitions. As used in this subsection:

* * *

(B) "Health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical or mental health condition, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

* * *

Sec. 4. 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 11 is amended to read:

Subchapter 11. ~~Pregnancy Services Centers~~ Health Care Services

§ 2491. FINDINGS; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

~~(a) Findings.~~ The General Assembly finds that:

(1) ~~Centers that seek to counsel clients against abortion, often referred to as crisis pregnancy centers or limited-services pregnancy centers, have become common across the country, including in Vermont. Accurate information about the services that a limited-services pregnancy center performs, in addition to forthright acknowledgement of its limitations, is essential to enable individuals in this State to make informed decisions about their care. This includes individuals being informed of whether they are receiving services from a licensed and qualified health care provider at a limited-services pregnancy center, as this allows individuals to determine if they need to seek medical care elsewhere in order to continue or terminate a pregnancy.~~

~~(2) Although some limited-services pregnancy centers openly acknowledge in their advertising, on their websites, and at their facilities that they neither provide abortions nor refer clients to other providers of abortion services, others provide confusing and misleading information to pregnant~~

~~individuals contemplating abortion by leading those individuals to believe that their facilities offer abortion services and unbiased counseling. Some limited-services pregnancy centers have promoted patently false or biased medical claims about abortion, pregnancy, contraception, and reproductive health care providers.~~

~~(3) False and misleading advertising by centers that do not offer or refer clients for abortion is of special concern to the State because of the time-sensitive and constitutionally protected nature of the decision to continue or terminate a pregnancy. When a pregnant individual is misled into believing that a center offers services that it does not in fact offer or receives false or misleading information regarding health care options, the individual loses time crucial to the decision whether to terminate a pregnancy and may lose the option to choose a particular method or to terminate a pregnancy at all.~~

~~(4)~~ Telling the truth is how trained health care providers demonstrate respect for patients, foster trust, promote self-determination, and cultivate an environment where best practices in shared decision-making can flourish. Without veracity in information and communication, it is difficult for individuals to make informed, voluntary choices that are essential to one's sense of personal agency and autonomy.

~~(5)~~(2) Advertising strategies and educational information about health care options that lack transparency, use misleading or ambiguous terminology, misrepresent or obfuscate services provided, or provide factually inaccurate information are a form of manipulation that disrespects individuals, undermines trust, broadens health disparity, and can result in patient harm.

~~(b) Intent.~~

~~(1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that the public is provided with accurate, factual information about the types of health care services that are available to pregnant individuals in this State. The General Assembly respects the constitutionally protected right of each individual to personal reproductive autonomy, which includes the right to receive clear, honest, and nonmisleading information about the individual's options and to make informed, voluntary choices after considering all relevant information.~~

~~(2) The General Assembly respects the right of limited-services pregnancy centers to counsel individuals against abortion, and nothing in this subchapter should be construed to regulate, limit, or curtail such advocacy.~~

§ 2492. ~~DEFINITIONS~~ DEFINITION

As used in this subchapter~~:~~,

~~(1) "Abortion" means any medical treatment intended to induce the termination of, or to terminate, a clinically diagnosable pregnancy except for the purpose of producing a live birth.~~

~~(2) "Client" means an individual who is inquiring about or seeking services at a pregnancy services center.~~

~~(3) "Emergency contraception" means any drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as a contraceptive method for use after sexual intercourse, whether provided over the counter or by prescription.~~

~~(4) "Health information" means any oral or written information in any form or medium that relates to health insurance or the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of a client.~~

~~(5) "Limited-services pregnancy center" means a pregnancy services center that does not directly provide, or provide referrals to clients for, abortions or emergency contraception.~~

~~(6) "Pregnancy services center" means a facility, including a mobile facility, where the primary purpose is to provide services to individuals who are or may be pregnant and that either offers obstetric ultrasounds, obstetric sonograms, or prenatal care to pregnant individuals or has the appearance of a medical facility. A pregnancy services center has the appearance of a medical facility if two or more of the following factors are present:~~

~~(A) The center offers pregnancy testing or pregnancy diagnosis, or both.~~

~~(B) The center has staff or volunteers who wear medical attire or uniforms.~~

~~(C) The center contains one or more examination tables.~~

~~(D) The center contains a private or semiprivate room or area containing medical supplies or medical instruments.~~

~~(E) The center has staff or volunteers who collect health information from clients.~~

~~(F) The center is located on the same premises as a State-licensed medical facility or provider or shares facility space with a State-licensed medical provider.~~

~~(7) "Premises" means land and improvements or appurtenances or any part thereof~~ "health care services" means all supplies, care, and services of a medical, dental, behavioral health, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, surgical, psychiatric, therapeutic, diagnostic, preventative, rehabilitative, or supportive nature, including medication.

§ 2493. UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE ACT

(a) It is an unfair and deceptive act and practice in commerce and a violation of section 2453 of this title for any ~~limited-services pregnancy center~~ person to disseminate or cause to be disseminated to the public any advertising about ~~the~~ health care services or proposed services performed ~~at that center~~ in this State that is untrue or clearly designed to mislead the public about the nature of the services provided. Advertising includes representations made directly to consumers; marketing practices; communication in any print medium, such as newspapers, magazines, mailers, or handouts; and any broadcast medium, such as television or radio, telephone marketing, or advertising over the ~~Internet~~ internet such as through websites ~~and~~, web ~~ads~~ advertisements, and social media. For purposes of this chapter, advertising ~~or the provision of services by a limited-services pregnancy center~~ about health care services is an act in commerce.

(b) ~~Health care providers certified, registered, or licensed under Title 26 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated who are employed by, contracted to provide services for or on behalf of, or volunteer to provide services at a limited-services pregnancy center shall be responsible for conducting and providing health care services, information, and counseling at the center. The failure of a health care professional certified, registered, or licensed under Title 26 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated to conduct or to ensure that health care services, information, and counseling at the limited-services pregnancy services center are conducted in accordance with State law and professional standards of practice may constitute unprofessional conduct under 3 V.S.A. § 129a and 26 V.S.A. § 1354.~~ [Repealed.]

(c) The Attorney General has the same authority to make rules, conduct civil investigations, and bring civil actions with respect to violations of ~~subsection (a) of~~ this section as provided under subchapter 1 of this chapter.

Sec. 5. 12 V.S.A. § 7306 is amended to read:

§ 7306. NONCOOPERATION

(a) No public agency or employee, appointee, officer or official, or any other ~~person~~ individual acting on behalf of a public agency may knowingly provide any information or expend or use time, money, facilities, property, equipment, personnel, or other resources in furtherance of any interstate or federal investigation or proceeding seeking to impose civil or criminal liability upon ~~a person~~ an individual or entity for:

(1) the provision, seeking or receipt of, or inquiring about legally protected health care activity that is legal in this State; or

(2) assisting any ~~person~~ individual or entity providing, seeking, receiving, or responding to an inquiry about legally protected health care activity that is legal in this State.

(b) This section shall not apply to:

(1) any investigation or proceeding where the conduct subject to potential liability under the investigation or proceeding would be subject to liability under the laws of this State if committed in this State;

(2) any ~~action taken by the Judicial Branch in judicial proceedings~~ order issued by a Vermont State court or a federal court; or

(3) a public agency or employee, appointee, officer or official, or any other individual acting on behalf of a public agency who, in the course of normal business, is responding to a warrant or extradition demand on the good faith belief that the warrant or demand is valid in this State.

Sec. 6. 18 V.S.A. § 1881 is amended to read:

§ 1881. DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION PROHIBITED

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Business associate" has the same meaning as in 45 C.F.R. § 160.103.

(2) "Covered entity" has the same meaning as in 45 C.F.R. § 160.103.

(3) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as in 1 V.S.A. § 150.

(4) "Protected health information" has the same meaning as in 45 C.F.R. § 160.103.

(5) "Telehealth" has the same meaning as in 26 V.S.A. § 3052.

(b) A covered entity or business associate shall not disclose protected health information unless the disclosure is permitted under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

(c)(1) ~~In~~ Notwithstanding any provision of subsection (b) of this section to the contrary, in order to protect patients and providers who engage in legally protected health care activity and except as set forth in in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a covered entity or business associate shall not disclose protected health information that is identifiable or susceptible to reidentification and is related to a legally protected health care activity:

(A) to any government entity other than the State of Vermont or its political subdivisions or instrumentalities if the covered entity or business associate has reason to believe that the information will be used:

(i) to conduct a criminal, civil, administrative, or professional disciplinary investigation into any individual for the mere act of seeking, obtaining, providing, or facilitating a legally protected health care activity;

(ii) to impose criminal, civil, or administrative liability or professional disciplinary action on any individual for the mere act of seeking, obtaining, providing, or facilitating a legally protected health care activity; or

(iii) to identify any individual for any of the activities described in subdivision (i) or (ii) of this subdivision (A); or

(B) for use in a civil or criminal action; a proceeding preliminary to a civil or criminal action; or a probate, legislative, or administrative proceeding ~~unless~~.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (1) of this subsection to the contrary, a covered entity or business associate may disclose protected health information that is identifiable or susceptible to reidentification and is related to a legally protected health care activity if the disclosure meets one or more of the following conditions:

~~(1)~~(A) The disclosure is authorized by the patient or the patient's conservator, guardian, or other authorized legal representative.

~~(2) The disclosure is specifically required by federal law, Vermont law, or rules adopted by the Vermont Supreme Court.~~

~~(3)~~(B) The disclosure is ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to federal law, Vermont law, or rules adopted by the Vermont Supreme Court. ~~An~~ A State court order compelling disclosure under this subdivision (B) shall include the court's determination that ~~good cause exists to require disclosure of the information related to~~ the information will not be used to impose criminal, civil, or administrative liability or professional disciplinary action on any individual based solely on the fact that the person sought, obtained, provided, or facilitated a legally protected health care activity.

~~(4)~~(C) The disclosure is to be made to a ~~person~~ business associate designated by the covered entity or the covered entity's business associate and will be used solely in the defense of the covered entity or the covered entity's business associate against a claim that has been made, or there is a reasonable belief will be made, against the covered entity or the covered entity's business

associate in a civil or criminal action; a proceeding preliminary to a civil or criminal action; or a probate, legislative, or administrative proceeding.

~~(5)~~(D) The disclosure is to Vermont's Board of Medical Practice or Office of Professional Regulation, as applicable, in connection with a bona fide investigation in Vermont of a licensed, certified, or registered health care provider or a bona fide investigation of whether an individual who is not licensed, certified, or registered to practice a health care profession in Vermont engaged in unauthorized practice in this State, whether in person or through telehealth.

~~(6)~~(E) The disclosure is to the Vermont Department of Health or the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, or both, in connection with a bona fide investigation of a licensed health care facility in Vermont.

(F) Subject to the limitations set forth in 12 V.S.A. § 7306, the disclosure is required in the ordinary course of business of Vermont's Medicaid program.

(d) A covered entity or business associate shall not be subject to any civil, criminal, or administrative liability or professional disciplinary action for refusing to disclose protected health information that is identifiable or susceptible to reidentification and is related to a legally protected health care activity, in accordance with subsection (c) of this section.

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. § 4999 is amended to read:

§ 4999. DEFINITIONS

As used in this part:

* * *

(2) "Licensed health care professional~~,~~" ~~as used in 18 V.S.A. chapter 107,~~ means a physician, a physician assistant, ~~a naturopathic physician,~~ or an advanced practice registered nurse. As used in chapter 107 of this part only, the term also includes a naturopathic physician.

* * *

Sec. 8. 18 V.S.A. § 5200 is amended to read:

§ 5200. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(4) "Licensed health care professional" means a physician, a physician assistant, a naturopathic physician, or an advanced practice registered nurse.

(5) "Natural organic reduction" has the same meaning as in section 5302 of this title.

Sec. 9. 18 V.S.A. § 5222 is amended to read:

§ 5222. REPORTS

(a)(1) The following fetal deaths shall be reported by the hospital, ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional, or funeral director directly to the Commissioner within seven days after delivery on forms prescribed by the Department:

~~(1)~~(A) All fetal deaths of 20 or more weeks of gestation or, if gestational age is unknown, of 400 or more grams, 15 or more ounces, fetal weight shall be reported.

~~(2)~~(B) All therapeutic or induced abortions, as legally authorized to be performed, of any length gestation or weight shall be reported.

~~(3)~~(2) Spontaneous abortions and ectopic pregnancies of less than 20 weeks gestation are not required to be reported.

(b) The ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional who treats a ~~woman~~ patient as a result of a miscarriage or abortion shall report the fetal death if it is not known to be previously reported under subsection (a) of this section. If there is evidence of violence or other unusual or suspicious circumstances, the medical examiner shall be immediately notified, and ~~he or she~~ the medical examiner shall complete at least the medical items on the report. If a funeral director is to be involved, the ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional may delegate to the funeral director the responsibility for completing items other than those of a medical nature. Similarly, the ~~physician~~ licensed health care professional may delegate the responsibility for completion of nonmedical items to appropriate personnel having access to records containing the information.

(c) If a fetal death occurs on a moving conveyance, the place of occurrence shall be given as the town or city where removal from the vehicle took place.

(d) ~~Fetal death reports~~ Reports made pursuant to this section are for statistical purposes only and are not public records. They shall be kept confidential; shall not be disclosed or discoverable in any civil, criminal, administrative, or other proceeding; and shall be destroyed after ~~five~~ two years.

Sec. 10. 26 V.S.A. § 1354 is amended to read:

§ 1354. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) Prohibited conduct. The Board shall find that any one of the following, or any combination of the following, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, constitutes unprofessional conduct:

* * *

(2) all advertising ~~of~~ about health care services or a medical business that is intended or has a tendency to mislead or deceive the public or impose upon credulous or ignorant persons and so be harmful or injurious to public morals or safety;

* * *

(21) permitting one's name or license to be used by a person, group, or corporation when not actually in charge of, ~~or~~ responsible for, or actively overseeing the treatment ~~given~~ or other health care services provided;

* * *

(29) delegation of professional responsibilities, including delivery of any health care services, to a person whom the licensed professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform them;

* * *

(33)(A) providing, prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing medical services or prescription medication or prescription-only devices to a person in response to any communication transmitted or received by computer or other electronic means, when the licensee fails to take the following actions to establish and maintain a proper physician-patient relationship:

(i) a reasonable effort to verify that the person requesting medication is in fact the patient, and is in fact who the person claims to be;

(ii) establishment of documented diagnosis through the use of accepted medical practices; and

(iii) maintenance of a current medical record;

(B) for the purposes of this subdivision (33), an electronic, ~~on-line~~ online, or telephonic evaluation by questionnaire is inadequate for the initial evaluation of the patient, except as otherwise provided in subdivision (C)(iv) of this subdivision (33);

(C) the following would not be in violation of this subdivision (33) if transmitted or received by computer or other electronic means:

(i) initial admission orders for newly hospitalized patients;

(ii) prescribing for a patient of another physician for whom the prescriber has taken the call;

(iii) prescribing for a patient examined by a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, or other advanced practitioner authorized by law and supported by the physician;

(iv) in furtherance of 18 V.S.A. chapter 223, prescribing medication for an individual to terminate the individual's pregnancy based on an adaptive questionnaire developed by or in consultation with health care providers with clinically appropriate expertise that allows the licensee to obtain additional medical history and ask follow-up questions as needed;

(v) continuing medication on a short-term basis for a new patient, prior to the patient's first appointment; or

~~(v)~~(vi) emergency situations where life or health of the patient is in imminent danger;

* * *

(b) Failure to practice competently. The Board may also find that failure to practice competently by reason of any cause on a single occasion or on multiple occasions constitutes unprofessional conduct. Failure to practice competently includes, as determined by the Board:

(1) performance of unsafe or unacceptable patient care; or

(2) failure to conform to the essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice.

(c) Burden of proof. The burden of proof in a disciplinary action shall be on the State to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the person has engaged in unprofessional conduct.

(d)~~(1)~~ Health care providers. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, no health care provider who is certified, registered, or licensed in Vermont shall be subject to professional disciplinary action by the Board, nor shall the Board take adverse action on an application for certification, registration, or licensure of a qualified health care provider, based solely on:

~~(A)~~(1) the health care provider providing or assisting in the provision of legally protected health care activity; or

~~(B)~~(2) a criminal, civil, or disciplinary action in another state against the health care provider that is based solely on the provider providing or assisting in the provision of legally protected health care activity.

~~(2)~~(e) Definitions. As used in this ~~subsection~~ section:

~~(A)~~(1) "Health care provider" means a person who provides professional health care services to an individual during that individual's medical care, treatment, or confinement.

~~(B)~~(2) "Health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical or mental health condition, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

~~(C)~~(3) "Legally protected health care activity" has the same meaning as in 1 V.S.A. § 150.

Sec. 11. 26 V.S.A. § 1615 is amended to read:

§ 1615. ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES; REGULATORY AUTHORITY; UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) In addition to the provisions of 3 V.S.A. § 129a and section 1582 of this chapter, the Board may deny an application for licensure, renewal, or reinstatement or may revoke, suspend, or otherwise discipline an advanced practice registered nurse upon due notice and opportunity for hearing if the person engages in the following conduct:

* * *

(6) ~~Providing~~ Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, providing, prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing medical services or prescription medication or prescription-only devices to a person in response to any communication transmitted or received by computer or other electronic means when the licensee fails to take the following actions to establish and maintain a proper provider-patient relationship:

(A) a reasonable effort to verify that the person requesting medication is in fact the patient and is in fact who the person claims to be;

(B) establishment of documented diagnosis through the use of accepted medical practices; and

(C) maintenance of a current medical record.

* * *

(b)(1) For the purposes of subdivision (a)(6) of this section, an electronic, online, or telephonic evaluation by questionnaire is inadequate for the initial evaluation of the patient, except as otherwise provided in subdivision (2)(D) of this subsection.

(2) The following would not be in violation of subdivision (a)(6) of this section:

(A) initial admission orders for newly hospitalized patients;

(B) prescribing for a patient of another provider for whom the prescriber has taken call;

(C) prescribing for a patient examined by a licensed APRN, physician assistant, or other practitioner authorized by law and supported by the APRN;

(D) in furtherance of 18 V.S.A. chapter 223, prescribing medication for an individual to terminate the individual's pregnancy based on an adaptive questionnaire developed by or in consultation with health care providers with clinically appropriate expertise that allows the licensee to obtain additional medical history and ask follow-up questions as needed;

(E) continuing medication on a short-term basis for a new patient prior to the patient's first appointment; or

~~(E)~~(F) emergency situations where the life or health of the patient is in imminent danger.

* * *

Sec. 12. 26 V.S.A. § 1736 is amended to read:

§ 1736. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(a) The following conduct and the conduct described in section 1354 of this title by a licensed physician assistant shall constitute unprofessional conduct; when that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of licensure:

* * *

(2) occupational advertising or advertising about health care services that is intended or has a tendency to mislead or deceive the public;

(3) exercising undue influence on or taking improper advantage of a person using the individual's services, or promoting the sale of professional goods or services in a manner that exploits a person for the financial gain of the practitioner or of a third party;

(4) failing to comply with provisions of federal or state statutes or rules governing the profession;

(5) conviction of a crime related to the profession; and

(6) conduct that evidences unfitness to practice in the profession.

* * *

(d) As used in this section, "health care services" means services for the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, cure, or relief of a physical or mental health condition, including counseling, procedures, products, devices, and medications.

Sec. 13. 26 V.S.A. § 2024 is added to read:

§ 2024. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PRESCRIBER AND PHARMACIST INFORMATION ON MEDICATIONS FOR LEGALLY PROTECTED HEALTH CARE ACTIVITY

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Gender-affirming health care services" and "reproductive health care services" have the same meanings as in 1 V.S.A. § 150.

(2) "Noncontrolled medication" means a medication that is not a controlled substance as defined in 21 U.S.C. § 802.

(b)(1) Upon the request of a prescribing practitioner and to the extent not expressly required under federal law, a pharmacist or other licensed member of the pharmacy staff shall redact or otherwise remove the practitioner's name or initials from a fulfilled prescription for a noncontrolled medication for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services, and from any accompanying printed materials.

(2) A pharmacist may, or, upon the pharmacist's request, another licensed member of the pharmacy staff shall, redact or otherwise remove the pharmacist's name or initials from a fulfilled prescription for a noncontrolled medication for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services, and from any accompanying printed materials.

(3) If a prescribing practitioner dispenses medication directly to patients for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services, or both, the practitioner may redact or otherwise remove the practitioner's own name or initials from a fulfilled prescription for a noncontrolled medication for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services, and from any accompanying printed materials.

(c) Nothing in this chapter or the rules governing the pharmacy profession shall be construed to require a pharmacist or other licensed member of a pharmacy's staff to list the prescribing practitioner's or pharmacist's name or initials on a fulfilled prescription for noncontrolled medication for gender-affirming health care services or reproductive health care services.

(d) A pharmacist or other licensed member of a pharmacy's staff shall be immune from civil and administrative liability for failing to redact or remove the name of a prescriber or pharmacist when requested to do so pursuant to

subdivision (b)(1) or (2) of this section; provided, however, that this immunity shall not apply to gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct by a pharmacist or other licensed member of the pharmacy staff.

Sec. 14. 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.

Bill Passed

S. 131.

Senate bill of the following title was read the third time and passed:

An act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington relating to the possession of firearms.

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

H. 218.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Lyons moved that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill in Sec. 1, appropriations; Opioid Abatement Special Fund, in subdivision (a)(11), by striking out "$50,0000.00" and inserting thereof "$50,000.00"

Which was agreed to.

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

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 96.

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

An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

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. 18 V.S.A. § 9434 is amended to read:

§ 9434. CERTIFICATE OF NEED; GENERAL RULES

(a) A health care facility ~~other than a hospital~~ shall not develop or have developed on its behalf a new health care project without issuance of a certificate of need by the Board. For purposes of this subsection, a "new health care project" ~~includes~~ means any of the following:

(1) The construction, development, purchase, renovation, or other establishment of a health care facility, or any capital expenditure by or on behalf of a health care facility, for which the capital cost exceeds ~~$1,500,000.00~~ $10,000,000.00.

(2) A change from one licensing period to the next in the number of licensed beds of a health care facility through addition or conversion, or through relocation from one physical facility or site to another.

(3) The offering of any home health service, or the transfer or conveyance of more than a 50 percent ownership interest in a health care facility other than a hospital or nursing home.

(4) The purchase, lease, or other comparable arrangement of a single piece of diagnostic and therapeutic equipment for which the cost, or in the case of a donation the value, is in excess of ~~$1,000,000.00~~ $5,000,000.00. For purposes of this subdivision, the purchase or lease of one or more articles of diagnostic or therapeutic equipment that are necessarily interdependent in the performance of their ordinary functions or that would constitute any health care facility included under subdivision 9432(8)(B) of this title, as determined by the Board, shall be considered together in calculating the amount of an expenditure. The Board's determination of functional interdependence of items of equipment under this subdivision shall have the effect of a final decision and is subject to appeal under section 9381 of this title.

(5) The offering of a health care service or technology having an annual operating expense that exceeds ~~$500,000.00~~ $3,000,000.00 for either of the next two budgeted fiscal years, if the service or technology was not offered or employed, either on a fixed or a mobile basis, by the health care facility within the previous three fiscal years.

(6) ~~The construction, development, purchase, lease, or other establishment of an ambulatory surgical center.~~ [Repealed.]

(b) ~~A hospital shall not develop or have developed on its behalf a new health care project without issuance of a certificate of need by the Board. For purposes of this subsection, a "new health care project" includes the following:~~

~~(1) The construction, development, purchase, renovation, or other establishment of a health care facility, or any capital expenditure by or on behalf of a hospital, for which the capital cost exceeds $3,000,000.00.~~

~~(2) The purchase, lease, or other comparable arrangement of a single piece of diagnostic and therapeutic equipment for which the cost, or in the case of a donation the value, is in excess of $1,500,000.00. For purposes of this subdivision, the purchase or lease of one or more articles of diagnostic or therapeutic equipment that are necessarily interdependent in the performance of their ordinary functions or that would constitute any health care facility included under subdivision 9432(8)(B) of this title, as determined by the Board, shall be considered together in calculating the amount of an expenditure. The Board's determination of functional interdependence of items of equipment under this subdivision shall have the effect of a final decision and is subject to appeal under section 9381 of this title.~~

~~(3) The offering of a health care service or technology having an annual operating expense that exceeds $1,000,000.00 for either of the next two budgeted fiscal years, if the service or technology was not offered or employed, either on a fixed or a mobile basis, by the hospital within the previous three fiscal years.~~

~~(4) A change from one licensing period to the next in the number of licensed beds of a health care facility through addition or conversion, or through relocation from one physical facility or site to another.~~

~~(5) The offering of any home health service.~~ [Repealed.]

(c) In the case of a project that requires a certificate of need under this section, expenditures for which are anticipated to be in excess of ~~$30,000,000.00~~ $50,000,000.00, the applicant first shall secure a conceptual development phase certificate of need, in accordance with the standards and procedures established in this subchapter, that permits the applicant to make expenditures for architectural services, engineering design services, or any other planning services, as defined by the Board, needed in connection with the project. Upon completion of the conceptual development phase of the project, and before offering or further developing the project, the applicant shall secure a final certificate of need in accordance with the standards and procedures established in this subchapter. Applicants shall not be subject to sanctions for failure to comply with the provisions of this subsection if such failure is solely the result of good faith reliance on verified project cost

estimates issued by qualified persons, which cost estimates would have led a reasonable person to conclude the project was not anticipated to be in excess of ~~$30,000,000.00~~ $50,000,000.00 and therefore not subject to this subsection. The provisions of this subsection notwithstanding, expenditures may be made in preparation for obtaining a conceptual development phase certificate of need, which expenditures shall not exceed ~~$1,500,000.00 for non-hospitals or $3,000,000.00 for hospitals~~ $10,000,000.00.

(d) If the Board determines that a person required to obtain a certificate of need under this subchapter has separated a single project into components in order to avoid cost thresholds or other requirements under this subchapter, the person shall be required to submit an application for a certificate of need for the entire project, and the Board may proceed under section 9445 of this title. The Board's determination under this subsection shall have the effect of a final decision and is subject to appeal under section 9381 of this title.

(e) The Board may periodically adjust the monetary jurisdictional thresholds contained in this section. In doing so, the Board shall reflect the same categories of health care facilities, services, and programs recognized in this section. Any adjustment by the Board shall not exceed an amount calculated using the cumulative Consumer Price Index rate of inflation.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 9435 is amended to read:

§ 9435. EXCLUSIONS

* * *

(f)(1) Excluded from this subchapter are routine replacements of:

(A) medical equipment that is fully depreciated; and

(B) nonmedical equipment and fixtures, including furnaces, boilers, refrigeration units, kitchen equipment, heating and cooling units, and similar items, regardless of their remaining useful life.

(2) ~~These~~ The replacements described in subdivision (1) of this subsection and purchased by a hospital shall be included in the hospital's budget and may be reviewed in the budget process set forth in subchapter 7 of this chapter.

* * *

(i) Excluded from this subchapter are emergency and nonemergency ground ambulance services, affiliated agencies, and equipment and supplies used by emergency medical personnel, as those terms are defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2651.

(j) Excluded from this subchapter are the offering of a health care service, or the construction, development, purchase, renovation, or other establishment of a health care facility, that is owned or operated by the State of Vermont or is funded in whole or in substantial part by a contract or grant awarded by the State of Vermont; provided, however, that the State agency sponsoring the project or awarding the contract or grant shall inform the Green Mountain Care Board prior to commencing the project or within 30 days following the execution of the contract or grant.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage and shall apply to all new health care projects initiated on or after that date. For applications for a certificate of need that are already in process on the date of passage of this act for which one or more persons have been granted interested party status, the jurisdictional thresholds and exclusions in place at the time the application was filed shall continue to apply until a final decision is made on the application. For applications for a certificate of need that are already in process on the date of passage of this act for which no person has been granted interested party status, the applicant may withdraw the application in accordance with Board rules.

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

Senator Gulick, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Health and Welfare.

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; Consideration Postponed

S. 27.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

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. STATE TREASURER; MEDICAL DEBT RELIEF; APPROPRIATION

(a) The sum of $1,000,000.00 is appropriated to the State Treasurer from the General Fund in fiscal year 2026 for the purpose of contracting with a nonprofit entity to acquire and repay certain medical debts incurred by Vermont residents as set forth in this section.

(b) The State Treasurer shall ensure that the entity with which the Treasurer contracts under this section will:

(1) purchase the medical debt of eligible debtors from health care providers at fair market value;

(2) abolish the debt with no cost or tax consequences for the debtor;

(3) coordinate with the health care provider or collections agency to ensure that any adverse information resulting from the medical debt is removed from the debtor's consumer credit report following the contractor's purchase and abolition of the debt; and

(4) notify each individual whose medical debt was abolished pursuant to this section:

(A) the amount of the individual's medical debt that was abolished and the name of the health care provider or providers from whom the entity purchased the individual's debt;

(B) the estimated percentage of the federal poverty level that corresponds to the individual's household income; and

(C) that financial assistance policies are available at all Vermont hospitals in accordance with 18 V.S.A. § 9482, including the following minimum discounts:

(i) a 100 percent discount for individuals with household income at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level; and

(ii) at least a 40 percent discount for individuals with household income between 250 and 400 percent of the federal poverty level.

(c) In order to be eligible for repayment of medical debt under this section, the following conditions must be met:

(1) the debtor shall be a Vermont resident who either has a household income that is at or below 400 percent of the federal poverty level for the applicable household size or who owes medical debt in an amount that is five percent or more of the debtor's household income; and

(2) the debtor's patient account still maintains an outstanding balance even after the health care provider has completed its routine efforts to collect the amounts due.

Sec. 2. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 53(b)(5)(B), as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.102 and 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.1000, is further amended to read:

(B) ~~$20,000,000~~ $19,000,000 shall be appropriated to the State Treasurer's Office and used for redeeming State of Vermont general obligation bonds prior to maturity.

Sec. 3. 1 V.S.A. § 151 is added to read:

§ 151. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

"Behavioral health" means any behavioral condition bearing on health, including stress-linked physical symptoms, patient activation, and health behaviors that can be addressed through support, counseling, change techniques, coaching, and other interventions. As used in the Vermont Statutes Annotated, the term does not include mental health conditions or substance use disorders. The General Assembly recognizes that using the term "behavioral health" to describe mental health conditions or substance use disorders has a stigmatizing impact, which may deter individuals from seeking health care for those conditions, but also recognizes that some jurisdictions interpret the term to incorporate those conditions and that therefore it may be necessary under limited circumstances to include the term in the definition of health care services for the sole reason of avoiding any question about the intended scope of a specific statute.

Sec. 4. 9 V.S.A. § 2466d is added to read:

§ 2466d. REPORTING OF MEDICAL DEBT INFORMATION PROHIBITED

(a) A credit reporting agency shall not report or maintain in the file on a consumer information relating to a medical debt.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Health care services" means all supplies, care, and services of a medical, dental, behavioral health, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, surgical, psychiatric, therapeutic, diagnostic, preventative, rehabilitative, or supportive nature, including medication.

(2) "Medical debt" means debt arising from health care services, including dental services, or from health care goods, including products, devices, durable medical equipment, and prescription drugs. "Medical debt"

does not include debt arising from services provided by a veterinarian; debt charged to a credit card unless the credit card is issued under an open-end or closed-end credit plan offered solely for the payment of health care services; debt charged to a home equity or general-purpose line of credit; or secured debt.

Sec. 5. 9 V.S.A. § 2480b is amended to read:

§ 2480b. DISCLOSURES TO CONSUMERS

* * *

(c) Any time a credit reporting agency is required to make a written disclosure to consumers pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1681g, it shall disclose, in at least 12-point type, and in bold type as indicated, the following notice:

"NOTICE TO VERMONT CONSUMERS

* * *

(2) Under Vermont law, no one may access your credit report without your permission except under the following limited circumstances:

* * *

(F) where the request for a credit report is related to a credit transaction entered into prior to January 1, 1993; ~~or~~

(G) where the request for a credit report is by the Vermont Department of Taxes and is used for the purpose of collecting or investigating delinquent taxes; or

(H) where the request for a credit report is by an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code for the purpose of determining eligibility for the abolition of medical debt.

* * *

Sec. 6. 9 V.S.A. § 2480g is amended to read:

§ 2480g. EXEMPTIONS

* * *

(e) The provisions of section 2480e of this title shall not apply to an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code when determining eligibility for the abolition of medical debt; provided, however, that the exemption from the provisions of section 2480e of this title shall not apply to a tax-exempt organization that is a large health care facility, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9481.

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. chapter 221, subchapter 10 is amended to read:

Subchapter 10. Patient Financial Assistance and Medical Debt

* * *

§ 9485. PROHIBITION ON SALE OR REPORTING OF MEDICAL DEBT

(a)(1) No large health care facility shall sell its medical debt except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) A large health care facility may sell or otherwise transfer its medical debt to an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code for the specific purpose of the tax-exempt organization abolishing the medical debt of one or more patients by cancellation of the indebtedness.

(b) No large health care facility or medical debt collector shall report or otherwise furnish any portion of a medical debt to a credit reporting agency.

* * *

Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

Thereupon, consideration was postponed.

Appointment Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, without a report given by the Committee to which it was referred and without debate:

Greenwood, Caleb of Troy - Student Member of the State Board of Education - July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026.

Appointment Confirmed

The following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed separately by the Senate, upon a full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nominations of

Minoli, Wanda of Montpelier - Commissioner, Department of Buildings and General Services - October 24, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 26, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Beck, Douglass, Heffernan, Williams.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Cummings addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Gulick, her remarks were entered in the Journal.

"Thank you, Mr. President,

"I rise on a point of personal privilege. Today marks a significant anniversary for many people in this state and for those of us who were here in 1999. We had a resolution, but it didn't get timed exactly right, so I would like to read from the resolution and then offer some personal reflections without objection.

"On December 20th, 1999, the Supreme Court issued the landmark decision on Baker vs. Vermont, holding that the exclusion of same-sex couples from access to the benefits and rights of marriage licenses under Vermont's law violated the common benefits clause of the Vermont Constitution. The court allowed the General Assembly to find a solution and the unwritten subtext was, if we couldn't find a solution they would, and we knew all they had was to allow marriage. You must remember the context of that time. We were being asked to change laws that reflected long held social and religious values.

"As to the legitimacy of same-sex relationships, it was highly emotional to say the least. At one point my mother called up and said, 'Your sister just called and they're interviewing someone on CNN and there's a target behind him and she says your picture is on it; is that true?' And I said 'Probably, but not to worry, he's harmless.' I have a box in my attic that my kids harass me about on occasion, because I saved my hate mail as they call it. There were lots of nuts and bolts, it's rather heavy. This was before email, believe it or not, so things came in the form of letters. They came from all over the country, and they came in phone calls.

"After that year, I no longer gave out the phone number of my employer, because I worked in an adult day center. We had a mentally challenged young woman who was volunteering to answer our phones and they totally

overwhelmed her and the office to the point where it was a safety hazard given the people, we dealt with it.

"The legislature convened, and a bill started in the House. I would like to recognize that Tom Little, who chaired the Judiciary Committee, Bill Lippert and Alice Nitka are all here. We are all survivors of that. Bill and I are survivors of a very emotional public hearing in St. Albans. It is one of the few times I remember being concerned for not only my own safety, but more especially Bill's safety. At the hearing, it was that kind of emotional.

"Michael Obuchowski was the Speaker of the House. When the bill hit the House, people were told this is not a partisan issue, this is a Supreme Court mandate. We understood there were opinions on both sides and worked it through. The House did and they sent us what was a very good bill that is essentially the civil unions that we have today.

"By the time the bill came to the Senate, it had been politicized and there were members in the other body who voted thinking they weren't going to be targeted politically by their parties who found out they were, and they lost their seats. When it came here it was again a highly political issue, but we persevered.

"I was on the Judiciary Committee and Senator Sears was the Chair. We were continuing to try and find some middle ground, something that the middle could live with; the largest number of people could say 'Okay we can live with this.' We were striving to find that.

"I was sent to the public hearing in St. Albans. It was frightening after that time. I always carried my dog, who at least had big ears and looked like a German Shepherd; I didn't go out to any meetings without the dog in the back seat. I remember coming in the next morning and saying 'There's no middle ground, we just need to do this. we need to do the best job that we can.'

"So, on April 25th, 2000, the House concurred with the Senate Proposal of Amendment, and we signed the bill the next day. Governor Howard Dean signed the legislation and Vermont became the first Legislature, the first State to recognize civil unions.

"Several years later, we did gay marriage, and it went through without a ripple. Of all the terrible things that people thought would happen, I don't know how many times I was told that downtown Montpelier would look like Provincetown, MA if we did this; it didn't.

"That is the anniversary we are celebrating today. It marked probably one of our first times in the State of Vermont recognizing and protecting the rights of all its citizens, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.

"I think the remembrance I would like to share, and I have found helpful during todays' very contentious, very emotional climate. We have seen a series of personal privilege speakers these past few weeks. So far, we have not had groups praying and circling the State House, but it is a highly contentious time.

"I always think back to the public hearing we had, a public hearing with House and Senate Judiciary. I don't remember the date, but I remember it was cold, it was dark, and it was snowing heavily. The State House was packed as busloads of people were brought in. As people came through the doors on either end, there were people greeting them and handing out stickers red or blue/pro or con. This was also before Zoom, so we couldn't accommodate everyone in the House chamber. We couldn't use the cafeteria, because that was the emergency escape route, and it was lined with state police officers in case things got out of hand, got dangerous. We did pipe, I believe, closed circuit TV into room 11. I made my way through the halls slowly because they were packed. There were people sitting on the floor eating pizza, don't tell David Schutz, but it was crowded.

"It was a highly emotional hearing. We did one pro and then one con. At one point it was a woman that was getting very vocal. She happened to be one of our local, well-known, mental health people. Our lone police officer in those days, Dave said 'Just let her talk, she'll be fine' she did, and she was. That was the only disturbance that we had. We ended the meeting, and we never needed the escape route.

"As I was leaving out the door, the blue tags and the red tags were all out there and they were all helping each other dig their cars out of the snow, because at that point I think there was close to a foot of snow. I think it's always good for us to remember as we go through these other times, that we are all human, we are all subject to being snowed in, and we all need each other to help us dig out.

"And so, Mr. President, I would today like to recognize all those people who risked, and many of them lost their political position, to move Vermont forward. We were the first state to do this, and it was a momentous time.

"Thank you, Mr. President."

Message from the House No. 50

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 109. House concurrent resolution congratulating the South Burlington Chapter of Rotary International on 40 years of exemplary community service and professional camaraderie.

H.C.R. 110. House concurrent resolution designating April 2025 as Black Maternal Care Awareness Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 111. House concurrent resolution designating May 18, 2025 as Grand Army of the Republic Highway Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 112. House concurrent resolution congratulating Capital City Concerts and Karen Kevra for a quarter century of delightful and informative classical music performances and related cultural endeavors in central Vermont.

H.C.R. 113. House concurrent resolution congratulating the winning teams at the 2025 Jr Iron Chef VT competition.

H.C.R. 114. House concurrent resolution honoring Deborah J. Aldrich for 42 years of extraordinary municipal public service in the Town of Chester.

H.C.R. 115. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Danville High School Bears Division IV championship boys' basketball team.

H.C.R. 116. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of the Vietnam War.

H.C.R. 117. House concurrent resolution congratulating Essex Middle School science teacher Andrew Kasprisin on his designation as the 2025 Vermont finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

H.C.R. 118. House concurrent resolution commending Team Trumie and Truman Compton for their advocacy, community engagement, and fostering of public awareness and acceptance of autism.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Burkhardt and others,

H.C.R. 109.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the South Burlington Chapter of Rotary International on 40 years of exemplary community service and professional camaraderie.

Offered by Reps. LaMont and others,

H.C.R. 110.

House concurrent resolution designating April 2025 as Black Maternal Care Awareness Month in Vermont.

Offered by Rep. Boyden,

Offered by Senator Westman,

H.C.R. 111.

House concurrent resolution designating May 18, 2025 as Grand Army of the Republic Highway Day in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Casey and McCann,

Offered by Senators Cummings, Perchlik and Watson,

H.C.R. 112.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Capital City Concerts and Karen Kevra for a quarter century of delightful and informative classical music performances and related cultural endeavors in central Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Sibilia and others,

H.C.R. 113.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the winning teams at the 2025 Jr Iron Chef VT competition.

Offered by Rep. Charlton,

Offered by Senators Clarkson, Major, Vyhovsky and White,

H.C.R. 114.

House concurrent resolution honoring Deborah J. Aldrich for 42 years of extraordinary municipal public service in the Town of Chester.

Offered by Rep. Burtt,

Offered by Senator Beck,

H.C.R. 115.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Danville High School Bears Division IV championship boys' basketball team.

Offered by Reps. Hango and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore and Ram Hinsdale,

H.C.R. 116.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of the Vietnam War.

Offered by Reps. McCann and others,

H.C.R. 117.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Essex Middle School science teacher Andrew Kasprisin on his designation as the 2025 Vermont finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Offered by Reps. Burrows and others,

H.C.R. 118.

House concurrent resolution commending Team Trumie and Truman Compton for their advocacy, community engagement, and fostering of public awareness and acceptance of autism.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 23.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Joseph Welker of Craftsbury.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 24.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 24. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 2, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, May 2, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, May 6, 2025.

Consideration Resumed; House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In with Amendment

S. 27.

Consideration was resumed on House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

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. STATE TREASURER; MEDICAL DEBT RELIEF; APPROPRIATION

(a) The sum of $1,000,000.00 is appropriated to the State Treasurer from the General Fund in fiscal year 2026 for the purpose of contracting with a nonprofit entity to acquire and repay certain medical debts incurred by Vermont residents as set forth in this section.

(b) The State Treasurer shall ensure that the entity with which the Treasurer contracts under this section will:

(1) purchase the medical debt of eligible debtors from health care providers at fair market value;

(2) abolish the debt with no cost or tax consequences for the debtor;

(3) coordinate with the health care provider or collections agency to ensure that any adverse information resulting from the medical debt is

removed from the debtor's consumer credit report following the contractor's purchase and abolition of the debt; and

(4) notify each individual whose medical debt was abolished pursuant to this section:

(A) the amount of the individual's medical debt that was abolished and the name of the health care provider or providers from whom the entity purchased the individual's debt;

(B) the estimated percentage of the federal poverty level that corresponds to the individual's household income; and

(C) that financial assistance policies are available at all Vermont hospitals in accordance with 18 V.S.A. § 9482, including the following minimum discounts:

(i) a 100 percent discount for individuals with household income at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level; and

(ii) at least a 40 percent discount for individuals with household income between 250 and 400 percent of the federal poverty level.

(c) In order to be eligible for repayment of medical debt under this section, the following conditions must be met:

(1) the debtor shall be a Vermont resident who either has a household income that is at or below 400 percent of the federal poverty level for the applicable household size or who owes medical debt in an amount that is five percent or more of the debtor's household income; and

(2) the debtor's patient account still maintains an outstanding balance even after the health care provider has completed its routine efforts to collect the amounts due.

Sec. 2. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 53(b)(5)(B), as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.102 and 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.1000, is further amended to read:

(B) ~~$20,000,000~~ $19,000,000 shall be appropriated to the State Treasurer's Office and used for redeeming State of Vermont general obligation bonds prior to maturity.

Sec. 3. 1 V.S.A. § 151 is added to read:

§ 151. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

"Behavioral health" means any behavioral condition bearing on health, including stress-linked physical symptoms, patient activation, and health behaviors that can be addressed through support, counseling, change

techniques, coaching, and other interventions. As used in the Vermont Statutes Annotated, the term does not include mental health conditions or substance use disorders. The General Assembly recognizes that using the term "behavioral health" to describe mental health conditions or substance use disorders has a stigmatizing impact, which may deter individuals from seeking health care for those conditions, but also recognizes that some jurisdictions interpret the term to incorporate those conditions and that therefore it may be necessary under limited circumstances to include the term in the definition of health care services for the sole reason of avoiding any question about the intended scope of a specific statute.

Sec. 4. 9 V.S.A. § 2466d is added to read:

§ 2466d. REPORTING OF MEDICAL DEBT INFORMATION PROHIBITED

(a) A credit reporting agency shall not report or maintain in the file on a consumer information relating to a medical debt.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Health care services" means all supplies, care, and services of a medical, dental, behavioral health, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, surgical, psychiatric, therapeutic, diagnostic, preventative, rehabilitative, or supportive nature, including medication.

(2) "Medical debt" means debt arising from health care services, including dental services, or from health care goods, including products, devices, durable medical equipment, and prescription drugs. "Medical debt" does not include debt arising from services provided by a veterinarian; debt charged to a credit card unless the credit card is issued under an open-end or closed-end credit plan offered solely for the payment of health care services; debt charged to a home equity or general-purpose line of credit; or secured debt.

Sec. 5. 9 V.S.A. § 2480b is amended to read:

§ 2480b. DISCLOSURES TO CONSUMERS

* * *

(c) Any time a credit reporting agency is required to make a written disclosure to consumers pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1681g, it shall disclose, in at least 12-point type, and in bold type as indicated, the following notice:

"NOTICE TO VERMONT CONSUMERS

* * *

(2) Under Vermont law, no one may access your credit report without your permission except under the following limited circumstances:

* * *

(F) where the request for a credit report is related to a credit transaction entered into prior to January 1, 1993; ~~or~~

(G) where the request for a credit report is by the Vermont Department of Taxes and is used for the purpose of collecting or investigating delinquent taxes; or

(H) where the request for a credit report is by an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code for the purpose of determining eligibility for the abolition of medical debt.

* * *

Sec. 6. 9 V.S.A. § 2480g is amended to read:

§ 2480g. EXEMPTIONS

* * *

(e) The provisions of section 2480e of this title shall not apply to an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code when determining eligibility for the abolition of medical debt; provided, however, that the exemption from the provisions of section 2480e of this title shall not apply to a tax-exempt organization that is a large health care facility, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9481.

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. chapter 221, subchapter 10 is amended to read:

Subchapter 10. Patient Financial Assistance and Medical Debt

* * *

§ 9485. PROHIBITION ON SALE OR REPORTING OF MEDICAL DEBT

(a)(1) No large health care facility shall sell its medical debt except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) A large health care facility may sell or otherwise transfer its medical debt to an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code for the specific purpose of the tax-exempt organization abolishing the medical debt of one or more patients by cancellation of the indebtedness.

(b) No large health care facility or medical debt collector shall report or otherwise furnish any portion of a medical debt to a credit reporting agency.

* * *

Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, Senators Lyons and Perchlik moved that the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment with a further proposal of amendment by striking out Sec. 2, which further amends 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 53(b)(5)(B), as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.102 and 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.1000, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

Sec. 2. [Deleted.]

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

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 96.

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

An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 488.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Transportation, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

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:

* * * Transportation Program Adopted as Amended; Definitions * * *

Sec. 1. TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM ADOPTED; DEFINITIONS

(a) Adoption. The Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program appended to the Agency of Transportation's proposed fiscal year 2026 budget, as amended by this act, is adopted to the extent federal, State, and local funds are available.

(b) Definitions. As used in this act, unless otherwise indicated:

(1) "Agency" means the Agency of Transportation.

(2) "Candidate project" means a project approved by the General Assembly that is not anticipated to have significant expenditures for preliminary engineering or right-of-way expenditures, or both, during the budget year and funding for construction is not anticipated within a predictable time frame.

(3) "Development and evaluation (D&E) project" means a project approved by the General Assembly that is anticipated to have preliminary engineering expenditures or right-of-way expenditures, or both, during the budget year and that the Agency is committed to delivering to construction on a timeline driven by priority and available funding.

(4) "Electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE)" and "electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public" have the same meanings as in 30 V.S.A. § 201.

(5) "Front-of-book project" means a project approved by the General Assembly that is anticipated to have construction expenditures during the budget year or the following three years, or both, with expected expenditures shown over four years.

(6) "Mileage-based user fee" or "MBUF" means a fee for vehicle use of the public road system with distance, stated in miles, as the measure of use.

(7) "Plug-in electric vehicle (PEV)," "plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV)," and "battery electric vehicle (BEV)" have the same meanings as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(85).

(8) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Transportation.

(9) "TIB funds" means monies deposited in the Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund in accordance with 19 V.S.A. § 11f.

(10) The table heading "As Proposed" means the Proposed Transportation Program referenced in subsection (a) of this section; the table heading "As Amended" means the amendments as made by this act; the table heading "Change" means the difference obtained by subtracting the "As Proposed" figure from the "As Amended" figure; the terms "change" or "changes" in the text refer to the project- and program-specific amendments, the aggregate sum of which equals the net "Change" in the applicable table heading; and "State" in any tables amending authorizations indicates that the source of funds is State monies in the Transportation Fund, unless otherwise specified.

* * * Rail Program; Technical Correction * * *

Sec. 2. RAIL PROGRAM

(a) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Rail the following project is deleted: Barre–Berlin–Montpelier 04-9038–WACR Subsidy.

(b) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Rail, the following project is added: Hartford HRRD(1) 25G002–White River Junction Depot Repairs.

(c) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Rail, spending authority for Hartford HRRD(1) 25G002–White River Junction Depot Repairs is authorized as follows:

FY26	As Proposed	As Amended	Change
Other	0	260,000	260,000
Total	0	260,000	260,000
Sources of funds			
State	0	260,000	260,000
Total	0	260,000	260,000

* * * Unobligated Fund Balance for Fiscal Year 2026 * * *

Sec. 3. UNOBLIGATED TRANSPORTATION FUND BALANCE; FISCAL YEAR 2026

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Administration shall ensure an unobligated fund balance of at least $686,000.00 exists in the Transportation Fund in fiscal year 2026 after the close of fiscal year 2025. It is the intent of the General Assembly that in the creation of the fiscal year 2026 budget adjustment proposal and the fiscal year 2027 budget proposal, the unobligated fund balance required pursuant to this section shall be utilized to offset estimated Transportation Fund revenue losses from fee and tax reductions enacted during the 2025 legislative session.

* * * State and Federal Funding Updates * * *

Sec. 4. STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING UPDATES

(a) On or before September 30, 2025 and December 15, 2025, the Secretary of Transportation shall provide the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee with a briefing on the status of State Transportation Fund revenues and federal funding for the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program, and any

impacts on the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program. The briefing shall include:

(1) a summary of federal funding that has been received to date, federal funding that is anticipated later in the State fiscal year, federal funding that is delayed, and federal funding that has been reduced or subject to rescission;

(2) a summary of the Transportation Fund revenues to date in State fiscal year 2026;

(3) a summary of the impacts on the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program that are caused by changes in State Transportation Fund revenues from the consensus forecast or delays or reductions in federal funding; and

(4) a summary of any legislative action that may be necessary to address reductions in State revenues or federal funding.

(b) Upon becoming aware of a significant change in State revenues or a reduction in federal funding, rescission of federal grants, or delay of anticipated federal funding that will impact the Agency's ability to carry out significant portions of the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program, the Secretary of Transportation may request that the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee meet within 14 days to review the Agency's plan to address the reduction in funding.

(c) In the event of a decrease in overall State or federal funding for the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program that is in excess of four percent, the Secretary shall submit to the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee a written report detailing the impact of the decrease on projects that are in the 2026 Transportation Program.

* * * Project Dashboard * * *

Sec. 5. 19 V.S.A. § 10g is amended to read:

§ 10g. ANNUAL REPORT; TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM; ADVANCEMENTS, CANCELLATIONS, AND DELAYS

* * *

(q)(1) The Agency's annual proposed Transportation Program shall include the following information depicted in a graphical dashboard:

(A) the percentage of projects in each section of the Transportation Program that have been delayed by more than one year from the preliminary plan projected completion date; and

(B) the percentage of projects in each section of the Transportation Program whose cost has increased by more than 50 percent or $5,000,000.00, whichever is less, from the preliminary plan cost estimate.

(2) The Agency shall provide the House and Senate Committees on Transportation with quarterly updates to the dashboard provided pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 6. 19 V.S.A. § 10g(g) is amended to read:

(g) ~~Project updates. The Agency's annual proposed Transportation Program shall include project updates referencing this section and listing the following:~~

~~(1) all proposed projects in the Program that would be new to the State Transportation Program;~~

~~(2) all projects for which total estimated costs have increased by more than $5,000,000.00 from the estimate in the adopted Transportation Program for the prior fiscal year or by more than 75 percent from the estimate in the adopted Transportation Program for the prior fiscal year;~~

~~(3) all projects for which the total estimated costs have, for the first time, increased by more than $10,000,000.00 from the Preliminary Plan estimate or by more than 100 percent from the Preliminary Plan estimate; and~~

~~(4) all projects funded for construction in the prior fiscal year's adopted Transportation Program that are no longer funded in the proposed Transportation Program submitted to the General Assembly, the projected costs for such projects in the prior fiscal year's adopted Transportation Program, and the total costs incurred over the life of each such project.~~ [Repealed.]

* * * Relinquishment of Vermont Route 36 in the Town of St. Albans * * *

Sec. 7. RELINQUISHMENT OF VERMONT ROUTE 36 IN THE TOWN OF ST. ALBANS

Pursuant to 19 V.S.A. § 15(a)(2), the General Assembly authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to enter into an agreement with the Town of St. Albans to relinquish a segment of the State highway in the Town of St. Albans known as Vermont Route 36. The segment authorized to be relinquished begins at mile marker 0.00, just east of the "Black Bridge" (B2), and continues 14,963 feet (approximately 2.834 miles) easterly to mile marker 2.834, where Vermont Route 36 meets the boundary of the City of St. Albans, and includes the 0.106-mile westbound section of Vermont Route 36 and approaches at the entrance to the St. Albans Bay Town Park.

* * * State-Owned Railroads; Rail Trails * * *

Sec. 8. 5 V.S.A. chapter 58 is redesignated to read:

CHAPTER 58. ~~STATE ACQUISITION OF~~ STATE-OWNED RAILROADS AND RAIL TRAILS

Sec. 9. 5 V.S.A. § 3408 is amended to read:

§ 3408. RAILBANKING; NOTIFICATION

(a) If the Secretary finds that the continued operation of any State-owned railroad property is not economically feasible under present conditions, ~~he or she~~ the Secretary may place the line in railbanked status after giving advance notice of ~~such~~ the planned railbanking to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation when the General Assembly is in session, and when the General Assembly is not in session, to the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee. The Agency, on behalf of the State, shall continue to hold the right-of-way of a railbanked line for reactivation of railroad service or for other public purposes not inconsistent with future reactivation of railroad service. ~~Such~~ The railbanking shall not be treated, for purposes of any law or rule of law, as an abandonment of the use of the rights-of-way for railroad purposes.

* * *

(c)(1) The Secretary may, after consulting with municipalities, adopt rules consistent with the provisions of section 3408a of this chapter governing the interim trail use of State-owned railroad rights-of-way that have been placed in railbanked status.

(2) Signs indicating the rules shall be conspicuously posted in or near all areas affected.

(3) Any person who violates ~~these~~ rules adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to a penalty of not more than $300.00.

Sec. 10. 5 V.S.A. § 3408a is added to read:

§ 3408a. USE OF RAIL TRAILS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Rail trail" means the right-of-way of a State-owned railroad line that has been authorized for railbanking and interim trail use pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d) or section 3408 of this chapter.

(2) "Trail sponsor" means the Agency of Transportation in the case of a rail trail maintained by the Agency or the municipality in the case of a rail trail maintained by a municipality.

(b) Use of rail trails. The following acts are prohibited within a rail trail right-of-way:

(1) Throwing, dropping, or discarding bottles, cans, paper, garbage, rubbish, sewage, or other material of any kind.

(2) Cutting, mutilating, or removing any tree, shrub, flower, plant, top soil, or sod or attempting to do so.

(3) Injury, defacement, removal, or destruction of the surface of the rail trail or a rail trail's structures, appurtenances, recreation facilities, or property.

(4) Except as authorized by the trail sponsor, erecting, placing, or displaying any advertising materials, posters, or placards of any kind. This prohibition shall not apply to official signs erected by the trail sponsor.

(5) Except as authorized by the trail sponsor, entering or remaining on the rail trail for the purpose of:

(A) selling, hiring, or leasing any goods or services; or

(B) distributing samples, pamphlets, or advertising materials, except for official information authorized by the trail sponsor.

(6) Parades, demonstrations, picnics, games, entertainment, or organizations, except at times and locations approved by the trail sponsor.

(7) Harassing or molesting wildlife, except for fishing.

(8) Using or discharging any firearms or other weapons or fireworks, except by a person authorized by the trail sponsor or as otherwise permitted by law.

(9) Igniting fires for any purpose, except in fireplaces or firepits at locations designated by the trail sponsor or for trail maintenance purposes.

(10) Soliciting alms or contributions.

(11) Use of motorized vehicles, except for:

(A) maintenance purposes;

(B) snowmobiles, subject to applicable State rules, when the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. has declared the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System officially open;

(C) Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) utilized by an individual with a disability as permitted by the Agency's Rail Trail Accessibility Policy;

(D) electric bicycles as permitted pursuant to applicable State rules; and

(E) other circumstances that the trail sponsor determines are appropriate.

(12) Overnight camping, except at areas designated for that purpose by the trail sponsor.

(c) Penalty. Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (b) of this section shall be subject to a civil penalty pursuant to subdivision 3408(c)(3) of this chapter.

* * * Transportation Board * * *

Sec. 11. 19 V.S.A. § 3 is amended to read:

§ 3. TRANSPORTATION BOARD; CREATION; MEMBERS

~~A transportation board~~ The Transportation Board is formed to be attached to the Agency of Transportation. There shall be seven members of the Board, appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Governor shall so far as is possible appoint Board members whose interests and expertise lie in various areas of the transportation field. The Governor shall appoint the ~~chair~~ Chair, and the Board may vote to appoint other officers. The members of the Board shall be appointed for terms of three years. Board members may be appointed for two additional three-year terms but shall not be eligible for further reappointment. ~~No~~ Not more than four members of the Board shall belong to the same political party. No member of the Board shall:

* * *

Sec. 12. 19 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. TRANSPORTATION BOARD; POWERS AND DUTIES

* * *

(d) Specific duties and responsibilities. The Board shall:

* * *

(4) provide appellate review, when requested in writing, regarding legal disputes in the execution of contracts awarded by the Agency or by municipalities cooperating with the Agency to advance projects in the State's Transportation Program, except that the Agency shall provide appellate review relating to bids and the competitive negotiation process under 19 V.S.A. § 10a;

(5) provide appellate review, when requested in writing, of decisions of the Secretary in administering the provisions of Title 24, relating to ~~junkyards~~ salvage yards;

* * *

* * * Green Mountain Transit Authority * * *

Sec. 13. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 801 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 801. GREEN MOUNTAIN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

* * *

§ 2. AREA OF OPERATION

(a) The area of operation shall be the urbanized area of Chittenden~~, Franklin, Grand Isle, and Washington Counties and the Towns of Orange, Washington, and Williamstown. The area of operation shall include Addison and Caledonia Counties and the Towns of Orange County other than Orange, Washington, and Williamstown, but only for the provision of commuter services. The area of operation shall include Lamoille County, but only for the provision of published scheduled services~~ County as established by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Green Mountain Transit Authority may operate service outside the urbanized area of Chittenden County with approval from the Agency of Transportation. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent other transit providers from offering transit connecting to the urbanized area of Chittenden County, or providing on demand services in that area, with the approval of the Agency of Transportation.

* * *

§ 10. IMPLEMENTATION

* * *

~~(c) Immediately upon joining the Authority, the municipality shall appoint two commissioners as provided herein. The initial terms of the commissioners of the initial members shall be arranged by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission so that the terms of approximately one-third of the commissioners shall expire in each year. The initial terms of commissioners from municipalities joining after March 7, 1973, shall be set by the Board of Commissioners.~~

* * *

* * * Town Highways * * *

Sec. 14. 19 V.S.A. § 306 is amended to read:

§ 306. APPROPRIATION; STATE AID FOR TOWN HIGHWAYS

(a) General State aid to town highways.

(1) An annual appropriation to class 1, 2, and 3 town highways shall be made. This appropriation shall increase over the previous fiscal year's appropriation by the same percentage change as the following, whichever is less, or shall remain at the previous fiscal year's appropriation if either of the following are negative or zero:

(A) the percentage change of the Agency's total appropriations funded by Transportation Fund revenues, excluding appropriations ~~for town highways~~ under this subsection (a) and subsections (e) and (h) of this section, for the most recently closed fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year immediately preceding the most recently closed fiscal year; or

* * *

(e) State aid for town highway structures.

(1) There shall be an annual appropriation for grants to municipalities for maintenance (including actions to extend life expectancy) and for construction of bridges and culverts; for maintenance and construction of other structures, including causeways and retaining walls, intended to preserve the integrity of the traveled portion of class 1, 2, and 3 town highways; and for alternatives that eliminate the need for a bridge, culvert, or other structure, such as the construction or reconstruction of a highway, the purchase of parcels of land that would be landlocked by closure of a bridge, the payment of damages for loss of highway access, and the substitution of other means of access. This appropriation shall increase over the previous fiscal year's appropriation by the same percentage change as the following, whichever is less, or shall remain at the previous fiscal year's appropriation if either of the following are negative or zero:

(A) the percentage change in the Agency's total appropriations funded by Transportation Fund revenues, excluding appropriations under this subsection (e) and subsections (a) and (h) of this section, for the most recently closed fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year immediately preceding the most recently closed fiscal year; or

(B) the percentage change in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

(2) For purposes of subdivision (1)(B) of this subsection, the percentage change in the CPI-U is calculated by determining the increase or decrease, to the nearest one-tenth of a percent, in the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year one year prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made compared to the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year two years prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made.

(3) Each fiscal year, the Agency shall approve qualifying projects with a total estimated State share cost of $7,200,000.00 at a minimum as new grants. ~~The Agency's proposed appropriation for the Program shall take into account the estimated amount of qualifying invoices submitted to the Agency with respect to project grants approved in prior years but not yet completed as well~~

~~as with respect to new project grants to be approved in the fiscal year~~ Beginning with State fiscal year 2027, the minimum total estimated State share cost for the approved grants shall increase over the prior fiscal year's minimum total estimated State share cost by the same percentage as the appropriation for State aid for town highway structures is increased pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(4) In a given fiscal year, should expenditures in the Town Highway Structures Program exceed the amount appropriated, the Agency shall advise the Governor of the need to request a supplemental appropriation from the General Assembly to fund the additional project cost, provided that the Agency has previously committed to completing those projects.

~~(3)~~(5) Funds received as grants for State aid for town highway structures may be used by a municipality to satisfy a portion of the matching requirements for federal earmarks, subject to subsection 309b(c) of this title.

* * *

(h) Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program.

(1) There shall be an annual appropriation for grants to municipalities for resurfacing, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of paved or unpaved class 2 town highways. ~~However, municipalities~~ Municipalities that have no State highways or class 1 town highways within their borders may use the grants for such activities with respect to both class 2 and class 3 town highways. ~~Each fiscal year, the Agency shall approve qualifying projects with a total estimated State share cost of $8,600,000.00 at a minimum as new grants. The Agency's proposed appropriation for the Program shall take into account the estimated amount of qualifying invoices submitted to the Agency with respect to project grants approved in prior years but not yet completed as well as with respect to new project grants to be approved in the fiscal year.~~ This appropriation shall increase over the previous fiscal year's appropriation by the same percentage change as the following, whichever is less, or shall remain at the previous fiscal year's appropriation if either of the following are negative or zero:

(A) the percentage change in the Agency's total appropriations funded by Transportation Fund revenues, excluding appropriations under this subsection (h) and subsections (a) and (e) of this section, for the most recently closed fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year immediately preceding the most recently closed fiscal year; or

(B) the percentage change in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

(2) For purposes of subdivision (1)(B) of this subsection, the percentage change in the CPI-U is calculated by determining the increase or decrease, to

the nearest one-tenth of a percent, in the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year one year prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made compared to the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year two years prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made.

(3) Each fiscal year, the Agency shall approve qualifying projects with a total estimated State share cost of $8,600,000.00 at a minimum as new grants. Beginning with State fiscal year 2027, the minimum total estimated State share cost for the approved grants shall increase over the prior fiscal year's minimum total estimated State share cost by the same percentage as the appropriation for the Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program is increased pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(4) In a given fiscal year, should expenditures in the Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program exceed the amount appropriated, the Agency shall advise the Governor of the need to request a supplemental appropriation from the General Assembly to fund the additional project cost, provided that the Agency has previously committed to completing those projects. Funds received as grants for State aid under the Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program may be used by a municipality to satisfy a portion of the matching requirements for federal earmarks, subject to subsection 309b(c) of this title.

* * *

Sec. 15. CANCELLATION OF LOCALLY MANAGED PROJECTS; PROCESS; IMPROVEMENTS; REPORT

The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Transportation Board, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall engage a consultant to examine the requirements of 19 V.S.A. § 309c, cancellation of locally managed projects, to evaluate the obligations, risks, and benefits imposed by the provisions of that section on the State and the local sponsor of a locally managed project and to identify potential changes to the provisions of that section to ensure that State and federal transportation funding resources are appropriately administered. The Agency shall, on or before January 15, 2026, submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the consultant's findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

Sec. 16. MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION ASSETS; ASSESSMENT; FUNDING NEEDS; REPORT

(a) The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall engage a consultant to:

(1) review current municipal practices relating to planning for ongoing maintenance, upgrades, and replacement of municipal transportation assets, including roads, pavement, bridges, culverts, signals, signage, highway equipment, and highway facilities;

(2) develop a framework for a system to assess the current condition of municipal highway networks and the potential impacts of improvements to or degradation of those networks on the State's transportation system;

(3) develop a prioritization process to direct State funding to the repair, upgrade, or replacement of specific municipal transportation assets based on the need for such work in the context of the asset's role in the State and regional highway networks; and

(4) identify and recommend potential statutory changes to implement the assessment framework developed pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection and the prioritization process developed pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(b) The Agency of Transportation shall, not later than January 15, 2027, submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the consultant's findings and recommendations for legislative action.

Sec. 17. STATE TOWN HIGHWAY AID; MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAMS; EFFICIENCIES; IMPROVEMENTS; REPORT

(a) The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall engage a consultant to evaluate the State's Town Highway Aid and municipal grant programs administered by the Agency to identify potential efficiencies and improvements related to the administration of Town Highway Aid and municipal grant programs. The consultant shall evaluate the various funding streams authorized pursuant to 19 V.S.A. § 306 as well as programs administered through the Agency's Municipal Assistance Bureau, including the Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, Municipal Mitigation Program, Municipal Park and Ride Program, Better Roads Program, Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program, and Grants in Aid.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Agency shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the consultant's findings and any recommendations for legislative or

administrative actions to improve or increase the efficiency of the Town Highway Aid and municipal grant programs.

* * * Mileage-Based User Fee * * *

Sec. 18. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 62, Secs. 27–29 are amended to read:

Sec. 27. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE LEGISLATIVE INTENT

It is the intent of the General Assembly for the State:

(1) to start collecting a mileage-based user fee from all battery-electric vehicles registered in Vermont starting on ~~July 1, 2025, which is expected to be the first day of the first fiscal year when more than 15 percent of new pleasure car registrations in the State are plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs)~~ or before January 1, 2027 subject to sufficient funding being available for implementation;

(2) to ~~start subjecting~~ subject plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) that are a pleasure car to an ~~increased~~ annual or a biennial ~~registration~~ electric vehicle infrastructure fee starting on ~~July~~ January 1, 2025, and that PHEVs shall not be subject to a mileage-based user fee;

(3) to ~~work towards~~ examine collecting a fee on ~~kWhs~~ electricity that ~~are~~ is dispensed through certain electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public so as to supplant lost ~~gas~~ fuel tax revenue from out-of-state PEVs traveling in Vermont; and

(4) to not commence collecting a mileage-based user fee until ~~such~~ the General Assembly has enacted legislation that establishes the amount of the fee and codifies any necessary authorizing language ~~is codified~~ in statute and that legislation becomes effective.

Sec. 28. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE AUTHORIZATION

(a) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Program for Environmental Policy and Sustainability, the Agency of Transportation, including the Department of Motor Vehicles, is authorized to apply for and accept a competitive federal Strategic Innovation for Revenue Collection grant established pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58 (IIJA), Sec. 13001, with up to $350,000.00 in Transportation Fund monies authorized for the nonfederal match in fiscal year 2024 and ~~a to-be-determined amount for the nonfederal match in subsequent fiscal years~~ up to $350,000.00 in Transportation Fund monies authorized for the nonfederal match in fiscal year 2025.

(b) ~~As permitted under federal regulations and grant terms, the~~ The Agency shall utilize ~~grant monies to design~~ State or federal funding, or both,

authorized to be used for the purpose of designing a mileage-based user fee that is consistent with Secs. 27 and 29 of this act.

(c) Subject to State procurement requirements and the availability of sufficient funding, the Agency may retain one or more contractors or consultants, or both, to assist with the design of a process to commence collecting a mileage-based user fee on ~~July 1, 2025~~ January 1, 2027.

Sec. 29. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE DESIGN

(a) Definitions. As used in Secs. 27–30 of this act:

(1) "Account manager" means a person under contract with the Agency of Transportation or Department of Motor Vehicles to administer and manage the mileage-based user fee.

(2) "Annual vehicle miles traveled" means the total number of miles that a BEV is driven between annual inspections as reported ~~by an inspection mechanic~~ to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

(3) "Mileage-based user fee" means the total amount that an owner or lessee of a BEV registered in Vermont owes the State and is calculated by:

(A) multiplying the mileage-based user fee rate by the annual vehicle miles traveled ~~or~~;

(B) in the case of a terminating event, by multiplying the mileage-based user fee rate by the vehicle miles traveled between the last Vermont annual inspection and the terminating event; or

(C) in the absence of a recorded odometer reading during the mileage reporting period, by multiplying the mileage-based user fee by the 98th percentile of estimated annual vehicle miles traveled for a pleasure car in Vermont.

(4) "Mileage-based user fee rate" means the per-mile usage fee charged to the owner or lessee of a BEV registered in Vermont.

(5) "Mileage reporting period" means the time between annual inspections or the time between ~~an~~ the most recent annual inspection and a terminating event.

(6) "Pleasure car" has the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(28).

(7) "Plug-in electric vehicle (PEV)" has the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(85) and includes battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), which have the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(85)(A) and (B).

(8) "Terminating event" means either the registering of a BEV that had been registered in Vermont in a different state or a change in ownership or lesseeship of the BEV, or both.

(b) Commencement date. The Agency shall design a process to collect a mileage-based user fee for miles driven by a BEV registered in Vermont to commence collecting revenue on ~~July 1, 2025~~ January 1, 2027.

(c) Covered vehicles. The Agency shall design a process to collect a mileage-based user fee based on the annual vehicle miles traveled by BEVs registered in the State.

(d) Imposition of a mileage-based user fee. The Agency shall design a process to collect a mileage-based user fee from the owner or lessee of a BEV registered in Vermont for each mileage reporting period ~~within 60 days after the Vermont annual inspection~~ on an annual, quarterly, or monthly basis selected by the owner or lessee and reconciled upon renewal of the vehicle registration or within 60 days after a terminating event that closes the mileage reporting period.

Sec. 19. INTENT

It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

(1) the mileage-based user fee for a BEV pleasure car be approximately equivalent to the average amount collected by the State in fuel tax revenue from the use of a non-PEV pleasure car registered in Vermont and the average amount collected by the State in fuel tax revenue and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure fee from the use of a PHEV pleasure car; and

(2) that the mileage-based user fee for BEV pleasure cars will be an interim step towards gradually expanding the mileage-based user fee to all motor vehicles.

Sec. 20. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE; FUNDING; DESIGN; UPDATES

The Agency of Transportation shall report to the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee on or before September 30, 2025 and December 15, 2025 regarding the status of federal grants and other funding for the design of the mileage-based user fee pursuant to the provisions of 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 62, Secs. 27–29, as amended by Sec. 12 of this act, and the Agency's progress in designing the mileage-based user fee.

* * * Authority to Transfer Monies in State Fiscal Year 2026 * * *

Sec. 21. AUTHORIZATION TO USE MONIES TO CONTINUE PARTNERSHIP WITH DRIVE ELECTRIC VERMONT IN STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026

In State fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Transportation is authorized to spend up to $325,000.00 in remaining monies appropriated to the Electrify Your Fleet Program in State Fiscal Year 2024 to continue the Agency of Transportation's partnership with Drive Electric Vermont. The monies shall be used for programs and activities that support increased ownership and use of PEVs in the State through:

(1) stakeholder coordination;

(2) consumer education and outreach;

(3) infrastructure development; and

(4) the provision of technical assistance and support to Vermont municipalities and Vermont businesses desiring to electrify their vehicle fleets.

* * * Consideration of Vehicle Miles Traveled in Project Planning * * *

Sec. 22. 19 V.S.A. § 1 is amended to read:

§ 1. DEFINITIONS

As used in this title:

* * *

(26) "Vehicle miles traveled" means the estimated sum of the miles traveled by all motor vehicle trips within a specific area during a calendar year.

Sec. 23. 19 V.S.A. § 10b is amended to read:

§ 10b. STATEMENT OF POLICY; GENERAL

(a) The Agency shall be the responsible agency of the State for the development of transportation policy. It shall develop a mission statement to reflect:

(1) that State transportation policy shall be to encompass, coordinate, and integrate all modes of transportation and to consider complete streets, as defined in section 2401 of this title, principles; and

(2) the need for transportation projects that will improve the State's economic infrastructure~~,~~; ~~as well as the~~ use ~~of~~ resources in efficient, coordinated, integrated, cost-effective, and environmentally sound ways~~,~~; reduce vehicle miles traveled within the State when feasible; and that will be consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP) issued under 30 V.S.A. § 202b.

* * *

Sec. 24. 19 V.S.A. § 10c is amended to read:

§ 10c. STATEMENT OF POLICY; HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES

* * *

(c) In choosing between the improvement of an existing highway and complete reconstruction, the Agency shall weigh the following factors:

* * *

(9) the impact on the historic, scenic, and aesthetic values of the municipality, as interpreted by the municipality, in which the highway is located; ~~and~~

(10) if it is a forest highway under federal jurisdiction; and

(11) opportunities to reduce vehicle miles traveled or otherwise reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to the highway.

* * *

Sec. 25. 19 V.S.A. § 10i is amended to read:

§ 10i. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

* * *

(c) Transportation Program. The Transportation Program shall be developed in a fiscally responsible manner to accomplish the following objectives:

* * *

(3) strengthening the economy, protecting the quality of the natural environment, and improving Vermonters' quality of life; ~~and~~

(4) achieving the recommendations of the CEP; and

(5) striving to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions.

* * *

* * * Medical Transports * * *

Sec. 26. PUBLIC TRANSIT DEMAND RESPONSE VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS; GRANTS; APPROPRIATION

(a) The sum of $600,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Transportation in fiscal year 2026 for the purpose of providing grants to the public transit agencies to hire volunteer coordinators. Volunteer coordinators hired with grants provided pursuant to this section shall be

responsible for the identification, recruitment, and retention of volunteers to provide transportation services to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

(b) The Agency shall, to the extent possible, seek to provide grants to public transit providers in a manner that is geographically balanced and ensures the distribution of volunteer coordinators throughout the State.

(c) Not later than December 15, 2026, the Agency, in consultation with public transit agencies that receive grants pursuant to this section, shall submit a written report the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the extent to which grants issued pursuant to this section resulted in an increase in volunteer capacity in the State.

Sec. 27. MEDICAID NON-EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

(a) In fiscal year 2026, prior to executing a contract to provide Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation services, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall provide to the Joint Fiscal Committee for review and approval a detailed analysis demonstrating that by executing such a contract:

(1) no State policy, including the coordinated delivery of transportation services in the Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities program and the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program, will be compromised;

(2) there will be no degradation of service to eligible individuals; and

(3) the financial stability of the State's public transportation systems will be maintained.

(b) The analysis shall also include the impact of the Agency of Transportation's investments in vehicles, technology, and other capital investments on the coordinated service delivery model.

Sec. 28. VOLUNTEERS PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES; BACKGROUND CHECKS; EXPANSION OF VOLUNTEER POOL; REPORT

(a) On or before July 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall commence meeting with the Vermont Public Transit Association, the Agency of Transportation, and, in the discretion of the Commissioner of Vermont Health Access, other stakeholders to identify potential, federally permissible opportunities to expand the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program's pool of volunteer drivers. As part of this work, the Department and Association shall collaborate to determine if there are specific classes of offenses that currently prevent volunteer drivers from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program.

(1) The Vermont Public Transit Association shall, to the extent possible, gather and provide to the Department anonymized information from its members regarding:

(A) the number of potential volunteers who were barred from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program due to a background check during the past year;

(B) which of the background checks currently required by the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program resulted in potential volunteers being barred from providing transportation services, broken out by percentage; and

(C) a summary of the offenses that resulted in potential volunteers being barred from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program, broken out by:

(i) the type of offense;

(ii) whether the offense was a felony or misdemeanor;

(iii) whether the offense was under State or federal law;

(iv) the percentage of potential volunteers who were barred from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program for each type of offense; and

(v) to the extent that it is possible to determine, the number of rides that could have been provided by the individuals barred under each type of offense.

(2) The Department shall utilize the information provided by the Association pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection to determine, to the extent possible, whether the identified offenses are:

(A) fraud-based or otherwise implicate potential Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse;

(B) an offense that otherwise bars an individual from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program; or

(C) an offense that caused harm to an individual other than the offender, or otherwise negatively impacted the safety of the general public.

(b) The Department of Vermont Health Access and the Vermont Public Transit Association shall, on or before January 30, 2026, make themselves available to provide an update to the House Committees on Transportation and on Health Care and to the Senate Committees on Transportation and on Health and Welfare regarding the work performed pursuant to this section and opportunities that were identified to expand the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program's pool of volunteer drivers.

Sec. 29. VOLUNTEER DRIVERS; PUBLICITY; OUTREACH

(a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Vermont Public Transit Association, shall identify and pursue opportunities to communicate with the Vermont driving public regarding volunteer and community driver participation in the State's demand response transportation programs, including the Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities program and the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program. Outreach conducted pursuant to this section may include:

(1) invitations for individuals to voluntarily indicate their interest through the operator licensing and vehicle registration processes, subject to any data privacy requirements under State or federal law;

(2) notices or other public outreach placed on the Department's website or other internet-based platforms; and

(3) messaging by the Agency of Transportation on social media platforms, including providing links to informational resources provided by the Vermont Public Transit Association.

(b) The Department of Vermont Health Access, in consultation with the Agency of Transportation and the Vermont Public Transit Association, shall identify and pursue opportunities to increase awareness of available transportation services provided by volunteer and community driver programs among both individuals who are potentially eligible to volunteer as drivers and individuals who could potentially utilize the transportation services.

Sec. 30. COORDINATION OF HEALTH CARE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES; WORKING GROUP; REPORT

(a) The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Commissioner of Vermont Health Access, shall convene a working group to improve the coordination of health care and transportation services in relation to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs. The working group shall be composed of stakeholders identified by the Secretary in consultation with the Commissioner of Vermont Health Access, including representatives of the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health

Systems, independent dialysis and methadone facilities, and the Vermont Public Transportation Association.

(b) The working group shall examine various options for improving the coordination of health care and transportation services, including:

(1) opportunities to coordinate the scheduling of health care appointments and treatments to maximize the use of shared rides; and

(2) opportunities to improve communication between the public transit agencies and health care providers to facilitate coordination of health care and transportation services for individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

(c) On or before January 15, 2026, the Secretary and Commissioner shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Transportation and on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Transportation and on Health and Welfare with the working group's findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

* * * Vehicle Identification Numbers for Certain Vehicles * * *

Sec. 31. ULTRA-LOW VOLUME VEHICLE MANUFACTURING; KIT-CARS; HOMEBUILT MOTOR VEHICLES; VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER; REPORT

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Secretary of Natural Resources and representatives of the ultra-low volume vehicle manufacturing industry in Vermont, shall examine processes for issuing vehicle identification numbers to ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles and opportunities to facilitate the registration of such vehicles.

(2) As used in this section:

(A) "Homebuilt motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle that is constructed or assembled by an individual from new or used parts, or both, and is not a kit-car.

(B) "Kit-car" means a motor vehicle that is constructed by an individual from a manufactured kit that includes some or all parts and components necessary to construct the motor vehicle.

(C) "Ultra-low volume motor vehicle" means a vehicle that is manufactured for sale by a manufacturer whose annual worldwide production is not more than 325 motor vehicles.

(b) In preparing the report, the Commissioner shall:

(1) examine the potential to waive some or all Vermont motor vehicle emissions requirements for ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles;

(2) identify a cost-effective process for certifying the safety of ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles; and

(3) develop a streamlined process to provide State Vehicle Identification Numbers to ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles.

(c) On or before January 15, 2026, the Commissioner shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the Commissioner's findings and identifying any legislative action necessary to enable the issuance of vehicle identification numbers to and registration of ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles.

* * * Railroad Lease Extensions * * *

Sec. 32. 5 V.S.A. § 3405 is amended to read:

§ 3405. LEASE FOR CONTINUED OPERATION

(a) The Secretary, as agent for the State, with the approval of the General Assembly, or if the General Assembly is not in session, approval of the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee, is authorized to lease or otherwise arrange for the continued operation of all or any State-owned railroad property to any responsible person, provided that approval for the operation, if necessary, is granted by the federal Surface Transportation Board under 49 C.F.R. Part 1150 (certificate to construct, acquire, or operate railroad lines). The transaction shall be subject to any further terms and conditions as in the opinion of the Secretary are necessary and appropriate to accomplish the purpose of this chapter.

(b) To preserve continuity of service on State-owned railroads, the Secretary may enter into a short-term lease or operating agreement, for a term not to exceed six months, with a responsible railroad operator. The Secretary shall notify the House and Senate Committees on Transportation within 10 calendar days after entering into any lease or agreement pursuant to this subsection.

(c) The Secretary shall notify the House and Senate Committees on Transportation or, if the General Assembly is not in session, the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee when there are 12 months remaining on the operating lease for any State-owned railroad, and when there are 12 months remaining on a lease extension for the operating lease for any State-owned railroad.

* * * Dig Safe * * *

Sec. 33. 30 V.S.A. § 7006 is amended to read:

§ 7006. MARKING OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITIES

A company notified in accordance with section 7005 of this title shall, within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, ~~of~~ after the receipt of the notice, mark the approximate location of its underground utility facilities in the area of the proposed excavation activities; provided, however, if the company advises the person that the proposed excavation area is of such length or size that the company cannot reasonably mark all of the underground utility facilities within ~~48~~ 72 hours, the person shall notify the company of the specific locations in which the excavation activities will first occur and the company shall mark facilities in those locations within ~~48~~ 72 hours and the remaining facilities within a reasonable time thereafter. A company and an excavator may by agreement fix a later time for the company's marking of the facilities, provided the marking is made prior to excavation activities. For the purposes of this chapter, the approximate location of underground facilities shall be marked with stakes, paint, or other physical means as designated by the Commission.

Sec. 34. 30 V.S.A. § 7006a is amended to read:

§ 7006a. MAINTENANCE OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITY MARKINGS

After a company has marked its underground facilities in accordance with section 7006 of this title, the excavator shall be responsible for maintenance of the designated markings. In the event said markings are obliterated, destroyed, or removed, the person engaged in excavation activities shall notify the System referred to in section 7002 of this title that remarking is needed. The System shall then notify all member companies whose facilities may be affected. ~~The~~ Each applicable company shall within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, following receipt of the notice, remark the location of its underground utility facilities.

* * * Legal Trails * * *

Sec. 35. 19 V.S.A. chapter 3 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 3. TOWN HIGHWAYS

§ 301. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(2) "Legislative body" ~~includes boards of selectmen, aldermen, and village trustees~~ means a "legislative body" as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2001.

(3) ~~"Selectmen" includes village trustees and aldermen~~ "Selectboard" means a "selectboard" as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2001.

* * *

(8) "Trail" means a public right-of-way that is not a highway and that:

(A) municipalities have the authority to exclusively or cooperatively maintain;

(B) previously was a designated town highway having the same width as the designated town highway, or a lesser width if so designated; or

~~(B)~~(C) a new public right-of-way laid out as a trail by the ~~selectmen~~ legislative body for the purpose of providing access to abutting properties or for recreational use. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to independently authorize the condemnation of land for recreational purposes or to affect the authority of ~~selectmen~~ legislative bodies to reasonably regulate the uses of recreational trails.

§ 302. CLASSIFICATION OF TOWN HIGHWAYS

(a) For the purposes of this section and receiving State aid, all town highways shall be categorized into one or another of the following classes:

* * *

(2) Class 2 town highways are those town highways selected as the most important highways in each town. As far as practicable, they shall be selected with the purposes of securing trunk lines of improved highways from town to town and to places that by their nature have more than normal amount of traffic. The ~~selectmen~~ legislative body, with the approval of the Agency, shall determine which highways are to be class 2 highways.

(3) Class 3 town highways:

(A) Class 3 town highways are all traveled town highways other than class 1 or 2 highways. The ~~selectmen~~ legislative body, after conference with a representative of the Agency, shall determine which highways are class 3 town highways.

* * *

(5) Trails shall not be considered highways ~~and the town~~. A municipality shall have the authority to maintain trails but shall not be responsible for any maintenance, including culverts and bridges.

* * *

§ 303. TOWN HIGHWAY CONTROL

Town highways shall be under the general supervision and control of the ~~selectmen~~ legislative body of the town where the roads are located. ~~Selectmen~~ The legislative body of a town shall supervise all expenditures.

§ 304. DUTIES OF SELECTBOARD

(a) It shall be the duty and responsibility of the selectboard of the town to, or acting as a board, it shall have the authority to:

* * *

(16) Unless the town electorate votes otherwise, under the provisions of 17 V.S.A. § 2646, appoint a road commissioner, or remove ~~him or her~~ the road commissioner from office, pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2651. Road commissioners, elected or appointed, shall have only the powers and authority regarding highways granted to them by the selectboard.

* * *

(24) Maintain trails, but shall not be required to maintain trails.

* * *

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 36. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 32 (railroad leases) and 33 and 34 (dig safe) shall take effect on passage.

(b) Sec. 5 (Agency of Transportation dashboard) shall take effect on January 1, 2026.

(c) Sec. 6 (repeal of 19 V.S.A. § 10g reports) shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(d) The remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Transportation.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amended as recommended by the Committee on Transportation.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and pending the question, Shall the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill as recommended by the Committee on Transportation?, Senators Westman, Brennan, Harrison, Perchlik and White moved to amend the recommendation of proposal of amendment of the Committee on Transportation as follows:

First: By inserting a Sec. 1a and its associated reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * Summary of Transportation Investments * * *

Sec. 1a. FISCAL YEAR 2026 TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS INTENDED TO REDUCE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, REDUCE FOSSIL FUEL USE, AND SAVE VERMONT HOUSEHOLDS MONEY

This act includes the State's fiscal year 2026 transportation investments intended to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, reduce fossil fuel use, and save Vermont households money in furtherance of the policies articulated in 19 V.S.A. § 10b and the goals of the Comprehensive Energy Plan and the Vermont Climate Action Plan and to satisfy the Executive and Legislative Branches' commitments to the Paris Agreement climate goals. In fiscal year 2026, these efforts will include the following:

(1) Park and Ride Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $2,435,740.00, which will fund two construction projects to create new park-and-ride facilities, the construction of improvements to two existing park-and-ride facilities, funding for a municipal park-and-ride grant program, and paving projects for existing park-and-ride facilities. This year's Park and Ride Program will create 60 new State-owned spaces. Specific additions and improvements include:

(A) Manchester—construction of 50 new spaces; and

(B) Sharon—design and construction of 10 new spaces.

(2) Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure, including local match, of $21,879,965.00, which will fund 33 bike and pedestrian construction projects; 17 bike and pedestrian design, right-of-way, or design and right-of way projects for construction in future fiscal years; and 10 scoping studies. The construction projects include the creation, improvement, or rehabilitation of walkways, sidewalks, shared-use paths, bike paths, and cycling lanes. Projects are funded in Arlington, Bakersfield, Bennington, Bethel, Brattleboro, Bristol, Burke, Burlington, Castleton, Chester, Danville, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Greensboro, Hardwick, Hartford, Highgate, Hinesburg, Huntington, Hyde Park, Irasburg, Jericho, Lyndonville, Middlebury, Montpelier, Moretown, Newfane, Newport City, Northfield, Pawlet, Randolph, Royalton, Rutland City, Rutland Town, Sheffield, Shelburne, Sheldon, South Burlington, Springfield, St. Albans City, St. Albans Town, Swanton, Wallingford, Waterbury, West Rutland, Williston, Wilmington, and Windsor. This act also provides funding for:

(A) some of Local Motion's operation costs to run the bike ferry on the Colchester Causeway, which is part of the Island Line Trail;

(B) a small-scale municipal bicycle and pedestrian grant program for projects to be selected during the fiscal year;

(C) projects funded through the Safe Routes to School Program; and

(D) community grants along the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT).

(3) Transportation Alternatives Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $6,471,054.00, including local funds, which will fund 17 transportation alternatives construction projects; 26 transportation alternatives design, right-of-way, or design and right-of-way projects; and eight scoping studies. Of these 51 projects, 20 involve environmental mitigation related to clean water or stormwater concerns, or both clean water and stormwater concerns, and 32 involve bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Projects are funded in Athens, Barre City, Bennington, Brandon, Brattleboro, Bridgewater, Bristol, Burke, Burlington, Castleton, Derby, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Fairlee, Ferrisburgh, Grafton, Guilford, Hartford, Hinesburg, Hyde Park, Jericho, Londonderry, Lyndon, Montgomery, Newark, Proctor, Rockingham, Rutland City, Shoreham, South Burlington, Springfield, St. Albans Town, Swanton, Tinmouth, Warren, Williston, and Wilmington.

(4) Public Transit Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $52,695,234.00 for public transit uses throughout the State. Included in the authorization are:

(A) Go! Vermont, with an authorization of $380,000.00. This authorization supports transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, including the State's Trip Planner and commuter services, to promote the use of carpools and vanpools.

(B) Mobility and Transportation Innovations (MTI) Grant Program, with an authorization of $340,000.00, which includes $315,000.00 in federal funds. This authorization continues to support projects that improve both mobility and access to services for transit-dependent Vermonters, reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

(5) Rail Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $61,887,348.00, including local funds and $31,894,436.00 in federal funds, for intercity passenger rail service, including funding for the Ethan Allen Express and Vermonter Amtrak services, and rail infrastructure that supports freight rail as well. Moving freight by rail instead of trucks lowers greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75 percent, on average.

Second: By inserting a Sec. 2a and its associated reader assistance heading to read as follows:

* * * Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters * * *

Sec. 2a. TOWN HIGHWAY NON-FEDERAL DISASTERS

(a) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters, spending is authorized as follows:

FY26	As Proposed	As Amended	Change
Grants	1,150,000	1,150,000	0
Total	1,150,000	1,150,000	0
Sources of funds			
State	1,150,000	0	-1,150,000
Other	0	1,150,000	1,150,000
Total	1,150,000	1,150,000	0

(b) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters, the following footnote is added: "Other funds of $1,150,000 are amounts appropriated from the PILOT Special Fund established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3709."

Third: In Sec. 26, public transit demand response volunteer coordinators; grants; appropriations, by striking out subsection (a) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (a) to read as follows:

(a) The Agency of Transportation is authorized to utilize up to $600,000.00 in one-time funds appropriated from the Transportation Fund to the Agency of Transportation in fiscal year 2026 for the purpose of providing grants to public transit agencies to hire volunteer coordinators. Volunteer coordinators hired with grants provided pursuant to this section shall be responsible for the identification, recruitment, and retention of volunteers to provide transportation services to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

Fourth: By striking out Sec. 27, Medicaid non-emergency transportation, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 27. MEDICAID NON-EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

In fiscal year 2026, prior to executing a contract to provide Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation services, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall provide to the Joint Fiscal Committee for review and approval a detailed analysis demonstrating that by executing such a contract:

(1) there will be no degradation of service to eligible individuals; and

(2) the financial stability of the State's public transportation systems will be maintained.

Fifth: In Sec. 29, volunteer drivers; publicity; outreach, by striking out subsection (b) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) The Department of Vermont Health Access shall develop informational materials related to eligibility for the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program. The Department shall, in consultation with the Agency of Transportation and other relevant stakeholders, make the materials available to the public on the Department's website and other internet-based platforms.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the proposal of amendment of the Committee on Transportation, as amended, was agreed to and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Third Reading Ordered

S.R. 13.

Senator Baruth, for the Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Senate resolution entitled:

Senate resolution strongly objecting to the manner and circumstances under which U.S. immigration authorities arrested and detained Mohsen Mahdawi and strongly advocating that he be afforded due process under the law and released immediately from detention.

Reported that the resolution ought to be adopted.

Thereupon, the Senate Resolution was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and third reading of the Senate Resolution was ordered, on a roll call, Yeas 24, Nays 5.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Westman, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Heffernan, Ingalls, Norris, Weeks, Williams.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Hart.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, April 30, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2025

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 Appropriations

H. 481.

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 stormwater management.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 493.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

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:

* * * Purpose, Definitions, Legend * * *

Sec. A.100 SHORT TITLE

(a) This bill may be referred to as the "BIG BILL – Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations Act".

Sec. A.101 PURPOSE; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) The purpose of this act is to provide appropriations for the operations of State government and for capital appropriations not funded with bond proceeds during fiscal year 2026. It is the express intent of the General Assembly that activities of the various agencies, departments, divisions, boards, offices, and commissions be limited to those that can be supported by funds appropriated in this act or other acts passed prior to June 30, 2025. Agency and department heads are directed to implement staffing and service levels at the beginning of fiscal year 2026 so as to meet this condition unless otherwise directed by specific language in this act or other acts of the General Assembly.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that any interim budget and appropriation adjustments made in accordance with 32 V.S.A. §§ 133 and 704 prioritize supporting the health, safety, and well-being of Vermonters; a robust education system; and a strong economy.

Sec. A.102 APPROPRIATIONS

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that this act serves as the primary source and reference for appropriations for the operations of State government and for capital appropriations not funded with bond proceeds in fiscal year 2026.

(b) The sums herein stated are appropriated for the purposes specified in the following sections of this act. When no time is expressly stated during which any of the operating appropriations are to continue, the appropriations are single-year appropriations and only for the purpose indicated and shall be paid from funds shown as the source of funds. Capital appropriations funded

from the Capital Infrastructure Subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments Special Fund shall be subject to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 1001b(e). If in this act there is an error in either addition or subtraction, the totals shall be adjusted accordingly. Apparent errors in referring to section numbers of statutory titles within this act may be disregarded by the Commissioner of Finance and Management.

(c) Unless codified or otherwise specified, all narrative portions of this act apply only to the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2026.

Sec. A.103 DEFINITIONS

(a) As used in this act:

(1) "Encumbrances" means a portion of spending authority reserved for the subsequent payment of existing travel authorizations, purchase orders, grants, or contracts. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall make final decisions on the appropriateness of encumbrances.

(2) "Grants" means subsidies, aid, or payments to local governments, to community and quasi-public agencies for providing local services, and to persons who are not wards of the State for services or supplies and means cash or other direct assistance, including pension contributions.

(3) "Operating expenses" means property management; repair and maintenance; rental expenses; insurance; postage; travel; energy and utilities; office and other supplies; equipment, including motor vehicles, highway materials, and construction; expenditures for the purchase of land and construction of new buildings and permanent improvements; and similar items.

(4) "Personal services" means wages and salaries, fringe benefits, per diems, contracted third-party services, and similar items.

(5) "Capital appropriation" means an appropriation for tangible capital investments or expenses that are eligible to be funded from general obligation debt financing and are allowed under federal laws governing the use of State bond proceeds as described in 32 V.S.A. § 309.

Sec. A.104 RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING LAWS

(a) Except as specifically provided, this act shall not be construed in any way to negate or impair the full force and effect of existing laws.

Sec. A.105 OFFSETTING APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In the absence of specific provisions to the contrary in this act, when total appropriations are offset by estimated receipts, the State appropriations shall control, notwithstanding receipts being greater or less than anticipated.

Sec. A.106 FEDERAL FUNDS

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly or the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, may accept federal funds available to the State of Vermont, including block grants in lieu of, or in addition to, funds herein designated as federal. The Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly or the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, may allocate all or any portion of such federal funds for any purpose consistent with the purposes for which the basic appropriations in this act have been made.

(b) If, during fiscal year 2026, federal funds available to the State of Vermont and designated as federal in this and other acts of the 2025 session of the Vermont General Assembly are converted into block grants or are abolished under their current title in federal law and reestablished under a new title in federal law, the Governor may continue to accept such federal funds for any purpose consistent with the purposes for which the federal funds were appropriated. The Governor may spend such funds for such purposes for not more than 45 days prior to General Assembly or Joint Fiscal Committee approval. Notice shall be given to the Joint Fiscal Committee without delay if the Governor intends to use the authority granted by this section, and the Joint Fiscal Committee shall meet in an expedited manner to review the Governor's request for approval.

Sec. A.107 NEW POSITIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the total number of authorized State positions, both classified and exempt, excluding temporary positions as defined in 3 V.S.A. § 311(a)(11), shall not be increased during fiscal year 2026 except for new positions authorized by the General Assembly during the 2025 session. Limited service positions approved pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5 shall not be subject to this restriction.

Sec. A.108 LEGEND

(a) The act is organized by functions of government. The sections between B.100 and B.9999 contain appropriations of funds for the upcoming budget year. The sections between E.100 and E.9999 contain language that relates to specific appropriations or government functions, or both. The function areas by section numbers are as follows:

B.100–B.199 and E.100–E.199	General Government
B.200–B.299 and E.200–E.299	Protection to Persons and Property
B.300–B.399 and E.300–E.399	Human Services

B.400–B.499 and E.400–E.499	Labor
B.500–B.599 and E.500–E.599	General Education
B.600–B.699 and E.600–E.699	Higher Education
B.700–B.799 and E.700–E.799	Natural Resources
B.800–B.899 and E.800–E.899	Commerce and Community Development
B.900–B.999 and E.900–E.999	Transportation
B.1000–B.1099 and E.1000–E.1099	Debt Service
B.1100–B.1199 and E.1100–E.1199	One-time and other appropriation actions

(b) The C sections contain amendments to the current fiscal year; the D sections contain fund allocations, transfers, reversions, and reservations for the upcoming fiscal year; the F sections also contain amendments to the current fiscal year; and the G section contains effective dates.

* * * Fiscal Year 2026 Base Appropriations * * *

Sec. B.100 Secretary of administration - secretary's office

Personal services	2,532,305
Operating expenses	255,891
Grants	755,000
Total	3,543,196
Source of funds	
General fund	1,762,509
Special funds	755,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,025,687
Total	3,543,196

Sec. B.100.1 Secretary of administration - office of racial equity

Personal services	1,687,090
Operating expenses	118,323
Total	1,805,413
Source of funds	
General fund	1,144,831
Internal service funds	534,462
Interdepartmental transfers	126,120
Total	1,805,413

Sec. B.101 Secretary of administration - finance

Personal services	1,523,066
Operating expenses	168,424
Total	1,691,490
Source of funds	
Interdepartmental transfers	1,691,490
Total	1,691,490

Sec. B.102 Secretary of administration - workers' compensation insurance

Personal services	871,453
Operating expenses	100,387
Total	971,840
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	971,840
Total	971,840

Sec. B.103 Secretary of administration - general liability insurance

Personal services	406,346
Operating expenses	65,072
Total	471,418
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	471,418
Total	471,418

Sec. B.104 Secretary of administration - all other insurance

Personal services	278,478
Operating expenses	54,925
Total	333,403
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	333,403
Total	333,403

Sec. B.104.1 Retired state employees pension plus funding

Grants	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000
Source of funds	
General fund	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000

Sec. B.105 Agency of digital services - communications and information technology

Personal services	87,034,344
Operating expenses	50,695,231
Total	137,729,575
Source of funds	
General fund	233,207
Special funds	1,014,199
Internal service funds	136,482,169
Total	137,729,575

Sec. B.106 Finance and management - budget and management

Personal services	1,843,264
Operating expenses	342,676
Total	2,185,940
Source of funds	
General fund	1,254,559
Internal service funds	688,359
Interdepartmental transfers	243,022
Total	2,185,940

Sec. B.107 Finance and management - financial operations

Personal services	3,416,478
Operating expenses	894,620
Total	4,311,098
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	3,767,171
Interdepartmental transfers	543,927
Total	4,311,098

Sec. B.108 Human resources - operations

Personal services	12,091,729
Operating expenses	1,609,092
Total	13,700,821
Source of funds	
General fund	1,931,766
Special funds	171,235
Internal service funds	10,811,922
Interdepartmental transfers	785,898
Total	13,700,821

Sec. B.108.1 Human resources - VTHR operations

Personal services	2,259,639
Operating expenses	922,339
Total	3,181,978
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	3,181,978
Total	3,181,978

Sec. B.109 Human resources - employee benefits & wellness

Personal services	1,443,574
Operating expenses	727,231
Total	2,170,805
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	2,170,805
Total	2,170,805

Sec. B.110 Libraries

Personal services	3,071,139
Operating expenses	523,300
Grants	267,993
Total	3,862,432
Source of funds	
General fund	2,371,969
Special funds	96,994
Federal funds	1,273,020
Interdepartmental transfers	120,449
Total	3,862,432

Sec. B.111 Tax - administration/collection

Personal services	30,188,806
Operating expenses	7,007,735
Total	37,196,541
Source of funds	
General fund	24,668,155
Special funds	12,413,386
Interdepartmental transfers	115,000
Total	37,196,541

Sec. B.112 Buildings and general services - administration

Personal services	1,132,286
Operating expenses	206,653
Total	1,338,939

Source of funds	
Interdepartmental transfers	1,338,939
Total	1,338,939

Sec. B.113 Buildings and general services - engineering

Personal services	47,165
Operating expenses	1,116,280
Total	1,163,445
Source of funds	
General fund	1,163,445
Total	1,163,445

Sec. B.113.1 Buildings and general services engineering - capital projects

Personal services	3,225,944
Operating expenses	500,000
Total	3,725,944
Source of funds	
General fund	3,225,944
Interdepartmental transfers	500,000
Total	3,725,944

Sec. B.114 Buildings and general services - information centers

Personal services	3,721,861
Operating expenses	1,973,457
Total	5,695,318
Source of funds	
General fund	702,146
Transportation fund	4,542,959
Special funds	450,213
Total	5,695,318

Sec. B.115 Buildings and general services - purchasing

Personal services	2,860,824
Operating expenses	272,026
Total	3,132,850
Source of funds	
General fund	1,697,210
Interdepartmental transfers	1,435,640
Total	3,132,850

Sec. B.116 Buildings and general services - postal services

Personal services	846,111
Operating expenses	188,303
Total	1,034,414

Source of funds	
General fund	93,669
Internal service funds	940,745
Total	1,034,414

Sec. B.117 Buildings and general services - copy center

Personal services	951,063
Operating expenses	223,405
Total	1,174,468
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	1,174,468
Total	1,174,468

Sec. B.118 Buildings and general services - fleet management services

Personal services	1,020,985
Operating expenses	247,895
Total	1,268,880
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	1,201,997
Interdepartmental transfers	66,883
Total	1,268,880

Sec. B.119 Buildings and general services - federal surplus property

Operating expenses	4,427
Total	4,427
Source of funds	
Enterprise funds	4,427
Total	4,427

Sec. B.120 Buildings and general services - state surplus property

Personal services	365,056
Operating expenses	175,786
Total	540,842
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	540,842
Total	540,842

Sec. B.121 Buildings and general services - property management

Personal services	1,199,933
Operating expenses	605,349
Total	1,805,282

Source of funds	
Internal service funds	1,805,282
Total	1,805,282

Sec. B.122 Buildings and general services - fee for space

Personal services	21,826,541
Operating expenses	17,638,201
Total	39,464,742
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	39,360,459
Interdepartmental transfers	104,283
Total	39,464,742

Sec. B.124 Executive office - governor's office

Personal services	1,957,078
Operating expenses	567,607
Total	2,524,685
Source of funds	
General fund	1,997,850
Interdepartmental transfers	526,835
Total	2,524,685

Sec. B.125 Legislative counsel

Personal services	4,589,480
Operating expenses	286,936
Total	4,876,416
Source of funds	
General fund	4,876,416
Total	4,876,416

Sec. B.126 Legislature

Personal services	6,957,653
Operating expenses	5,329,448
Total	12,287,101
Source of funds	
General fund	12,287,101
Total	12,287,101

Sec. B.126.1 Legislative information technology

Personal services	1,504,560
Operating expenses	912,661
Total	2,417,221

Source of funds	
General fund	2,417,221
Total	2,417,221

Sec. B.127 Joint fiscal committee

Personal services	2,959,862
Operating expenses	197,907
Total	3,157,769
Source of funds	
General fund	3,157,769
Total	3,157,769

Sec. B.128 Sergeant at arms

Personal services	1,639,780
Operating expenses	166,416
Total	1,806,196
Source of funds	
General fund	1,806,196
Total	1,806,196

Sec. B.129 Lieutenant governor

Personal services	296,158
Operating expenses	51,993
Total	348,151
Source of funds	
General fund	348,151
Total	348,151

Sec. B.130 Auditor of accounts

Personal services	4,775,026
Operating expenses	143,505
Total	4,918,531
Source of funds	
General fund	408,398
Special funds	53,145
Internal service funds	4,456,988
Total	4,918,531

Sec. B.131 State treasurer

Personal services	7,137,154
Operating expenses	312,956
Total	7,450,110

Source of funds	
General fund	2,729,084
Special funds	4,179,251
Interdepartmental transfers	541,775
Total	7,450,110

Sec. B.132 State treasurer - unclaimed property

Personal services	801,268
Operating expenses	581,648
Total	1,382,916
Source of funds	
Private purpose trust funds	1,382,916
Total	1,382,916

Sec. B.133 Vermont state retirement system

Personal services	221,251
Operating expenses	3,066,842
Total	3,288,093
Source of funds	
Pension trust funds	3,288,093
Total	3,288,093

Sec. B.134 Municipal employees' retirement system

Personal services	228,961
Operating expenses	1,672,059
Total	1,901,020
Source of funds	
Pension trust funds	1,901,020
Total	1,901,020

Sec. B.134.1 Vermont pension investment commission

Personal services	2,234,198
Operating expenses	303,904
Total	2,538,102
Source of funds	
Special funds	2,538,102
Pension trust funds	0
Total	2,538,102

Sec. B.135 State labor relations board

Personal services	545,157
Operating expenses	66,136
Total	611,293

Source of funds	
General fund	601,717
Special funds	6,788
Interdepartmental transfers	2,788
Total	611,293

Sec. B.136 VOSHA review board

Personal services	109,521
Operating expenses	25,734
Total	135,255
Source of funds	
General fund	84,251
Interdepartmental transfers	51,004
Total	135,255

Sec. B.136.1 Ethics commission

Personal services	183,787
Operating expenses	39,775
Total	223,562
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	223,562
Total	223,562

Sec. B.137 Homeowner rebate

Grants	19,000,000
Total	19,000,000
Source of funds	
General fund	19,000,000
Total	19,000,000

Sec. B.138 Renter rebate

Grants	9,500,000
Total	9,500,000
Source of funds	
General fund	9,500,000
Total	9,500,000

Sec. B.139 Tax department - reappraisal and listing payments

Grants	3,410,000
Total	3,410,000
Source of funds	
General fund	3,410,000
Total	3,410,000

Sec. B.140 Municipal current use

Grants	21,350,000
Total	21,350,000
Source of funds	
General fund	21,350,000
Total	21,350,000

Sec. B.142 Payments in lieu of taxes

Grants	12,200,000
Total	12,200,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	12,200,000
Total	12,200,000

Sec. B.144 Payments in lieu of taxes - correctional facilities

Grants	40,000
Total	40,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	40,00
Total	40,000

Sec. B.145 Total general government

Source of funds	
General fund	139,223,564
Transportation fund	4,542,959
Special funds	33,918,313
Federal funds	1,273,020
Internal service funds	209,117,870
Interdepartmental transfers	9,219,740
Enterprise funds	4,427
Pension trust funds	5,189,113
Private purpose trust funds	1,382,916
Total	403,871,922

Sec. B.200 Attorney general

Personal services	15,608,060
Operating expenses	1,810,445
Grants	20,000
Total	17,438,505

Source of funds	
General fund	8,195,240
Special funds	2,468,889
Tobacco fund	434,660
Federal funds	1,809,676
Interdepartmental transfers	4,530,040
Total	17,438,505
Sec. B.201 Vermont court diversion	
Personal services	1,250
Grants	5,024,343
Total	5,025,593
Source of funds	
General fund	4,767,596
Special funds	257,997
Total	5,025,593
Sec. B.202 Defender general - public defense	
Personal services	18,955,131
Operating expenses	1,650,926
Total	20,606,057
Source of funds	
General fund	20,016,404
Special funds	589,653
Total	20,606,057
Sec. B.203 Defender general - assigned counsel	
Personal services	7,769,975
Operating expenses	64,500
Total	7,834,475
Source of funds	
General fund	7,834,475
Total	7,834,475
Sec. B.204 Judiciary	
Personal services	64,512,754
Operating expenses	13,865,672
Grants	121,030
Total	78,499,456
Source of funds	
General fund	72,601,728
Special funds	1,997,094
Federal funds	1,560,412

Interdepartmental transfers	2,340,222
Total	78,499,456

Sec. B.205 State's attorneys

Personal services	19,010,284
Operating expenses	2,115,052
Total	21,125,336
Source of funds	
General fund	20,541,309
Federal funds	31,000
Interdepartmental transfers	553,027
Total	21,125,336

Sec. B.206 Special investigative unit

Personal services	126,877
Operating expenses	27,835
Grants	2,136,507
Total	2,291,219
Source of funds	
General fund	2,291,219
Total	2,291,219

Sec. B.206.1 Crime victims advocates

Personal services	3,221,461
Operating expenses	117,870
Total	3,339,331
Source of funds	
General fund	3,339,331
Total	3,339,331

Sec. B.207 Sheriffs

Personal services	6,092,392
Operating expenses	446,237
Total	6,538,629
Source of funds	
General fund	6,538,629
Total	6,538,629

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	6,407,651
Operating expenses	6,380,415
Grants	278,285
Total	13,066,351

Source of funds	
General fund	7,748,863
Special funds	4,105
Federal funds	1,089,155
Interdepartmental transfers	4,224,228
Total	13,066,351

Sec. B.209 Public safety - state police

Personal services	83,279,417
Operating expenses	16,733,452
Grants	1,813,523
Total	101,826,392
Source of funds	
General fund	87,421,532
Special funds	3,223,793
Federal funds	9,734,790
Interdepartmental transfers	1,446,277
Total	101,826,392

Sec. B.210 Public safety - criminal justice services

Personal services	5,116,729
Operating expenses	2,098,944
Total	7,215,673
Source of funds	
General fund	1,929,676
Special funds	4,483,740
Federal funds	802,257
Total	7,215,673

Sec. B.211 Public safety - emergency management

Personal services	6,811,020
Operating expenses	1,018,043
Grants	63,029,843
Total	70,858,906
Source of funds	
General fund	2,145,622
Special funds	710,000
Federal funds	67,941,304
Interdepartmental transfers	61,980
Total	70,858,906

Sec. B.212 Public safety - fire safety

Personal services	9,963,365
Operating expenses	3,674,954
Grants	127,350
Total	13,765,669
Source of funds	
General fund	1,795,530
Special funds	10,769,486
Federal funds	1,155,653
Interdepartmental transfers	45,000
Total	13,765,669

Sec. B.213 Public safety - forensic laboratory

Personal services	4,388,176
Operating expenses	1,356,042
Total	5,744,218
Source of funds	
General fund	4,162,196
Special funds	81,774
Federal funds	951,794
Interdepartmental transfers	548,454
Total	5,744,218

Sec. B.215 Military - administration

Personal services	1,142,600
Operating expenses	810,661
Grants	1,319,834
Total	3,273,095
Source of funds	
General fund	3,273,095
Total	3,273,095

Sec. B.216 Military - air service contract

Personal services	11,831,181
Operating expenses	1,427,093
Total	13,258,274
Source of funds	
General fund	818,486
Federal funds	12,439,788
Total	13,258,274

Sec. B.217 Military - army service contract

Personal services	51,243,591
Operating expenses	8,227,725
Total	59,471,316
Source of funds	
Federal funds	59,471,316
Total	59,471,316

Sec. B.218 Military - building maintenance

Personal services	906,250
Operating expenses	908,538
Total	1,814,788
Source of funds	
General fund	1,752,288
Special funds	62,500
Total	1,814,788

Sec. B.219 Military - veterans' affairs

Personal services	1,382,555
Operating expenses	193,170
Grants	27,500
Total	1,603,225
Source of funds	
General fund	1,259,653
Special funds	222,717
Federal funds	120,855
Total	1,603,225

Sec. B.220 Center for crime victim services

Personal services	2,371,733
Operating expenses	321,928
Grants	8,573,370
Total	11,267,031
Source of funds	
General fund	1,650,091
Special funds	4,465,489
Federal funds	5,151,451
Total	11,267,031

Sec. B.221 Criminal justice council

Personal services	2,508,514
Operating expenses	2,142,603
Total	4,651,117

Source of funds	
General fund	4,260,265
Interdepartmental transfers	390,852
Total	4,651,117

Sec. B.222 Agriculture, food and markets - administration

Personal services	3,384,273
Operating expenses	353,580
Total	3,737,853
Source of funds	
General fund	1,519,601
Special funds	1,695,613
Federal funds	522,639
Total	3,737,853

Sec. B.223 Agriculture, food and markets - food safety and consumer protection

Personal services	5,680,286
Operating expenses	1,109,650
Grants	2,810,000
Total	9,599,936
Source of funds	
General fund	3,663,441
Special funds	4,048,844
Federal funds	1,875,651
Interdepartmental transfers	12,000
Total	9,599,936

Sec. B.224 Agriculture, food and markets - agricultural development

Personal services	6,358,750
Operating expenses	746,926
Grants	15,633,200
Total	22,738,876
Source of funds	
General fund	3,157,499
Special funds	646,995
Federal funds	18,934,382
Total	22,738,876

Sec. B.225 Agriculture, food and markets - agricultural resource management and environmental stewardship

Personal services	3,053,693
Operating expenses	845,696

Grants	247,000
Total	4,146,389
Source of funds	
General fund	822,914
Special funds	2,473,045
Federal funds	482,577
Interdepartmental transfers	367,853
Total	4,146,389

Sec. B.225.1 Agriculture, food and markets - Vermont agriculture and environmental lab

Personal services	2,058,524
Operating expenses	1,359,556
Total	3,418,080
Source of funds	
General fund	1,698,826
Special funds	1,647,441
Interdepartmental transfers	71,813
Total	3,418,080

Sec. B.225.2 Agriculture, food and markets - clean water

Personal services	4,120,365
Operating expenses	857,888
Grants	11,487,000
Total	16,465,253
Source of funds	
General fund	1,975,832
Special funds	10,511,241
Federal funds	2,171,588
Interdepartmental transfers	1,806,592
Total	16,465,253

Sec. B.226 Financial regulation - administration

Personal services	3,011,702
Operating expenses	103,565
Grants	100,000
Total	3,215,267
Source of funds	
Special funds	3,215,267
Total	3,215,267

Sec. B.227 Financial regulation - banking	
Personal services	2,483,666
Operating expenses	482,337
Total	2,966,003
Source of funds	
Special funds	2,966,003
Total	2,966,003
Sec. B.228 Financial regulation - insurance	
Personal services	5,825,682
Operating expenses	578,524
Total	6,404,206
Source of funds	
Special funds	6,404,206
Total	6,404,206
Sec. B.229 Financial regulation - captive insurance	
Personal services	5,998,278
Operating expenses	591,092
Total	6,589,370
Source of funds	
Special funds	6,589,370
Total	6,589,370
Sec. B.230 Financial regulation - securities	
Personal services	1,375,414
Operating expenses	242,541
Total	1,617,955
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,617,955
Total	1,617,955
Sec. B.232 Secretary of state	
Personal services	21,619,186
Operating expenses	4,242,952
Grants	1,350,000
Total	27,212,138
Source of funds	
General fund	1,350,000
Special funds	19,155,734
Federal funds	6,706,404
Total	27,212,138

Sec. B.233 Public service - regulation and energy	
Personal services	12,790,401
Operating expenses	2,615,047
Grants	25,000
Total	15,430,448
Source of funds	
Special funds	12,152,225
Federal funds	2,439,257
ARRA funds	6,627
Interdepartmental transfers	821,491
Enterprise funds	10,848
Total	15,430,448
Sec. B.233.1 VT Community broadband board	
Personal services	1,978,960
Operating expenses	571,368
Grants	43,000,000
Total	45,550,328
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,589,990
Federal funds	43,960,338
Total	45,550,328
Sec. B.234 Public utility commission	
Personal services	4,565,693
Operating expenses	578,746
Total	5,144,439
Source of funds	
Special funds	5,144,439
Total	5,144,439
Sec. B.235 Enhanced 9-1-1 board	
Personal services	4,700,016
Operating expenses	697,379
Total	5,397,395
Source of funds	
Special funds	5,397,395
Total	5,397,395
Sec. B.236 Human rights commission	
Personal services	1,243,420
Operating expenses	142,164
Total	1,385,584

Source of funds	
General fund	1,292,811
Federal funds	92,773
Total	1,385,584

Sec. B.236.1 Liquor and lottery commission

Personal services	10,866,788
Operating expenses	7,415,512
Total	18,282,300
Source of funds	
Special funds	125,000
Tobacco fund	250,579
Interdepartmental transfers	70,000
Enterprise funds	17,836,721
Total	18,282,300

Sec. B.240 Cannabis control board

Personal services	4,466,288
Operating expenses	2,053,382
Grants	10,000
Total	6,529,670
Source of funds	
Special funds	6,529,670
Total	6,529,670

Sec. B.241 Total protection to persons and property

Source of funds	
General fund	279,824,152
Special funds	121,247,670
Tobacco fund	685,239
Federal funds	239,445,060
ARRA funds	6,627
Interdepartmental transfers	17,289,829
Enterprise funds	17,847,569
Total	676,346,146

Sec. B.300 Human services - agency of human services - secretary's office

Personal services	17,333,398
Operating expenses	11,231,120
Grants	3,795,202
Total	32,359,720

Source of funds	
General fund	15,569,598
Special funds	135,517
Federal funds	14,023,964
Global Commitment fund	2,510,857
Interdepartmental transfers	119,784
Total	32,359,720

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	2,207,280,248
Total	2,207,280,248
Source of funds	
General fund	712,815,861
Special funds	31,339,852
Tobacco fund	21,049,373
State health care resources fund	31,074,772
Federal funds	1,406,003,180
Interdepartmental transfers	4,997,210
Total	2,207,280,248

Sec. B.303 Developmental disabilities council

Personal services	513,359
Operating expenses	96,185
Grants	191,595
Total	801,139
Source of funds	
Special funds	12,000
Federal funds	789,139
Total	801,139

Sec. B.304 Human services board

Personal services	823,371
Operating expenses	90,892
Total	914,263
Source of funds	
General fund	538,324
Federal funds	375,939
Total	914,263

Sec. B.305 AHS - administrative fund

Personal services	330,000
Operating expenses	13,170,000
Total	13,500,000

Source of funds	
Interdepartmental transfers	13,500,000
Total	13,500,000

Sec. B.306 Department of Vermont health access - administration

Personal services	142,860,018
Operating expenses	36,310,876
Grants	3,112,301
Total	182,283,195
Source of funds	
General fund	43,820,359
Special funds	4,760,237
Federal funds	126,141,154
Global Commitment fund	4,382,601
Interdepartmental transfers	3,178,844
Total	182,283,195

Sec. B.307 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program - global commitment

Grants	979,554,012
Total	979,554,012
Source of funds	
Global Commitment fund	979,554,012
Total	979,554,012

Sec. B.309 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program - state only

Grants	67,605,443
Total	67,605,443
Source of funds	
General fund	62,133,605
Global Commitment fund	5,471,838
Total	67,605,443

Sec. B.310 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid non-waiver matched

Grants	44,034,870
Total	44,034,870
Source of funds	
General fund	13,467,770
Federal funds	30,567,100
Total	44,034,870

Sec. B.311 Health - administration and support

Personal services	9,163,996
Operating expenses	8,043,463
Grants	7,985,727
Total	25,193,186
Source of funds	
General fund	4,298,710
Special funds	2,423,587
Federal funds	10,954,085
Global Commitment fund	7,361,523
Interdepartmental transfers	155,281
Total	25,193,186

Sec. B.312 Health - public health

Personal services	71,272,453
Operating expenses	10,371,654
Grants	48,496,832
Total	130,140,939
Source of funds	
General fund	15,160,817
Special funds	25,398,124
Tobacco fund	1,088,918
Federal funds	64,355,699
Global Commitment fund	18,457,507
Interdepartmental transfers	5,654,874
Permanent trust funds	25,000
Total	130,140,939

Sec. B.313 Health - substance use programs

Personal services	7,036,556
Operating expenses	381,500
Grants	61,624,360
Total	69,042,416
Source of funds	
General fund	4,795,744
Special funds	7,972,399
Tobacco fund	949,917
Federal funds	15,928,439
Global Commitment fund	39,395,917
Total	69,042,416

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	12,456,526
Operating expenses	2,420,029
Grants	279,691,678
Total	294,568,233
Source of funds	
General fund	13,127,716
Special funds	6,836
Federal funds	13,158,032
Global Commitment fund	266,967,840
Interdepartmental transfers	1,307,809
Total	294,568,233

Sec. B.315 Department of mental health - mental health facilities

Personal services	40,937,117
Operating expenses	3,393,946
Total	44,331,063
Source of funds	
General fund	18,868,124
Special funds	1,711,256
Global Commitment fund	23,751,683
Total	44,331,063

Sec. B.316 Department for children and families - administration & support services

Personal services	50,609,972
Operating expenses	17,876,453
Grants	5,914,175
Total	74,400,600
Source of funds	
General fund	43,680,871
Special funds	2,954,500
Federal funds	24,518,288
Global Commitment fund	2,780,636
Interdepartmental transfers	466,305
Total	74,400,600

Sec. B.317 Department for children and families - family services

Personal services	49,175,153
Operating expenses	5,497,038
Grants	100,541,760
Total	155,213,951

Source of funds	
General fund	63,680,993
Special funds	729,150
Federal funds	37,407,542
Global Commitment fund	53,381,266
Interdepartmental transfers	15,000
Total	155,213,951

Sec. B.318 Department for children and families - child development

Personal services	6,563,807
Operating expenses	783,604
Grants	228,228,202
Total	235,575,613
Source of funds	
General fund	80,715,345
Special funds	96,409,671
Federal funds	42,924,133
Global Commitment fund	15,526,464
Total	235,575,613

Sec. B.319 Department for children and families - office of child support

Personal services	14,186,272
Operating expenses	3,738,844
Total	17,925,116
Source of funds	
General fund	5,598,669
Special funds	454,219
Federal funds	11,484,628
Interdepartmental transfers	387,600
Total	17,925,116

Sec. B.320 Department for children and families - aid to aged, blind and disabled

Personal services	2,558,460
Grants	10,418,567
Total	12,977,027
Source of funds	
General fund	7,470,372
Global Commitment fund	5,506,655
Total	12,977,027

Sec. B.321 Department for children and families - general assistance

Personal services	15,000
Grants	10,415,779
Total	10,430,779
Source of funds	
General fund	10,189,157
Federal funds	11,098
Global Commitment fund	230,524
Total	10,430,779

Sec. B.322 Department for children and families - 3SquaresVT

Grants	51,077,812
Total	51,077,812
Source of funds	
Federal funds	51,077,812
Total	51,077,812

Sec. B.323 Department for children and families - reach up

Operating expenses	23,821
Grants	36,532,863
Total	36,556,684
Source of funds	
General fund	24,035,417
Special funds	5,970,229
Federal funds	2,806,330
Global Commitment fund	3,744,708
Total	36,556,684

Sec. B.324 Department for children and families - home heating fuel assistance/LIHEAP

Grants	16,019,953
Total	16,019,953
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,480,395
Federal funds	14,539,558
Total	16,019,953

Sec. B.325 Department for children and families - office of economic opportunity

Personal services	1,376,425
Operating expenses	159,458
Grants	39,165,356
Total	40,701,239

Source of funds	
General fund	32,312,474
Special funds	83,135
Federal funds	5,118,329
Global Commitment fund	3,187,301
Total	40,701,239

Sec. B.326 Department for children and families - OEO - weatherization assistance

Personal services	498,837
Operating expenses	275,322
Grants	15,147,885
Total	15,922,044
Source of funds	
Special funds	7,757,091
Federal funds	8,164,953
Total	15,922,044

Sec. B.327 Department for children and families - secure residential treatment

Personal services	258,100
Operating expenses	38,775
Grants	3,476,862
Total	3,773,737
Source of funds	
General fund	3,743,737
Global Commitment fund	30,000
Total	3,773,737

Sec. B.328 Department for children and families - disability determination services

Personal services	8,322,170
Operating expenses	495,934
Total	8,818,104
Source of funds	
General fund	130,556
Federal funds	8,687,548
Total	8,818,104

Sec. B.329 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - administration & support

Personal services	48,973,454
Operating expenses	6,544,338
Total	55,517,792

Source of funds	
General fund	25,692,412
Special funds	1,390,457
Federal funds	27,258,639
Global Commitment fund	110,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,066,284
Total	55,517,792

Sec. B.330 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - advocacy and independent living grants

Grants	24,909,492
Total	24,909,492
Source of funds	
General fund	8,585,909
Federal funds	7,321,114
Global Commitment fund	9,002,469
Total	24,909,492

Sec. B.331 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - blind and visually impaired

Grants	3,407,604
Total	3,407,604
Source of funds	
General fund	489,154
Special funds	223,450
Federal funds	2,390,000
Global Commitment fund	305,000
Total	3,407,604

Sec. B.332 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - vocational rehabilitation

Grants	10,179,845
Total	10,179,845
Source of funds	
General fund	371,845
Federal funds	8,558,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,250,000
Total	10,179,845

Sec. B.333 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - developmental services

Grants	349,987,467
Total	349,987,467

Source of funds	
General fund	132,732
Special funds	15,463
Federal funds	403,573
Global Commitment fund	349,385,699
Interdepartmental transfers	50,000
Total	349,987,467

Sec. B.334 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - TBI home and community based waiver

Grants	7,540,256
Total	7,540,256
Source of funds	
Global Commitment fund	7,540,256
Total	7,540,256

Sec. B.334.1 Disabilities, aging and independent living - long term care

Grants	346,858,094
Total	346,858,094
Source of funds	
General fund	498,579
Federal funds	2,450,000
Global Commitment fund	343,909,515
Total	346,858,094

Sec. B.335 Corrections - administration

Personal services	5,601,461
Operating expenses	269,950
Total	5,871,411
Source of funds	
General fund	5,871,411
Total	5,871,411

Sec. B.336 Corrections - parole board

Personal services	551,497
Operating expenses	60,112
Total	611,609
Source of funds	
General fund	611,609
Total	611,609

Sec. B.337 Corrections - correctional education

Personal services	3,900,732
Operating expenses	255,399
Total	4,156,131
Source of funds	
General fund	4,006,975
Federal funds	372
Interdepartmental transfers	148,784
Total	4,156,131

Sec. B.338 Corrections - correctional services

Personal services	177,107,933
Operating expenses	25,571,966
Grants	801,823
Total	203,481,722
Source of funds	
General fund	198,084,766
Special funds	935,963
Federal funds	516,600
Global Commitment fund	3,548,078
Interdepartmental transfers	396,315
Total	203,481,722

Sec. B.338.1 Corrections - justice reinvestment II

Grants	11,055,849
Total	11,055,849
Source of funds	
General fund	8,478,161
Federal funds	13,147
Global Commitment fund	2,564,541
Total	11,055,849

Sec. B.339 Corrections - correctional services - out of state beds

Personal services	4,130,378
Total	4,130,378
Source of funds	
General fund	4,130,378
Total	4,130,378

Sec. B.340 Corrections - correctional facilities - recreation

Personal services	708,510
Operating expenses	457,555
Total	1,166,065

Source of funds	
Special funds	1,166,065
Total	1,166,065

Sec. B.341 Corrections - Vermont offender work program

Personal services	243,283
Operating expenses	160,570
Total	403,853
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	403,853
Total	403,853

Sec. B.342 Vermont veterans' home - care and support services

Personal services	24,048,875
Operating expenses	6,913,887
Total	30,962,762
Source of funds	
General fund	10,033,214
Special funds	12,799,530
Federal funds	8,130,018
Total	30,962,762

Sec. B.343 Commission on women

Personal services	432,073
Operating expenses	89,355
Total	521,428
Source of funds	
General fund	516,773
Special funds	4,655
Total	521,428

Sec. B.344 Retired senior volunteer program

Grants	164,960
Total	164,960
Source of funds	
General fund	164,960
Total	164,960

Sec. B.345 Green mountain care board

Personal services	10,362,452
Operating expenses	416,874
Total	10,779,326

Source of funds	
General fund	4,482,574
Special funds	6,296,752
Total	10,779,326

Sec. B.346 Office of the child, youth, and family advocate

Personal services	386,033
Operating expenses	71,330
Total	457,363
Source of funds	
General fund	457,363
Total	457,363

Sec. B.347 Total human services

Source of funds	
General fund	1,448,763,034
Special funds	212,430,533
Tobacco fund	23,088,208
State health care resources fund	31,074,772
Federal funds	1,946,078,413
Global Commitment fund	2,148,606,890
Internal service funds	403,853
Interdepartmental transfers	32,694,090
Permanent trust funds	25,000
Total	5,843,156,793

Sec. B.400 Labor - programs

Personal services	39,454,824
Operating expenses	5,462,457
Grants	5,870,493
Total	50,787,774
Source of funds	
General fund	11,313,657
Special funds	9,710,673
Federal funds	29,640,603
Interdepartmental transfers	122,841
Total	50,787,774

Sec. B.401 Total labor

Source of funds	
General fund	11,313,657
Special funds	9,710,673

Federal funds	29,640,603
Interdepartmental transfers	122,841
Total	50,787,774

Sec. B.500 Education - finance and administration

Personal services	17,203,356
Operating expenses	4,699,787
Grants	17,772,840
Total	39,675,983
Source of funds	
General fund	8,994,162
Special funds	19,793,553
Education fund	3,606,201
Federal funds	6,217,482
Global Commitment fund	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	804,585
Total	39,675,983

Sec. B.501 Education - education services

Personal services	18,418,946
Operating expenses	1,185,388
Grants	192,117,080
Total	211,721,414
Source of funds	
General fund	6,894,415
Special funds	3,266,001
Tobacco fund	750,388
Federal funds	199,239,149
Interdepartmental transfers	1,571,461
Total	211,721,414

Sec. B.502 Education - special education: formula grants

Grants	270,736,200
Total	270,736,200
Source of funds	
Education fund	270,736,200
Total	270,736,200

Sec. B.503 Education - state-placed students

Grants	17,200,000
Total	17,200,000

Source of funds	
Education fund	17,200,000
Total	17,200,000

Sec. B.504 Education - adult education and literacy

Grants	4,899,009
Total	4,899,009
Source of funds	
General fund	3,958,344
Federal funds	940,665
Total	4,899,009

Sec. B.504.1 Education - Flexible Pathways

Grants	11,481,896
Total	11,481,896
Source of funds	
General fund	921,500
Education fund	10,560,396
Total	11,481,896

Sec. B.505 Education - adjusted education payment

Grants	1,991,143,238
Total	1,991,143,238
Source of funds	
Education fund	1,991,143,238
Total	1,991,143,238

Sec. B.506 Education - transportation

Grants	26,115,792
Total	26,115,792
Source of funds	
Education fund	26,115,792
Total	26,115,792

Sec. B.507 Education - merger support grants

Grants	1,800,000
Total	1,800,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	1,800,000
Total	1,800,000

Sec. B.507.1 Education - EL categorical aid

Grants	2,250,000
Total	2,250,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	2,250,000
Total	2,250,000

Sec. B.508 Education - nutrition

Grants	18,500,000
Total	18,500,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	18,500,000
Total	18,500,000

Sec. B.509 Education - afterschool grant program

Personal services	500,000
Grants	9,140,000
Total	9,640,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	9,640,000
Total	9,640,000

Sec. B.510 Education - essential early education grant

Grants	8,977,737
Total	8,977,737
Source of funds	
Education fund	8,977,737
Total	8,977,737

Sec. B.511 Education - technical education

Grants	18,737,850
Total	18,737,850
Source of funds	
Education fund	18,737,850
Total	18,737,850

Sec. B.511.1 State board of education

Personal services	54,208
Operating expenses	16,500
Total	70,708

Source of funds	
General fund	70,708
Total	70,708

Sec. B.513 Retired teachers pension plus funding

Grants	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000
Source of funds	
General fund	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000

Sec. B.514 State teachers' retirement system

Grants	199,377,627
Total	199,377,627
Source of funds	
General fund	160,566,569
Education fund	38,811,058
Total	199,377,627

Sec. B.514.1 State teachers' retirement system administration

Personal services	345,352
Operating expenses	3,465,303
Total	3,810,655
Source of funds	
Pension trust funds	3,810,655
Total	3,810,655

Sec. B.515 Retired teachers' health care and medical benefits

Grants	71,052,589
Total	71,052,589
Source of funds	
General fund	49,091,090
Education fund	21,961,499
Total	71,052,589

Sec. B.516 Total general education

Source of funds	
General fund	245,496,788
Special funds	32,699,554
Tobacco fund	750,388
Education fund	2,430,399,971
Federal funds	206,397,296
Global Commitment fund	260,000

Interdepartmental transfers	2,376,046
Pension trust funds	3,810,655
Total	2,922,190,698

Sec. B.600 University of Vermont

Grants	57,378,104
Total	57,378,104
Source of funds	
General fund	57,378,104
Total	57,378,104

Sec. B.602 Vermont state colleges

Grants	52,468,692
Total	52,468,692
Source of funds	
General fund	52,468,692
Total	52,468,692

Sec. B.603 Vermont state colleges - allied health

Grants	1,797,087
Total	1,797,087
Source of funds	
General fund	297,087
Global Commitment fund	1,500,000
Total	1,797,087

Sec. B.605 Vermont student assistance corporation

Grants	27,084,946
Total	27,084,946
Source of funds	
General fund	27,084,946
Total	27,084,946

Sec. B.605.1 VSAC - flexible pathways stipend

Grants	82,450
Total	82,450
Source of funds	
General fund	41,225
Education fund	41,225
Total	82,450

Sec. B.606 New England higher education compact

Grants	86,520
Total	86,520
Source of funds	
General fund	86,520
Total	86,520

Sec. B.607 University of Vermont - morgan horse farm

Grants	1
Total	1
Source of funds	
General fund	1
Total	1

Sec. B.608 Total higher education

Source of funds	
General fund	137,356,575
Education fund	41,225
Global Commitment fund	1,500,000
Total	138,897,800

Sec. B.700 Natural resources - agency of natural resources - administration

Personal services	6,436,257
Operating expenses	1,265,146
Total	7,701,403
Source of funds	
General fund	5,344,094
Special funds	722,828
Interdepartmental transfers	1,634,481
Total	7,701,403

Sec. B.701 Natural resources - state land local property tax assessment

Operating expenses	2,705,834
Total	2,705,834
Source of funds	
General fund	2,284,334
Interdepartmental transfers	421,500
Total	2,705,834

Sec. B.702 Fish and wildlife - support and field services

Personal services	23,876,543
Operating expenses	6,738,504
Grants	833,630
Total	31,448,677

Source of funds	
General fund	9,532,865
Special funds	364,696
Fish and wildlife fund	10,097,060
Federal funds	9,927,754
Interdepartmental transfers	1,526,302
Total	31,448,677

Sec. B.703 Forests, parks and recreation - administration

Personal services	1,564,253
Operating expenses	1,796,785
Total	3,361,038
Source of funds	
General fund	3,130,308
Special funds	143,765
Federal funds	86,965
Total	3,361,038

Sec. B.704 Forests, parks and recreation - forestry

Personal services	11,026,473
Operating expenses	1,122,371
Grants	1,408,910
Total	13,557,754
Source of funds	
General fund	6,839,753
Special funds	1,204,005
Federal funds	4,326,877
Interdepartmental transfers	1,187,119
Total	13,557,754

Sec. B.705 Forests, parks and recreation - state parks

Personal services	13,707,058
Operating expenses	4,936,482
Grants	550,000
Total	19,193,540
Source of funds	
General fund	2,061,995
Special funds	17,131,545
Total	19,193,540

Sec. B.706 Forests, parks and recreation - lands administration and recreation

Personal services	3,818,270
Operating expenses	8,667,107
Grants	6,015,019
Total	18,500,396

Source of funds	
General fund	1,324,880
Special funds	2,794,948
Federal funds	13,755,832
Interdepartmental transfers	624,736
Total	18,500,396

Sec. B.708 Forests, parks and recreation - forest and parks access roads

Personal services	130,000
Operating expenses	99,925
Total	229,925
Source of funds	
General fund	229,925
Total	229,925

Sec. B.709 Environmental conservation - management and support services

Personal services	9,655,674
Operating expenses	5,226,877
Grants	188,303
Total	15,070,854
Source of funds	
General fund	2,462,770
Special funds	1,452,358
Federal funds	2,563,636
Interdepartmental transfers	8,592,090
Total	15,070,854

Sec. B.710 Environmental conservation - air and waste management

Personal services	26,481,647
Operating expenses	9,958,684
Grants	4,343,000
Total	40,783,331
Source of funds	
General fund	305,347
Special funds	27,825,978
Federal funds	12,531,023
Interdepartmental transfers	120,983
Total	40,783,331

Sec. B.711 Environmental conservation - office of water programs

Personal services	44,324,028
Operating expenses	8,531,648
Grants	136,489,044
Total	189,344,720

Source of funds	
General fund	12,980,443
Special funds	33,801,176
Federal funds	141,693,623
Interdepartmental transfers	869,478
Total	189,344,720

Sec. B.713 Land use review board

Personal services	5,001,041
Operating expenses	537,905
Total	5,538,946
Source of funds	
General fund	4,169,020
Special funds	1,369,926
Total	5,538,946

Sec. B.714 Total natural resources

Source of funds	
General fund	50,665,734
Special funds	86,811,225
Fish and wildlife fund	10,097,060
Federal funds	184,885,710
Interdepartmental transfers	14,976,689
Total	347,436,418

Sec. B.800 Commerce and community development - agency of commerce and community development - administration

Personal services	2,515,577
Operating expenses	872,866
Grants	389,320
Total	3,777,763
Source of funds	
General fund	3,777,763
Total	3,777,763

Sec. B.801 Economic development

Personal services	4,396,254
Operating expenses	1,199,682
Grants	9,106,544
Total	14,702,480

Source of funds	
General fund	6,087,190
Special funds	3,150,350
Federal funds	5,264,940
Interdepartmental transfers	200,000
Total	14,702,480

Sec. B.802 Housing and community development

Personal services	2,669,883
Operating expenses	1,528,070
Grants	27,139,431
Total	31,337,384
Source of funds	
General fund	7,806,505
Special funds	10,144,339
Federal funds	10,957,973
Interdepartmental transfers	2,428,567
Total	31,337,384

Sec. B.806 Tourism and marketing

Personal services	3,453,707
Operating expenses	4,569,290
Grants	700,000
Total	8,722,997
Source of funds	
General fund	4,640,125
Federal funds	4,007,872
Interdepartmental transfers	75,000
Total	8,722,997

Sec. B.808 Vermont council on the arts

Grants	1,003,063
Total	1,003,063
Source of funds	
General fund	1,003,063
Total	1,003,063

Sec. B.809 Vermont symphony orchestra

Grants	154,170
Total	154,170
Source of funds	
General fund	154,170
Total	154,170

Sec. B.810 Vermont historical society

Grants	1,202,564
Total	1,202,564
Source of funds	
General fund	1,202,564
Total	1,202,564

Sec. B.811 Vermont housing and conservation board

Grants	109,284,304
Total	109,284,304
Source of funds	
General fund	1,631,582
Special funds	40,490,082
Federal funds	67,162,640
Total	109,284,304

Sec. B.812 Vermont humanities council

Grants	318,270
Total	318,270
Source of funds	
General fund	318,270
Total	318,270

Sec. B.813 Total commerce and community development

Source of funds	
General fund	26,621,232
Special funds	53,784,771
Federal funds	87,393,425
Interdepartmental transfers	2,703,567
Total	170,502,995

Sec. B.900 Transportation - finance and administration

Personal services	19,914,359
Operating expenses	6,581,104
Grants	50,000
Total	26,545,463
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	25,152,473
Federal funds	1,392,990
Total	26,545,463

Sec. B.901 Transportation - aviation

Personal services	4,770,561
Operating expenses	8,456,904
Grants	190,000
Total	13,417,465
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	7,474,433
Federal funds	5,943,032
Total	13,417,465

Sec. B.902 Transportation - buildings

Personal services	1,000,000
Operating expenses	1,500,000
Total	2,500,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	2,200,000
TIB fund	300,000
Total	2,500,000

Sec. B.903 Transportation - program development

Personal services	83,759,860
Operating expenses	281,446,274
Grants	46,104,466
Total	411,310,600
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	62,005,434
TIB fund	15,103,017
Special funds	280,000
Federal funds	308,679,500
Interdepartmental transfers	15,722,027
Local match	9,520,622
Total	411,310,600

Sec. B.904 Transportation - rest areas construction

Personal services	398,500
Operating expenses	791,746
Total	1,190,246
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	119,025
Federal funds	1,071,221
Total	1,190,246

Sec. B.905 Transportation - maintenance state system

Personal services	48,113,208
Operating expenses	69,113,835
Total	117,227,043
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	110,349,507
Federal funds	932,014
Interdepartmental transfers	5,945,522
Total	117,227,043

Sec. B.906 Transportation - policy and planning

Personal services	3,411,138
Operating expenses	1,290,442
Grants	10,346,035
Total	15,047,615
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	3,742,314
Federal funds	11,223,301
Interdepartmental transfers	82,000
Total	15,047,615

Sec. B.906.1 Transportation - environmental policy and sustainability

Personal services	8,114,291
Operating expenses	67,686
Grants	1,332,030
Total	9,514,007
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	389,377
Federal funds	8,150,226
Interdepartmental transfers	21,860
Local match	952,544
Total	9,514,007

Sec. B.907 Transportation - rail

Personal services	18,493,101
Operating expenses	43,394,247
Total	61,887,348
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	15,067,669
Federal funds	31,894,435
Interdepartmental transfers	8,228,363
Local match	6,696,881
Total	61,887,348

Sec. B.908 Transportation - public transit

Personal services	1,026,301
Operating expenses	81,224
Grants	51,587,709
Total	52,695,234
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	10,007,534
Federal funds	42,547,700
Interdepartmental transfers	140,000
Total	52,695,234

Sec. B.909 Transportation - central garage

Personal services	5,957,587
Operating expenses	19,696,966
Total	25,654,553
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	25,654,553
Total	25,654,553

Sec. B.910 Department of motor vehicles

Personal services	36,447,934
Operating expenses	13,070,367
Total	49,518,301
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	46,709,524
Federal funds	2,687,081
Interdepartmental transfers	121,696
Total	49,518,301

Sec. B.911 Transportation - town highway structures

Grants	7,200,000
Total	7,200,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	7,200,000
Total	7,200,000

Sec. B.912 Transportation - town highway local technical assistance program

Personal services	449,763
Operating expenses	31,689
Total	481,452

Source of funds	
Transportation fund	121,452
Federal funds	360,000
Total	481,452

Sec. B.913 Transportation - town highway class 2 roadway

Grants	8,600,000
Total	8,600,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	8,600,000
Total	8,600,000

Sec. B.914 Transportation - town highway bridges

Personal services	10,034,000
Operating expenses	27,759,406
Total	37,793,406
Source of funds	
TIB fund	3,596,983
Federal funds	31,716,311
Local match	2,480,112
Total	37,793,406

Sec. B.915 Transportation - town highway aid program

Grants	30,418,736
Total	30,418,736
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	30,418,736
Total	30,418,736

Sec. B.916 Transportation - town highway class 1 supplemental grants

Grants	128,750
Total	128,750
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	128,750
Total	128,750

Sec. B.917 Transportation - town highway: state aid for nonfederal disasters

Grants	1,150,000
Total	1,150,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,150,000
Total	1,150,000

Sec. B.918 Transportation - town highway: state aid for federal disasters

Grants	4,000,000
Total	4,000,000
Source of funds	
Federal funds	4,000,00
Total	4,000,000

Sec. B.919 Transportation - municipal mitigation assistance program

Personal services	100,000
Operating expenses	325,500
Grants	6,467,500
Total	6,893,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	715,000
Special funds	4,750,000
Federal funds	1,428,000
Total	6,893,000

Sec. B.921 Transportation board

Personal services	181,233
Operating expenses	22,938
Total	204,171
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	204,171
Total	204,171

Sec. B.922 Total transportation

Source of funds	
Transportation fund	330,605,399
TIB fund	19,000,000
Special funds	6,180,000
Federal funds	452,025,811
Internal service funds	25,654,553
Interdepartmental transfers	30,261,468
Local match	19,650,159
Total	883,377,390

Sec. B.1000 Debt service

Operating expenses	675,000
Total	675,000

Source of funds	
General fund	675,000
Total	675,000

Sec. B.1001 Total debt service

Source of funds	
General fund	675,000
Total	675,000

* * * Fiscal Year 2026 One-Time Appropriations * * *

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2026 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,100,000 General Fund for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

(2) $220,000 General Fund for the Office of Racial Equity to continue the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action, Leadership Vermont program an additional two years; and

(3) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 3709(a), $1,000,000 PILOT Special Fund for the Municipal Technical Assistance Program as established by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 95.

(b) Department of Human Resources. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,575,000 General Fund for the Classification Modernization project.

(c) Department of Taxes. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,000,000 PILOT Special Fund for the Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program as established per Sec. E.142.2 of this act. These funds shall carry forward each fiscal year until fully expended or reverted.

(d) Department of Public Safety. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $600,000 General Fund for State match for federal cybersecurity grant funds;

(2) $800,000 General Fund for the purchase of mobile and portable radio equipment; and

(3) $150,000 General Fund for the Vermont Community Radio Grant Program established in Sec. E.208.2 of this act.

(e) Agency of Human Services Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $4,448,520 General Fund and $6,351,480 federal funds for the Department of Vermont Health Access' Global Commitment appropriation for the Support and Services at Home program, the Primary Care Medical Home, and Community Health Team services under the Blueprint for Health;

(2) $2,250,000 General Fund for feasibility analysis and transformation plan development with hospitals, designated agencies, primary care organizations, and other community-based providers;

(3) $125,000 General Fund for the development of quality and access measures, targets, and monitoring strategies for a statewide population health plan;

(4) $125,000 General Fund for the development of hospital global budgets and other alternative payment models for Medicare; and

(5) $6,200 General Fund for per diems and expense reimbursement for members of the Office of New Americans Study Committee.

(f) Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $500,000 General Fund for the Vermont Serve, Learn, and Earn Program.

(g) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $240,000 General Fund for Polychlorinated Biphenyl testing;

(2) $40,000 General Fund for a grant to Empty Arms Vermont;

(3) $300,000 Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for recovery residences certified by the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences;

(4) $800,000 Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for recovery centers;

(5) $200,000 Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for grants to youth mentoring programs; and

(6) $500,000 Tobacco Litigation Settlement Special Fund for grants to Parent Child Centers for smoking cessation initiatives.

(h) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,000,000 General Fund for shelter capacity expansion;

(2) $30,500,000 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program;

(3) $1,000,000 General Fund for direct aid to the Vermont Foodbank's network partner food shelves and pantries through an equitable statewide distribution of food or subgrants or both;

(4) $500,000 General Fund for the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Community Resource Center; and

(5) $156,000 General Fund for the Child Care Apprenticeship Program.

(i) Department of Corrections. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $250,000 General Fund to retain a consultant and develop an implementation plan to transition the Northeast Correctional Complex or the Caledonia County Work Camp or parts of either or of both to a treatment-focused facility for incarcerated Vermonters.

(j) Agency of Education. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $150,000 General Fund for administrative costs relating to home-based child care meals.

(k) Vermont State Colleges. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $5,000,000 General Fund for the final transformation bridge financing payment.

(l) Department of Fish and Wildlife. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $185,000 Fish and Wildlife Nondedicated Special Fund to sustain current operations as the Department undergoes a financial restructuring. These funds shall carry forward each fiscal year until fully expended or reverted;

(2) $80,000 General Fund for the purchase of mobile and portable radio equipment; and

(3) $30,000 General Fund for the Lake Champlain International Fishing Derby.

(m) Department of Environmental Conservation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $50,000 General Fund for Municipal Wastewater Connections database;

(2) $850,000 General Fund for the Concentrated Animals Feeding Operation database project and contractor support;

(3) $9,520,000 Environmental Contingency Fund For Polychlorinated Biphenyl testing and remediation in schools. These funds shall carry forward each fiscal year until fully expended or reverted; and

(4) $14,500,000 Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves Fund for the State match to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund, in accordance with the provisions of 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.108(b).

(n) Department of Housing and Community Development. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $9,100,000 General Fund for the Vermont Bond Bank Vermont Infrastructure Sustainability Fund;

(2) $1,000,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Finance Agency First Generation Homebuyer Assistance Program;

(3) $13,500,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Finance Agency Rental Revolving Loan Fund and the Middle-Income Homeownership Development Program;

(4) $4,300,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Improvement Program 2.0 and for staff to support the Program; and

(5) $15,000 General Fund for the Residential Universal Design Study Committee.

(o) Department of Economic Development. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $200,000 General Fund for the Vermont Professionals of Color Network;

(2) $780,000 General Fund for the Small Business Technical Assistance Exchange;

(3) $15,000 General Fund for the Vermont-Ireland Trade Commission; and

(4) $1,000,000 General Fund for the Brownfields Revitalization Fund.

(p) Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $5,000,000 General Fund to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units, including improvements to manufactured homes and communities; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness; recovery residences; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home and community-based services.

(q) Office of the State Treasurer. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $148,000 General Fund for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program; and

(2) $700,000 General Fund for financial modeling. In fiscal year 2026, the Office of the State Treasurer may, through an interdepartmental transfer, transfer up to $700,000 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program Fund.

(r) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $835,420 General Fund for the Payment Reform Unit;

(2) $3,119,310 General Fund for the OneCare primary care model transition; and

(3) $10,800,000 Global Commitment for the Support and Services at Home program, the Primary Care Medical Home, and Community Health Team services under the Blueprint for Health.

(s) University of Vermont. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $750,000 General Fund for the Vermont Gallium Nitride Tech Hub.

(t) Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $450,000 General Fund for a grant to the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont for the Crop Cash and Crop Cash Plus programs;

(2) $500,000 General Fund for a grant to Vermont Foodbank for the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Program;

(3) $1,000,000 General Fund to offer Vermont Local Food for Schools and Child Care grants within the Rozo McLaughlin Farm to School Grants Program to fund grants for the purchase and distribution of local food to schools and registered or licensed child care programs; and

(4) $500,000 General Fund to support Vermont's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts.

(u) Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $235,000 General Fund for a grant to HomeShare Vermont; and

(2) $500,000 General Fund for grants to skilled nursing facilities to increase the pipeline of employed licensed nursing assistants, including increasing the capacity of new and existing facility-based training programs, and developing or expanding collaborations with other programs, including career and technical education programs. Grants may support training program costs, paid internships, student support, and recruitment and retention bonuses.

(A) Of the funds appropriated in subdivision (u)(2) of this section, $150,000 shall be for grants of $30,000 or less.

(B) Of the funds appropriated in subdivision (u)(2) of this section, $350,000 shall be for up to three grants.

(v) Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,500,000 General Fund for Freedom and Unity grants.

(w) Military Department. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $10,000 General Fund for the USS Vermont Support Group.

(x) Vermont Council on the Arts. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $68,737 General Fund for State match for federal funds.

(y) Agency of Transportation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,400,000 Transportation Fund for transfer to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for programs to increase access to level 1 and 2 Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment charging ports at workplaces or multiunit dwellings, or both; and

(2) $600,000 Transportation Fund for the purpose of providing grants to the public transit agencies to hire volunteer coordinators who shall be responsible for the identification, recruitment, and retention of volunteers to provide transportation services to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

(z) Department of Labor. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $150,000 General Fund for a grant to Advance Vermont.

(aa) Office of the Secretary of State. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $50,000 General Fund for grants to support local civic journalism;

(2) $306,210 General Fund for staff and IT costs at the Office of Professional Regulation relating to the implementation of S.119 of 2025;

(3) $963,681 General Fund for fee waivers relating to the implementation of S.119 of 2025; and

(4) $25,000 General Fund for staff and IT costs at the Office of Professional Regulation relating to the implementation of certifications of perinatal doulas and birthing centers.

(bb) Green Mountain Care Board. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $500,000 General Fund for contracts, including contracts for assistance with implementing reference-based pricing; and

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 10301 to the contrary, $150,000 Vermont Health Information Technology Special Fund for expenses associated with increased standardization of electronic hospital budget data submissions.

(cc) Office of the Defender General. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $30,000 General Fund to enhance IT server capacity;

(2) $87,500 General Fund for the Orleans County staff office; and

(3) $20,000 General Fund for the Addison County staff office.

(dd) Land Use Review Board. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $100,000 General Fund for development of digital infrastructure relating to regional planning commission mapping projects.

Sec. B.1101 FISCAL YEAR 2025 CLOSEOUT

(a) As part of the fiscal year 2025 closeout, the Department of Finance and Management shall execute the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308. If any balance remains after meeting these requirements, then, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 308c, the Department of Finance and Management shall designate the first $138,520,000 as unallocated carryforward for use in meeting the requirements of the fiscal year 2026 appropriations act as passed by the General Assembly. The Department of Finance and Management shall then, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 308c, calculate the maximum number of contingent transactions that can be funded, in the order provided in subsection (b) of this section, and designate that money to remain unallocated for such purpose in fiscal year 2026. Any residual balance remaining after such designations shall be reserved in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308c.

(b) In fiscal year 2026, the following contingent transactions shall be executed in the following order from the designated unallocated balance as determined in subsection (a) of this section:

(1) $5,000,000 is transferred to the Communications and Information Technology Special Fund to cover the costs of transitioning billable services from a service level agreement model to a core enterprise services model.

(2) $45,000,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Administration to be transferred by the Emergency Board pursuant to 32 V.S.A. §133 if federal funds are reduced while the General Assembly is not in session.

Sec. B.1103 CASH FUND FOR CAPITAL AND ESSENTIAL INVESTMENTS; FISCAL YEAR 2026 ONE-TIME CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2026, $14,061,099 is appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments for the following:

(1) Department of Buildings and General Services:

(A) $861,599 for statewide major maintenance;

(B) $250,000 for statewide planning, reuse, and contingency;

(C) $250,000 for statewide physical security enhancements;

(D) $219,500 for State House repointing;

(E) $250,000 for an uninterruptable power supply system for the Middlesex print and postal facility; and

(F) $6,900,000 for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction.

(2) Vermont Veterans' Home:

(A) $1,500,000 for the design and construction of the American Unit.

(3) Department of Housing and Community Development:

(A) $1,000,000 for Bennington, high school redevelopment housing infrastructure;

(B) $1,000,000 for Barre, Prospect Heights housing infrastructure;

(C) $1,000,000 for Brattleboro, Winston Prouty Center housing infrastructure;

(D) $100,000 for a grant to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to support a site study focused on economic development, parking, housing, and flood mitigation for the 1.6-acre parcel at 87 State Street and parcels at 89 State Street and 42 Court Street; and

(E) $250,000 for a competitive grant to establish a new recovery residence, per the criteria of the Vermont Recovery Housing Program Action Plan.

(4) Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation:

(A) $275,000 for the purchase of a fire apparatus.

(5) Department of Fish and Wildlife:

(A) $25,000 for the Lake Champlain Walleye Association, Inc. to upgrade and repair the Walleye rearing, restoration, and stocking infrastructure.

(6) Department of Public Safety:

(A) $35,000 for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the dry hydrant program.

(7) Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets:

(A) $45,000 for the Bennington Veterans Incubator Farm at the Vermont Veterans' Home.

* * * Fiscal Year 2025 Adjustments, Appropriations, and Amendments * * *

Sec. C.100 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.209 is amended to read:

Sec. B.209 Public safety - state police

Personal services	~~74,755,468~~ 76,655,468
Operating expenses	15,992,094
Grants	1,137,841
Total	~~91,885,403~~ 93,785,403
Source of funds	
General fund	~~57,891,409~~ 59,791,409
Transportation fund	20,250,000
Special funds	3,170,328
Federal funds	8,967,252
Interdepartmental transfers	1,606,414
Total	~~91,885,403~~ 93,785,403

Sec. C.101 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.702 is amended to read:

Sec. B.702 Fish and wildlife - support and field services

Personal services	~~22,597,844~~ 22,887,844
Operating expenses	6,843,095
Grants	853,066
Total	~~30,294,005~~ 30,584,005
Source of funds	
General fund	~~8,267,967~~ 8,557,967
Special funds	365,427
Fish and wildlife fund	10,418,331
Federal funds	9,751,683
Interdepartmental transfers	1,490,597
Total	~~30,294,005~~ 30,584,005

Sec. C.102 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.101 is amended to read:

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following amounts are transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): ~~$73,212,880~~ $78,235,088.34.

* * *

(J) Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (#21555): ~~$830,000~~ $6,500,000.

(K) Education Fund (#20205): $25,000,000.

(L) Medical Insurance Fund (#55100): $18,500,000.

(M) Correctional Industries Fund (#59100): $3,135,443.

(N) Act 250 Permit Fund (#21260): $900,000.

(O) State Liability Self-Insurance Fund (#56200): $3,000,000.

(P) Emergency Personnel Survivor's Benefit Fund (#21884): $220,000.

(2) From the Transportation Fund to the:

(A) ~~Vermont Recreational Trails Fund (#21455): $370,000.~~

~~(B)~~ Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvements Fund (#21575): $523,966.

~~(C)~~(B) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $316,745.

(C) Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund (#20191): $900,000.

(D) Notwithstanding 19 V.S.A. § 13(c), the Transportation Fund transfer to the Central Garage fund in fiscal year 2025 shall be $0.

* * *

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025:

(1) The following amounts shall be transferred to the General Fund from the funds indicated:

(A) Cannabis Regulation Fund (#21998): ~~$12,000,000~~ $15,417,084.32.

(B) AHS Central Office Earned Federal Receipts (#22005): $4,641,960.

(C) Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund (#50250): ~~$7,000,000~~ $6,139,162.

(D) Liquor Control Fund (#50300): ~~$21,100,000~~ $9,543,353.

(E) ~~Tobacco Litigation Settlement Fund (#21370): $3,000,000.~~

~~(F)~~ Financial Institutions Supervision Fund (#21065): $1,100,000.

(F) Workforce Education and Training Fund (#21913): $2,598,921.75.

(G) Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund (#21994): the balance of the fund at the close of fiscal year 2025.

(2) The following estimated amounts, which may be all or a portion of unencumbered fund balances, shall be transferred from the following funds to the General Fund. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July meeting the final amounts transferred from each fund and certify that such transfers will not impair the agency, office, or department reliant upon each fund from meeting its statutory requirements.

(A) AG-Fees & Reimbursements-Court Order Fund (#21638): $2,000,000.

(B) Unclaimed Property Fund (#62100): ~~$6,500,000~~ $8,037,352.

(3) ~~$66,935,000~~ $65,060,450.50 of the net unencumbered fund balances in the Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21075), the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085), and the Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21080) shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(c)(1) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.3 of the Rules for State Matching Funds under the Federal Public Assistance Program, in fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may provide funding from the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund that was transferred pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(J) of this section to subgrantees prior to the completion of a project. In fiscal ~~year~~ years 2025 and 2026, up to 70 percent of the State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project for municipalities that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT may be advanced at the request of a municipality.

(2) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.1 of the Rules for State Matching Funds Under the Federal Public Assistance Program, the Secretary of Administration shall increase the standard State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project to the highest percentage possible given available funding for municipalities in counties that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events and are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT.

* * *

Sec. C.103 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100 is amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2025 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

* * *

(d) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(8) $835,073 General Fund for the Bridges to Health Program; ~~and~~

(9) ~~$400,000~~ $550,000 General Fund for the Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey; and

(10) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity.

(e) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $16,500,000 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing program~~;~~.

(2) $1,034,065 General Fund to extend 10 Economic Services Division limited service positions, including associated operating costs, in support of the General Assistance Emergency Housing program; ~~and~~

(3) $332,000 General Fund for a 2-1-1 service line contract to operate 24 hours seven days per week;

(4) $340,000 General Fund and $660,000 federal funds for the Office of Child Support mainframe transition planning. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 703, unless otherwise reverted by a future act of the General Assembly, these appropriations shall carry forward until fully expended; and

(5) $1,800,000 General Fund shall be added to the appropriation made in Sec. B.1102(b)(4) of this act for the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

* * *

(n) Agency of Human Services Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$3,913,200~~ $5,586,324 General Fund and ~~$5,366,383~~ $7,713,259 federal funds to be used for Global Commitment match for the Medicaid Global Payment Program. To the extent that at a future date the Global Payment Program ceases to operate as a program or changes methodology to a retrospective payment program, any resulting one-time General Fund spending authority remaining at that time shall be reverted. If the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b has not been replenished in accordance with subdivision (b)(21) of Sec. B.1102 of this act, the remaining

unallocated General Fund balance shall be reserved in the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b up to the amount appropriated in this subdivision.

(o) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$9,279,583~~ $13,299,583 Global Commitment for the Medicaid Global Payment Program;

(2) $150,000 General Fund to conduct a technical analysis of Vermont's health insurance markets; ~~and~~

(3) $100,000 General Fund to implement the expansion of Medicare Savings Programs eligibility;

(4) $10,000,000 General Fund for Provider Stabilization Grants; and

(5) $11,000,000 General Fund for an alternative payment model reconciliation payment to Brattleboro Retreat. All or a portion of these funds may also be used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match. If funds are used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match, the commensurate amount of Global Commitment Fund spending authority may be requested during the Global Commitment Transfer process pursuant to Sec. E.301.1 of this act.

* * *

(v) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$200,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities that were impacted by the August and December 2023 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT and DR-4762-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of the August and December 2023 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on Federal Emergency Management Agency related projects~~ $1,800,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4810-VT and DR-4744-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic

impacts of 2023 and 2024 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on Federal Emergency Management Agency-related projects.

(A) The funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) for local economic damage grants shall be distributed as follows:

(i) $75,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has at least $5,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(ii) $50,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $5,000,000 and at least $2,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iii) $30,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $2,000,000 and at least $1,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iv) $20,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $1,000,000 and at least $250,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(v) $10,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $250,000 and at least $100,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(B) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) have not been granted on or before September 30, 2025, they shall revert to the General Fund and be transferred to the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund.

(C) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) are insufficient to distribute grants to all eligible municipalities in their full amount, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511, utilize excess receipt authority to establish spending authority from the PILOT Special Fund for this purpose.

(w) Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,800,000 General Fund to complete pilot projects identified pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 186.

(x) Judiciary. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $800,000 General Fund to upgrade the network wiring and security systems in county court houses; and

(2) $50,000 General Fund to upgrade or construct bathrooms in the Essex Meeting House that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sec. C.104 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 40, is further amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,300,000 General Fund to create, implement, and oversee a comprehensive statewide language access plan~~;~~.

(2) $15,000,000 General Fund to be used to offset the cost of denied claims for ~~Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)~~ federal reimbursement related to presidentially declared disasters in fiscal year 2024 or 2025, or to fund unanticipated statewide costs related to recovery efforts from declared disasters or administering programs created by funds from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery Fund, including the costs of related limited-service positions, and contracting for programs and services.

(3) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity. These funds shall not be released until the recommendation and report required by Sec. E.100.1 of this act, regarding the permanent administrative location for the Office of Health Equity, is provided to the committees of jurisdiction listed in Sec. E.100.1 of this act and the positions in the Office of Health Equity created by this act are filled.

(4) $30,000,000 General Fund to be used as ~~Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) matching funds~~ nonfederal share related to disaster spending for costs incurred due to ~~the July 2023 flooding event~~ federally declared disasters in fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

* * *

(l) Agency of Human Services Central Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(2) $8,834,000 General Fund and $11,483,302 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program. Funds shall be used to expand the substances covered by the program, include mental health and pediatric screenings, and make strategic

investments with community partners; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(m) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $366,066 General Fund and $372,048 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

(2) $15,583,352 Global Commitment Fund #20405 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose; and

* * *

(n) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $4,595,448 Global Commitment Fund #20405 to the Division of Substance Use Programs for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(ee) Joint Fiscal Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $250,000 for ~~per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Task Force on Economic Development Incentives and for consulting services approved by the Task Force~~ consulting services related to legislative needs identified in the 2025–2026 biennium, including analysis of legislative staff compensation and organizational structure and implementation of adjustments in accordance with policies adopted by the Joint Legislative Management Committee.

* * *

Sec. C.105 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. C.110 is amended to read:

Sec. C.110 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; REVERSION AND REALLOCATION

(a) The Secretary of Administration ~~shall revert~~ may reimburse up to ~~$5,000,000~~ $14,300,000 of prior fiscal year federal funds ~~appropriated~~

expended through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, as approved by the Joint Fiscal Committee pursuant to Grant Request #3034~~. An amount of spending authority equal to these reversions shall be provided, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511, to existing State programs that meet the eligibility criteria established by the U.S. Treasury~~ with new General Fund appropriations transferred from existing State programs that meet the eligibility criteria established by the U.S. Treasury. These programs shall receive an amount of funds from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program equal to the amount of General Fund appropriation transferred.

Sec. C.106 [Deleted.]

Sec. C.107 BUSINESS EMERGENCY GAP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; VERMONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY GRANT

(a) Of the $7,000,000 General Fund authorized by unanimous vote of the Emergency Board on August 12, 2024 for the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program, $2,000,000 shall be used for a grant to the Vermont Economic Development Authority to establish a disaster relief fund for use by businesses following a natural disaster.

* * * Fiscal Year 2026 Fund Transfers and Reserve Allocations * * *

Sec. D.100 PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX ALLOCATIONS

(a) This act contains the following amounts allocated to special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. These allocations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of $591,137 is allocated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of $591,137 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(2) Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of $36,964,250 from the property transfer tax and the surcharge established by 32 V.SA. § 9602a deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of $2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 314 shall be offset by the reduction of $1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and $1,000,000 from the surcharge established by 32

V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2026 appropriation of $36,964,250 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the $1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, the $1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall be restored.

(3) Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a)(2), amounts in excess of $10,000,705 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Municipal and Regional Planning and Resilience Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a)(3), the $10,000,705 shall be allocated as follows:

(A) $7,740,546 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) $1,260,089 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) $1,000,070 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following amounts shall be transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund (#10000) to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $81,155,462.

(B) Capital Infrastructure Fund (#21952): $10,272,469.

(C) Tax Computer System Modernization Fund (#21909): $4,300,000.

(D) Fish and Wildlife Fund – Nondedicated (#20305): $185,000.

(E) Education Fund (#20205): $77,200,000.

(F) Communications and Information Technology Fund (#58100): $10,000,000.

(G) Environmental Contingency Fund (#21275): $9,520,000.

(H) Domestic and Sexual Violence Fund (#21926): $450,000.

(2) From the Transportation Fund (#20105) to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $305,825.

(B) Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvements Fund (#21575): $523,966.

(3) From the Education Fund (#20205) to the:

(A) Tax Computer System Modernization Fund (#21909): $1,500,000.

(4) From the Clean Water Fund (#21932) to the:

(A) Agricultural Water Quality Special Fund (#21933): $11,000,000.

(B) Lake in Crisis Response Program Special Fund (#21938): $120,000.

(5) From the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments and Reserves Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments (#21953) to the:

(A) Transportation Fund (#20105): $12,500,000.

(B) Capital Infrastructure Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments Fund (#21952): $1,000,000.

(6) From the Agency of Human Services Central Office Earned Federal Receipts (#22005) to the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): $4,641,960.

(7) From the Attorney General Fees and Reimbursement Court Order Fund (#21638) to the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): $2,000,000.

(8) From the Cannabis Regulation Fund (#21998) to the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): 70 percent of the unencumbered and unexpended balance of the fund in excess of $4,035,000 following the close of fiscal year 2025. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report the amount of this transfer to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July 2025 meeting. For purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget, this amount is estimated to be $8,900,000.

(B) Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund (#21995): 30 percent of the unencumbered and unexpended balance of the fund in excess of $4,035,000 following the close of fiscal year 2025. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report the amount of this transfer to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July 2025 meeting. For purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget, this amount is estimated to be $3,800,000.

(b) The following transfers shall be in accordance with the citations provided. Transfer estimates are for purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget and do not supersede the actual year-end transfer amounts.

(1) To the General Fund (#10000) from the:

(A) 8 V.S.A. § 80(d). Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21075): $46,204,523.

(B) 9 V.S.A. § 5613(c). Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085): $21,745,635.

(C) 27 V.S.A. § 1543. Unclaimed Property Fund (#62100): $6,541,757.

(2) To the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085) from the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): $1,053,073

(c) Transfers from the following enterprise funds to the General Fund (#10000) shall not exceed the actual fiscal year end profits earned by the enterprise net of any amount necessary to absolve the fund of a deficit. The following estimated transfers are for purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget only.

(1) From the Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund (#50250): $7,600,000.

(2) From the Liquor Control Fund (#50300): $14,849,754.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary in fiscal year 2026, $19,000,000 shall be transferred from the Child Care Contribution Special Fund to the General Fund.

Sec. D.102 REVERSIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2026, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

1100892208	AOA – VHFA	$2,000,000.00
1210892201	LEG – Pension Benefit Consul	$8,821.25
1220891803	VT Tax Structure Comm	$59,673.09
1220891901	Contract Services for Research	$25,000.00
1220892201	JFO – AAHC Task Force Consult	$7,155.00
1220892301	JFO – Studies and Reports	$21,125.50
1230891301	Security	$39.10

1230892301	SAA – Capitol Police	$0.99
1260892201	TRE – Bond Redemption	$5,000,000.00

Sec. D.103 RESERVES

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2026, the following reserve transactions shall be implemented for the funds provided:

(1) General Fund.

(A) The General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve shall be adjusted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308. For purposes of developing this budget, $1,875,385 is expected to be unreserved in fiscal year 2026.

(B) The General Fund Human Services Caseload Reserve shall be adjusted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308b. For purposes of developing this budget, $2,721,375 is expected to be unreserved in fiscal year 2026.

(C) The General Fund 27/53 Reserve shall be adjusted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308e. For purposes of developing this budget, $5,700,000 is expected to be reserved in fiscal year 2026.

(2) Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments and Reserves Subaccount in the Cash for Capital and Essential Investments Fund.

(A) $12,500,000 is unreserved for transfer to the Transportation Fund for use by the Agency of Transportation in accordance with the provisions for which the funds were originally reserved in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1102(b)(17).

(B) $14,500,000 is unreserved for use by the Department of Environmental Conservation in accordance with the provisions for which the funds were originally reserved in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.108(b).

(3) Transportation Fund.

(A) For the purpose of calculating the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Fund Stabilization Reserve's requirement of five percent of prior year appropriations, fiscal year 2025 Transportation Fund reversions are deducted from the fiscal year 2025 total appropriations amount.

(b) In fiscal year 2025, $5,000,000 shall be reserved within the Child Care Contribution Special Fund. If in fiscal year 2026 the Child Care Contribution Special Fund is found to have an undesignated fund deficit, these funds shall be unreserved and used to the extent necessary to offset the deficit as determined by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. If these funds are used in fiscal year 2026, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall

report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, or the Joint Fiscal Committee when the General Assembly is not in session, on the amount used.

* * * General Government * * *

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 12 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2026 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

(A) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Pre-charge Administrator.

(B) Office of the Secretary of State:

(i) one Administrative Services Coordinator IV.

(C) Green Mountain Care Board:

(i) one Reference-based Pricing Director;

(ii) one Reference-based Pricing Project Manager; and

(iii) one Operations, Procurement, and Contractual Oversight Manager.

(D) Department of Fish and Wildlife:

(i) one Fish and Wildlife Specialist.

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

(A) State Labor Relations Board:

(i) one Staff Attorney; and

(ii) one Labor Relations IT Staff.

(B) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Assistant Attorney General.

(C) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(i) one Financial and IT Specialist; and

(ii) two Transport Deputies.

(b) The establishment of four permanent positions to be established through existing vacant positions is authorized in fiscal year 2026 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

(A) Criminal Justice Council:

(i) one Canine Head Trainer.

(B) Cannabis Control Board:

(i) one Compliance and Enforcement Attorney.

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

(A) Human Rights Commission:

(i) one Intake Specialist; and

(ii) one Staff Attorney Investigator.

(c) The establishment of one limited service position is authorized in fiscal year 2026:

(1) Office of the State Treasurer:

(A) one Climate Superfund Specialist.

(d) The extension of nine limited services positions is authorized until June 30, 2026:

(1) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(A) six Deputy State's Attorneys;

(B) two Legal Assistants; and

(C) one Victim Advocate.

(e) The conversion of two limited service positions to classified permanent status is authorized in fiscal year 2026 as follows:

(1) Land Use Review Board:

(A) two District Coordinators.

Sec. E.100.1 [Deleted.]

Sec. E.100.2 SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION; REPORT ON STATUS OF FEDERAL FUNDS

(a) The Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July, September, and November 2025 meetings, and at other meetings as requested, on any reductions to federal revenues to the State and the status of any appropriations impacted by such reductions.

Sec. E.100.3 AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT; CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND APPROPRIATIONS; REPORTING

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee on a quarterly basis, and upon the request of the Committee, on the status of appropriations made from the American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund.

(1) Reports shall include information on:

(A) the original amounts appropriated;

(B) outstanding obligations against appropriations; and

(C) any remaining spending authority.

(b) In fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee on a quarterly basis, and upon the request of the Committee, on the status of any new spending authority established pursuant to 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106.

(1) Reports shall include information on:

(A) the original amounts appropriated;

(B) outstanding obligations against appropriations; and

(C) any remaining spending authority.

(c) Any spending authority established pursuant to 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106(a) and (c) that remains unexpended and unencumbered on December 31, 2027 shall revert to the General Fund. Any unallocated balance resulting from this reversion shall be reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve.

(d) The Secretary of Administration shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on or before January 15, 2028 on the amount reverted to the General Fund and reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

Sec. E.105 AGENCY OF DIGITAL SERVICES; COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUND TRANSFER

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the Agency of Digital Services shall utilize from the Internal Service Fund appropriation in Sec. B.105 of this act an amount of funds equal to that transferred from the General Fund to the Communications and Information Technology Fund in this act to cover the costs of transitioning billable services from a service level agreement model to a core enterprise services model. To the extent to which these funds are insufficient to complete

this transition, the Agency shall, as part of its fiscal year 2026 budget adjustment presentation, request an additional appropriation or transfer of funds and shall not bill other agencies or departments to cover the costs of the transition.

Sec. E.111 32 V.S.A. § 5824 is amended to read:

§ 5824. ADOPTION OF FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS

The statutes of the United States relating to the federal income tax, as in effect on December 31, ~~2023~~ 2024, but without regard to federal income tax rates under 26 U.S.C. § 1, are hereby adopted for the purpose of computing the tax liability under this chapter and shall continue in effect as adopted until amended, repealed, or replaced by act of the General Assembly.

Sec. E.111.1 32 V.S.A. § 7402 is amended to read:

§ 7402. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter unless the context requires otherwise:

* * *

(8) "Laws of the United States" means the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended through December 31, ~~2023~~ 2024. As used in this chapter, "Internal Revenue Code" has the same meaning as "laws of the United States" as defined in this subdivision. The date through which amendments to the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986 are adopted under this subdivision shall continue in effect until amended, repealed, or replaced by act of the General Assembly.

* * *

Sec. E.111.2 32 V.S.A. § 5861(c) is amended to read:

(c) Spouses or a surviving spouse ~~may~~ shall file a joint Vermont personal income tax return for any taxable year for which the spouses file or the surviving spouse ~~are permitted to file~~ files a joint federal income tax return under the laws of the United States, unless the Commissioner allows a different filing status.

Sec. E.111.3 TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS; TAX YEAR 2025

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, for purposes of determining the tax-exempt status of an organization, Vermont tax laws for tax year 2025 shall follow 26 U.S.C. §§ 501–506 and all other federal statutory provisions, federal regulations, and federal case law relating to the determination of an organization's tax-exempt status for purposes of federal income taxation, as in effect on April 1, 2025, regardless of any amendments

or other changes affecting implementation or interpretation of those sections between April 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, whether due to an act of Congress, federal regulation, federal bulletin, federal guidance, presidential executive order, federal administrative or judicial decision, or other federal source.

Sec. E.127 32 V.S.A. § 704 is amended to read:

§ 704. INTERIM BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION ADJUSTMENTS

(a) The General Assembly recognizes that acts of appropriations and their sources of funding reflect the priorities for expenditures of public funds enacted by the General Assembly and that major reductions or transfers, when required by reduced State revenues or other reasons, ought to be made whenever possible by an act of the General Assembly reflecting its revisions of those priorities. Nevertheless, the General Assembly also recognizes that when it is not in session, it may be necessary to reduce authorized appropriations and their sources of funding, and funds may need to be transferred, to maintain a balanced State budget. Under these limited circumstances, it is the intent of the General Assembly that appropriations may be reduced and funds transferred when the General Assembly is not in session pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(b)(1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (f) of this section, in each instance that the official State revenue estimate for the General Fund, the Transportation Fund, or federal funds has been reduced by one percent or more from the estimates determined and assumed for purposes of the current fiscal year's appropriations, the Secretary of Administration shall prepare an expenditure reduction plan for consideration and approval by the Joint Fiscal Committee pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, provided that any total reductions in appropriations and transfers of funds are not greater than the reductions in the official State revenue estimate.

(2) In each instance that the official State revenue estimate for the General Fund, the Transportation Fund, or federal funds has been reduced by less than one percent from the estimates determined and assumed for purposes of the current fiscal year's appropriations, the Secretary of Administration may prepare and implement an expenditure reduction plan without the approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee, provided that any total reductions in appropriations and transfers of funds are not greater than the reductions in the official State revenue estimate. The Secretary may implement an expenditure reduction plan under this subdivision if plan reductions to the total amount appropriated in any section or subsection do not exceed five percent, the plan is designed to minimize any negative effects on the delivery of services to the public, and the plan does not have any unduly disproportionate effect on any

single function, program, service, benefit, or county. Plans not requiring the approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee shall be filed with the Joint Fiscal Office prior to implementation. If the Secretary's plan consists of reductions greater than five percent to the total amount appropriated in any section or subsection, such plan shall only be implemented in the manner provided for in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. E.127.1 32 V.S.A. § 133 is amended to read:

§ 133. DUTIES

(a) The Board shall have authority to make expenditures necessitated by unforeseen emergencies and may draw on the State's General Fund and General Fund Balance Reserve for that purpose.

(b) Pursuant to section 706 of this title, the Board shall also have authority to transfer appropriations made to other agencies and to use the transferred amounts to make expenditures necessitated by unforeseen emergencies.

(c) In a fiscal year, the sum of the Board's expenditures under subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall not exceed two percent of the total General Fund appropriation for the year of the expenditures.

Sec. E.127.2 32 V.S.A. § 308c is amended to read:

§ 308c. GENERAL FUND AND TRANSPORTATION FUND BALANCE RESERVES

(a) There is hereby created within the General Fund a General Fund Balance Reserve, also known as the "Rainy Day Reserve." After satisfying the requirements of section 308 of this title, and after other reserve requirements have been met, any remaining unreserved and undesignated end of fiscal year General Fund surplus shall be reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve. The General Fund Balance Reserve shall not exceed ~~five~~ 10 percent of the appropriations from the General Fund for the prior fiscal year without legislative authorization.

(1), (2) [Repealed.]

(3) Of the funds that would otherwise be reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve under this subsection, the following amounts shall be reserved as necessary and transferred from the General Fund as follows:

(A) 25 percent to the Vermont State Retirement Fund established by 3 V.S.A. § 473; and

(B) 25 percent to the Postretirement Adjustment Allowance Account established in 16 V.S.A. § 1949a.

(b)(1) The General Assembly may ~~specifically~~ unreserve and appropriate ~~the use of up to 50 percent of the amounts added in the prior fiscal year from~~ or transfer an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the General Fund Balance Reserve to fund unforeseen or emergency needs. It is the intent of the General Assembly that any General Fund Balance Reserve funds utilized in accordance with this section be replenished.

(2) If the official State revenue estimates of the Emergency Board for the General Fund, determined under section 305a of this title, have been reduced by two percent or more from the estimates determined and assumed for purposes of the ~~general~~ appropriations act or budget adjustment act, funds in the General Fund Balance Reserve may be unreserved and appropriated or transferred to compensate for a reduction of revenues.

(c) There is hereby created within the Transportation Fund a Transportation Fund Balance Reserve. After satisfying the requirements of section 308a of this title, and after other reserve requirements have been met, any remaining unreserved and undesignated end of fiscal year Transportation Fund surplus shall be reserved in the Transportation Fund Balance Reserve. Monies from this Reserve shall be available for appropriation by the General Assembly.

(d) Determination of the amounts of the General Fund and Transportation Fund Balance Reserves shall be made by the Commissioner of Finance and Management and reported, along with the amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, to the legislative Joint Fiscal Committee at its first meeting following September 1 of each year.

Sec. E.127.3 FEDERAL FUNDING; CALCULATION OF APPROPRIATION REDUCTION; SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION; JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Unduplicated appropriation" means the total appropriation set forth in this act for a governmental function excluding Global Commitment funds, Interdepartmental Transfer funds, and Internal Service funds. For purposes of this section, the determination of unduplicated appropriations shall not include Education Fund.

(2) "Governmental function unit" refers to the governmental function areas set forth in Sec. A.108 of this act.

(b) In each instance that a reduction in federal funds to the State results in:

(1) the unduplicated appropriation for each governmental function unit to decrease by less than one half of one percent, the Secretary of Administration shall notify the Joint Fiscal Committee.

(2) the unduplicated appropriation for any governmental function unit to decrease by one half to one percent:

(A) the Secretary of Administration shall prepare an expenditure reduction and transfer plan for consideration and approval by the Joint Fiscal Committee pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 704(e), provided that any total reductions in appropriations and transfers of funds are not greater than the reductions in federal funds; and

(B) to maintain a balanced State budget, minimize the impact to Vermonters and to abide by the legislative intent set forth by the General Assembly in this act, the Joint Fiscal Committee may make a recommendation to the Emergency Board to:

(i) pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 308c(b)(3), utilize the General Fund Balance Reserve or the appropriation set forth in Sec. B.1101(b)(2) of this act, or both, to support impacted programs at not more than the current fiscal year funding level until the General Assembly is in session;

(ii) revert any unexpended and unobligated funds; and

(iii) make such reductions or transfers in appropriations necessary to support the priorities of the General Assembly, and the recommended reduction is limited to not more than 10 percent of any fund or 10 percent of any appropriation.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, for the purpose of calculating any appropriation reduction that triggers the actions set forth in this section, the baseline federal funding amounts shall be the federal funding set forth in this act. The Secretary of Administration shall monitor any changes in federal funding as the difference between the baseline federal funding amount for use in fiscal year 2026 and any updated State federal funds revenue forecast adopted by the Emergency Board and shall calculate the percent reduction of the unduplicated appropriations for each governmental function unit.

Sec. E.127.4 EMERGENCY BOARD; REPLENISH REDUCED SPENDING AUTHORITY

(a) The Emergency Board, in response to a declared emergency pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 9 occurring while the General Assembly is not in session, or a reduction in State revenue estimates or federal funding pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 704(b) occurring while the General Assembly is not in session, may unreserve and make available an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the General Fund Balance Reserve to replenish the spending authority impacted by the declared emergency or reduction in funding in order to maintain a balanced State budget, minimize the impact to Vermonters, and to abide by the

legislative intent set forth by the General Assembly in the most recent fiscal year appropriations act. In no event shall the amount provided to any agency or department under this section exceed the original amount appropriated by the General Assembly.

Sec. E.127.5 FISCAL YEAR 2026 FEE REPORT; GENERAL GOVERNMENT

(a) Fiscal year 2026 fee information. Agencies, departments, boards, and offices that receive appropriations in Secs. B.100-199, B.400-599, and B. 800-999 of this act shall, in collaboration with the Joint Fiscal Office, prepare a comprehensive fee report for each fee that is in effect in fiscal year 2026. The fee report shall contain the following information for each fee:

(1) the statutory authorization and termination date, if any;

(2) the current rate or amount of the fee and the date the fee was last set or adjusted by the General Assembly or Joint Fiscal Committee;

(3) the Fund into which the fee revenues are deposited;

(4) the amount of the revenues derived from the fee in each of the five fiscal years preceding fiscal year 2026;

(5) the number of times that the fee was paid in each of the two fiscal years preceding fiscal year 2026;

(6) a projection of the fee revenues in fiscal years 2026 and 2027;

(7) a description of the service or product provided or the regulatory function performed by the agency, department, board or office supported by the fee;

(8) the amount of the fee if adjusted for inflation from the last time the fee amount was modified using an appropriate index chosen in consultation with the Joint Fiscal Office. The inflation adjustment shall be calculated as the percentage change between the value of the index in the July of the year the fee was last adjusted by the General Assembly and July 2025;

(9) if any portion of the fee revenue is deposited into a special fund, the percentage of the special fund's revenues that the fee represents;

(10) any available information regarding comparable fees in other jurisdictions;

(11) any polices or trends that might affect the viability of the fee amount; and

(12) any other relevant considerations for setting the fee amount.

(b) Reports.

(1) The Joint Fiscal Office shall provide guidance as necessary to the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) of this section on the methodology to be used for compiling the information requested in the fee reports. On or before October 15, 2025, the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) of this section shall submit a draft report of the information required in subdivisions (a)(1)–(12) of this section to the Joint Fiscal Office for review. Agencies, departments, boards, and offices shall work with the Joint Fiscal Office to finalize the report before submitting the final report described in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) On or before December 15, 2025, the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) shall submit a jointly prepared final report to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Finance.

(3) If any of the information requested in this section cannot be provided for any reason, the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) shall include in both the draft and final reports a written explanation for why the information cannot be provided.

(c) As used in this section, as it pertains to Executive Branch agencies, departments, boards, and offices, "fee" means any source of State revenue classified by the Department of Finance and Management Accounting System as "fees," "business licenses," "nonbusiness licenses," and "fines and penalties."

(d) Executive Branch fee report moratorium. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 605, in fiscal year 2026, the Governor shall not be required to submit the consolidated Executive Branch fee annual report and request to the General Assembly.

Sec. E.131 3 V.S.A. chapter 18 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 18. ~~VT~~ VERMONT SAVES

§ 531. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(3) "Covered employer" means a person, entity, or subsidiary engaged in a business, industry, profession, trade, or other enterprise in the State, whether for profit or not for profit, that ~~has~~ does not ~~offered~~ currently offer to an employee, or is within a control group that maintains or contributes to, ~~effective in form or operation at any time within the current calendar year or two preceding calendar years,~~ a specified tax-favored retirement plan. If an employer does not maintain a specified tax-favored retirement plan for a

portion of a calendar year ending on or after the effective date of this chapter but does adopt such a plan for the remainder of that calendar year, the employer is not a covered employer for the remainder of the year. A covered employer does not include:

(A) the federal government, the State or any other state, any county or municipal corporation, or any of the State's or any other state's units or instrumentalities;

(B) any employer that has ~~not~~ only been in business during ~~both~~ the current calendar year ~~and the preceding calendar year~~.

(4) "ERISA" means the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended, 29 U.S.C § 1001 et seq.

(5) "Internal Revenue Code" means the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(6) "IRA" means a traditional IRA or a Roth IRA.

(7) "Participant" means an individual who has an IRA under the Program.

(8) "Payroll deduction IRA or payroll deduction IRA arrangement" means an arrangement by which an employer allows employees to contribute to an IRA by means of payroll deduction.

(9) "Program" means the ~~VT~~ Vermont Saves Program established in accordance with this chapter.

* * *

§ 532. ~~VT~~ VERMONT SAVES PROGRAM; ESTABLISHMENT

(a) Establishment; purpose. There is established the ~~VT~~ Vermont Saves Program (Program), administered by the Office of the State Treasurer, for the purpose of increasing financial security for Vermonters by providing access to an IRA for Vermont employees of companies that do not currently offer a retirement savings program. The Program shall be designed to facilitate portability of benefits through withdrawals, rollovers, and direct transfers from an IRA and achieve economies of scale and other efficiencies to minimize costs. The Program shall:

* * *

(b) Type of IRA. The type of IRA to which contributions are made pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be a Roth IRA; provided, however, the Treasurer is authorized to add an option for all participants to:

(1) affirmatively elect to contribute to a traditional IRA instead of a Roth IRA; or

(2) open both a Roth IRA and a traditional IRA.

(c) Contributions.

(1) Unless otherwise specified by the covered employee, a covered employee shall automatically initially contribute five percent of the covered employee's salary or wages to the Program. A covered employee may elect to opt out of the Program at any time or contribute at any higher or lower rate, expressed as a percentage of salary or wages, or, as permitted by the Treasurer, expressed as a flat dollar amount, subject in all cases to the IRA contribution and eligibility limits applicable under the Internal Revenue Code at no additional charge.

(2) The Treasurer shall provide for, on a uniform basis, an annual increase of each active participant's contribution rate, by not less than one percent, but not more than eight percent, of salary or wages each year. Any such increases shall apply to active participants, including participants by default with an option to opt out or participants who are initiated by affirmative participant election, provided that any increase is subject to the IRA contribution and eligibility limits applicable under the Internal Revenue Code.

* * *

Sec. E.131.1 29 V.S.A. chapter 61 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 61. MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE LOAN FUND

§ 1601. MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE LOAN FUND

(a) There is hereby created the Municipal Equipment and Vehicle Loan Fund for the purpose of providing loans on favorable terms to municipalities for the purchase of ~~construction, fire, emergency, or heavy equipment or~~ motorized highway building and maintenance equipment, heavy equipment, and authorized emergency vehicles as set forth in 23 V.S.A. § 4.

(b) The Municipal Equipment and Vehicle Loan Fund shall be administered by a committee composed of the State Treasurer and the State Traffic Committee established by 19 V.S.A. § 1(24), pursuant to policies and procedures approved by ~~the Traffic~~ this Committee ~~established by 19 V.S.A. § 1(24)~~ with administrative support from the Office of the State Treasurer. The Committee shall establish criteria for distribution of available loan funds among municipalities considering at least financial need, equitable geographic distribution, and ability to repay. The Fund shall be a revolving fund and all principal and interest earned on loans and the fund balance remaining in the

Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall ~~not revert but~~ be ~~carried over in the Fund~~ available for use in the succeeding fiscal year. The Committee shall meet upon request of the Treasurer to consider applications.

§ 1602. APPLICATION; LOANS; CONDITIONS

(a) Application forms shall be furnished by the Committee on request. Upon Committee approval of an application of a municipality or two or more municipalities applying jointly for purchases as set forth in subsection 1601(a) of this title, the State Treasurer may loan money from the Fund to ~~that municipality or municipalities for the purchase of equipment. Purchases of equipment eligible for loans~~ the applicants. Loans from the Fund shall ~~have~~ be used on equipment and vehicles with a useful life of at least five years and a purchase price of at least $20,000~~.00 but shall not be eligible for loans in excess of $150,000.00 from this Fund~~.

(b) The State Treasurer is authorized to establish terms and conditions, including repayment schedules of up to five years for loans from the Fund to ensure repayment of loans to the Fund. The amount of any loan shall be not more than 75 percent of the purchase price or $150,000, whichever is lower. Before a municipality may receive a loan from the Fund, it shall give to the State Treasurer security for the repayment of the funds. The security shall be in such form and amount as the Treasurer may determine and may include a lien on the equipment or emergency vehicle financed by the loan.

(c) The rates of interest shall be as established by this section to assist municipalities in purchasing equipment upon terms more favorable than in the commercial market. Such rates shall be not more than two percent per annum for a loan to a single municipality, and loans shall bear no interest charge if made to two or more municipalities purchasing equipment jointly.

(d) In any fiscal year, new loans from the ~~Municipal Equipment Loan~~ Fund shall not exceed an aggregate of $1,500,000~~.00~~. ~~The Treasurer shall put forth recommendations to the General Assembly on maximum loan amount every five years, commencing January 15, 2028, based on requests received and loans granted pursuant to this chapter.~~

(e) When a municipality suffers the destruction of more than one piece of equipment or a vehicle at or near the same time or suffers some unanticipated hardship relating to the equipment or vehicle and the Committee finds that replacement would place an undue financial hardship on the municipality, the Committee may waive one or both of the following loan limiting factors in subsection (b) of this section:

(1) the $150,000 annual limitation on each municipality; or

(2) the 75 percent of the purchase price limitation.

(f) The State Treasurer shall put forth recommendations to the General Assembly on the maximum individual loan amount from the Fund every five years, commencing on January 15, 2028, based on requests received and loans granted pursuant to this chapter in the five preceding years.

* * *

Sec. E.131.2 32 V.S.A. § 1001 is amended to read:

§ 1001. CAPITAL DEBT AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

* * *

(c) Committee estimate of a prudent amount of net State tax-supported debt; affordability considerations. On or before September 30 of each year , the Committee shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly the Committee's estimate of net State tax-supported debt that prudently may be authorized for the next fiscal year, together with a report explaining the basis for the estimate. The Committee's estimate shall not take into consideration the balance remaining at the end of each fiscal year in the subaccounts of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments, established pursuant to section 1001b of this title. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall not apply to the report to be made under this subsection. In developing its annual estimate, and in preparing its annual report, the Committee shall consider:

* * *

(4) The criteria that recognized bond rating agencies use to judge the quality of issues of State bonds, including:

(A) existing and projected total debt service on net tax-supported debt as a percentage of combined General and Transportation Fund revenues, excluding surpluses in these revenues that may occur in an individual fiscal year; ~~and~~

(B) existing and projected total net tax-supported debt outstanding as a percentage of total State personal income;

(C) existing and projected pension and other postemployment benefit liability metrics; and

(D) other metrics at the Committee's discretion, including long-term liabilities not covered in subdivisions (A)–(C) of this subdivision (4).

(5) The principal amounts currently outstanding, and balances for the next fiscal year, and annually for the following nine fiscal years, of existing:

(A) obligations of instrumentalities of the State for which the State has a contingent or limited liability;

(B) any other long-term debt of instrumentalities of the State not secured by the full faith and credit of the State, or for which the General Assembly is permitted to replenish reserve funds; and

(C) to the maximum extent obtainable, all long-term debt of municipal governments in Vermont that is secured by general tax or user fee revenues.

(6) The impact of capital spending upon the economic conditions and outlook for the State.

(7) The cost-benefit of various levels of debt financing, types of debt, and maturity schedules.

(8) Any projections of capital needs authorized or prepared by the Agency of Transportation, the Joint Fiscal Office, or other agencies or departments.

(9) Any other factor that is relevant to:

(A) the ability of the State to meet its projected debt service requirements for the next five fiscal years; or

(B) the interest rate to be borne by the credit rating on, or other factors affecting the marketability of State bonds.

(10) The effect of authorizations of new State debt on each of the considerations of this section.

(11) The capital asset depreciation ratio reflecting unfunded capital maintenance costs.

* * *

Sec. E.133 VERMONT STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING BUDGET, SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) Of the $3,288,093 appropriated in Sec. B.133 of this act, $2,247,471 constitutes the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and $1,040,622 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System.

Sec. E.134 VERMONT MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING BUDGET; SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) Of the $1,901,020 appropriated in Sec. B.134 of this act, $1,494,924 constitutes the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and $406,096 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System.

Sec. E.134.1 [Deleted.]

Sec. E.134.2 [Deleted.]

Sec. E.139 GRAND LIST LITIGATION ASSISTANCE

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.139 of this act, $9,000 shall be transferred to the Attorney General and $70,000 shall be transferred to the Department of Taxes' Division of Property Valuation and Review and used with any remaining funds from the amount previously transferred for final payment of expenses incurred by the Department or towns in defense of grand list appeals regarding the reappraisals of the hydroelectric plants and other expenses incurred to undertake utility property appraisals in Vermont.

Sec. E.142 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

(a) This appropriation is for State payments in lieu of property taxes under 32 V.S.A. chapter 123, subchapter 4, and the payments shall be calculated in addition to and without regard to the appropriations for correctional facilities elsewhere in this act. Payments in lieu of taxes under this section shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.142.1 32 V.S.A. § 3709 is amended to read:

§ 3709. PILOT SPECIAL FUND

(a) There is hereby established a PILOT Special Fund consisting of local option tax revenues paid to the Treasurer pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138. This Fund shall be managed by the Commissioner of Taxes pursuant to chapter 7, subchapter 5 of this title. Notwithstanding subdivision 588(3) of this title, all interest earned on the Fund shall be retained in the Fund for use in meeting future obligations. The Fund shall be exclusively for payments required under chapter 123, ~~subchapter~~ subchapters 4 and 4C of this title, and for any additional State payments in lieu of taxes for correctional facilities ~~and to the City of Montpelier~~. The Commissioner of Finance and Management may draw warrants for disbursements from this Fund in anticipation of receipts.

* * *

Sec. E.142.2 32 V.S.A. chapter 123, subchapter 4C is added to read:

Subchapter 4C. Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program

§ 3710. MUNICIPAL GRAND LIST STABILIZATION PROGRAM

(a) There is established the Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program within the Department of Taxes to reimburse municipalities for municipal property taxes assessed under chapter 133 of this title for flood-prone properties acquired by a municipality pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 51 or a prior voluntary buyout program operated by the Division of Emergency Management.

(b) On or before September 1 of each year, the Commissioner of Public Safety shall certify to the Commissioner of Taxes the properties eligible for the Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program and shall submit any other information required by the Commissioner of Taxes. To be eligible for the Program under this subchapter, a municipality must have acquired an eligible property on or after July 1, 2023 and preserved the property as open space with a deed restriction or covenant prohibiting development of the property. The Commissioner of Public Safety shall first certify properties to the Commissioner of Taxes pursuant to this subsection on or before September 1, 2025.

(c) Upon notification by the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Commissioner of Taxes shall certify the payment amounts and make an annual payment to each municipality for each eligible property to compensate for the loss of municipal property tax. The payment shall be calculated using the grand list value of the acquired property for the year during which the property was either damaged by flooding or identified as flood-prone by the Commissioner of Public Safety, multiplied by the municipal tax rate, including any submunicipal tax rates, in effect each year. This payment shall be made on or before January 1 of each year for five years.

(d) A property shall not be eligible for reimbursement payments for more than 10 years. The Commissioner shall make an annual payment for the full amount calculated under subsection (c) of this section for five years. After a municipality has received payments for an eligible property for five consecutive years, the Commissioner shall make an annual payment to the municipality for any subsequent year of eligibility in an amount equal to one-half of the amount calculated under subsection (c) of this section.

(e) Payment under this section shall be calculated and issued from the PILOT Special Fund under section 3709 of this title only after all other grants under subchapter 4 of this chapter are calculated and issued. If the PILOT Special Fund balance is insufficient to pay the full amount of all payments

authorized under this subchapter, then payments calculated under this section and due to each municipality for each property shall be reduced proportionately.

Sec. E.142.3 20 V.S.A. § 51 is added to read:

§ 51. FLOOD-PRONE PROPERTIES; ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Division of Emergency Management and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall establish and maintain the Voluntary Buyout Program for flood-prone properties. The Program shall allow a municipality, at the request of the owner of a flood-prone property, to apply for funding to cover the purchase price of the property. The purchase price shall be the full fair market value of the flood-prone property. The municipality shall maintain the acquired property as open space with a deed restriction or covenant prohibiting development of the property.

Sec. E.144 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES; CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

(a) Payments in lieu of taxes under this section shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.200 ATTORNEY GENERAL

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud and Residential Abuse Unit, is authorized to retain, subject to appropriation, one-half of the State share of any recoveries from Medicaid fraud settlements, excluding interest, that exceed the State share of restitution to the Medicaid Program. All such designated additional recoveries retained shall be used to finance Medicaid Fraud and Residential Abuse Unit activities.

(b) Of the revenue available to the Attorney General under 9 V.S.A. § 2458(b)(4), $1,802,200 is appropriated in Sec. B.200 of this act.

Sec. E.200.1 9 V.S.A. § 2473 is amended to read:

§ 2473. NOTICE OF SOLICITATION

* * *

(f)(1) For each calendar year in which a paid fundraiser solicits in this State on behalf of a charitable organization, the paid fundraiser shall pay a registration fee of ~~$500.00~~ $675 to the Attorney General ~~no~~ not later than ~~ten~~ 10 days prior to its first solicitation in this State.

(2) Each notice of solicitation filed in accordance with this section shall be accompanied by a fee of ~~$200.00~~ $270. In the case of a campaign lasting

more than 12 months, an additional ~~$200.00~~ $270 fee shall be paid annually on or before the date of the anniversary of the commencement of the campaign.

(3) Fees paid under this subsection shall be deposited in a special fund managed pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5~~,~~ and shall be available to the Attorney General for the costs of administering sections 2471–2479 of this title.

Sec. E.200.2 18 V.S.A. § 4632 is amended to read:

§ 4632. DISCLOSURE OF ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES AND GIFTS BY MANUFACTURERS OF PRESCRIBED PRODUCTS

* * *

(b)(1) Annually on or before April 1, the Office of the Attorney General shall collect a ~~$500.00~~ $765 fee from each manufacturer of prescribed products filing annual disclosures of expenditures greater than zero described in subsection (a) of this section.

(2) Fees collected under this section shall fund collection and analysis of information on activities related to the marketing of prescribed products under section 4631a of this title and under this section. The fees shall be collected in a special fund assigned to the Office.

* * *

Sec. E.208 PUBLIC SAFETY; ADMINISTRATION

(a) The Commissioner of Public Safety is authorized to enter into a performance-based contract with the Essex County Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement service activities agreed upon by both the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Sheriff.

Sec. E.208.1 PUBLIC SAFETY; CAPITAL PLAN

(a) As part of its fiscal year 2027 budget presentation, the Department of Public Safety shall submit a capital plan for the replacement of firearms and mobile and portable radio equipment to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations.

Sec. E.208.2 VERMONT COMMUNITY RADIO GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Findings. The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Vermont's seven active community radio stations currently serve over 200,000 Vermonters, many in rural and underserved areas.

(2) Community radio stations have consistently provided critical information during emergencies, including Tropical Storm Irene, recent severe flooding, and other natural disasters.

(3) These stations operate with small budgets, primarily relying on volunteer staff and listener donations, and are ineligible for federal funding through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting due to their size.

(4) Upcoming FCC-approved stations in Bristol, Richmond-Underhill-Jericho, and Ludlow will expand coverage to nearly all Vermont counties, increasing statewide accessibility to vital community radio services.

(5) Investment in these stations strengthens Vermont's public safety network and promotes civic engagement by providing local, hyper-focused content that commercial and statewide media cannot replicate.

(b) Intent. The intent of this section is to ensure Vermont's community radio stations remain resilient and prepared to serve as lifelines during emergencies while fostering local engagement and preserving Vermont's unique community fabric.

(c) Grant program.

(1) The Vermont Community Radio Grant Program is established to provide one-time funding to community radio stations for the purpose of:

(A) upgrading equipment and infrastructure necessary for reliable emergency broadcasting;

(B) procuring and installing backup generators; and

(C) enhancing operational sustainability through software improvements and technical training.

(2) The Program shall be administered by the Commissioner of Public Safety or designee in collaboration with the Vermont Association of Broadcasters.

(3) Grants shall be allocated as follows:

(A) up to $25,000 per station for seven active community radio stations; and

(B) up to $10,000 per station for three upcoming stations currently under construction.

(4) To be eligible for a grant under the Program, an applicant shall:

(A) be a nonprofit, noncommercial community radio station licensed in Vermont;

(B) demonstrate a history of providing emergency broadcasting services or show the capacity to provide those services upon funding; and

(C) submit a detailed implementation plan for the proposed use of grant funding.

(d) Report. On or before June 30, 2026, a community radio station that receives a grant under the Program shall provide to the Commissioner of Public Safety a report detailing the:

(1) use of grant funds, including itemized expenses;

(2) improvements achieved in emergency readiness and operational capacity; and

(3) impact on community service and engagement.

Sec. E.209 PUBLIC SAFETY; STATE POLICE

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209, $35,000 shall be available to the Southern Vermont Wilderness Search and Rescue Team, which is composed of the State Police, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, county sheriffs, and local law enforcement personnel in Bennington, Windham, and Windsor Counties, for snowmobile enforcement.

(b) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209 of this act, $405,000 is allocated for grants in support of the Drug Task Force. Of this amount, $190,000 shall be used by the Vermont Drug Task Force to fund three town task force officers. These town task force officers shall be dedicated to enforcement efforts with respect to both regulated drugs as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4201(29) and the diversion of legal prescription drugs. Any unobligated funds may be allocated by the Commissioner to fund the work of the Drug Task Force or be carried forward.

(c) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209 of this act, $2,100,000 is allocated exclusively for the purchase, outfitting, assignment, and disposal of State Police vehicles.

Sec. E.212 PUBLIC SAFETY; FIRE SAFETY

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.212 of this act, $55,000 shall be granted to the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the purpose of designing dry hydrants.

Sec. E.215 MILITARY; ADMINISTRATION

(a) The amount of $1,319,834 shall be disbursed to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for the National Guard Tuition Benefit Program established in 16 V.S.A. § 2857.

Sec. E.219 MILITARY; VETERANS' AFFAIRS

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.219 of this act, $1,000 shall be used for continuation of the Vermont Medal Program; $2,000 shall be used for the expenses of the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council; $7,500 shall be used for the Veterans' Day parade; and $10,000 shall be granted to the American Legion for the Boys' State and Girls' State programs.

Sec. E.232 SECRETARY OF STATE; VERMONT ACCESS NETWORK BUDGET

(a) The Secretary of State shall grant the $1,350,000 General Fund appropriation, provided in Section B.232 of this act, to the Vermont Access Network to maintain current operations and programming.

Sec. E.232.1 SECRETARY OF STATE; LOCAL CIVIC JOURNALISM AWARDS

(a) As part of its civic engagement and education activities, the Office of the Secretary of State shall, in collaboration with the University of Vermont Center for Community News, make cash awards to local civic journalism organizations or businesses with funds appropriated to it in Sec. B.1100(aa)(1) of this act. The Office of the Secretary of State shall, in collaboration with the University of Vermont Center for Community News, establish award criteria and assemble a panel of three to five journalists, academics, and industry veterans who neither work for eligible organizations nor are eligible to receive awards themselves to determine award recipients. Awards shall be made in amounts between $1,000 and $10,000.

Sec. E.236.1 LIQUOR AND LOTTERY; APPROPRIATION; BUSINESS -TO-BUSINESS WEBSITE

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.236.1 of this act, $1,820,000 Enterprise Fund shall be used for the business-to-business website design and implementation to improve the ordering and payment for on-premise licensees.

Sec. E.300 FUNDING FOR THE OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE, VERMONT LEGAL AID

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.300 of this act:

(1) $2,000,406 shall be used for the contract with the Office of the Health Care Advocate;

(2) $1,717,994 for Vermont Legal Aid services, including the Poverty Law Project and mental health services; and

(3) $650,000 is for the purposes of maintaining current Vermont Legal Aid program capacity and addressing increased requests for services, including eviction prevention and protection from foreclosure and consumer debt.

Sec. E.300.1 REPORT; RESIDENTIAL BEDS FOR YOUTH

(a) As part of their fiscal year 2027 budget presentations to the General Assembly, the Agency of Human Services and departments within the Agency of Human Services shall provide coordinated information regarding:

(1) the basis for the projected number of beds per facility to create 41 new beds for youth in high-end facilities under the Departments for Children and Families, of Mental Health, and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living for inpatient, psychiatric residential, stabilization, and treatment services, including projected reductions in out-of-state placements;

(2) the status of capacity at lower level residential and crisis facilities and their capabilities in preventing higher level needs if investments would enable full capacity use; and

(3) a projected five-year operating budget across the Agency and departments for full utilization of the new high-end system components as currently planned, including:

(A) costs to the Department of Vermont Health Access' budget; and

(B) how these costs will impact the overall budgets for lower-level, community-based, prevention, and other services needed to prevent escalation to higher levels of care.

Sec. E.300.2 EVALUATION OF OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES AT COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE PROVIDERS; REPORT

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall evaluate the organizational and funding structures of certain community-based service providers to identify opportunities for coordinating and consolidating functions across providers in order to achieve operational efficiencies and cost savings.

(1) The community-based service providers that the Agency shall evaluate pursuant to this section may include area agencies on aging, community action agencies, designated and specialized service agencies, and parent-child centers.

(2) The functions that the Agency considers for potential coordination or consolidation may include human resources responsibilities, business processes, information technology systems, contracting and other legal services, and other functions that the Agency finds are being carried out by or

on behalf of many community-based service providers in this State and that may be able to be performed more efficiently and cost-effectively across multiple service providers.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Agency of Human Services shall report to the House Committees on Appropriations, Health Care, and Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare with the results of its evaluation and its findings and recommendations for ways in which specific functions may be coordinated or consolidated across community-based service providers in order to achieve operational efficiencies and cost savings.

Sec. E.300.3 SETTLEMENT FUNDS; PRIMARY CARE; LEGISLATIVE INTENT; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2026, the Agency of Human Services shall report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations regarding the funding mechanism used to distribute $11,000,000 from the University of Vermont Medical Center to non-hospital primary care providers pursuant to the Settlement Agreement entered into by the University of Vermont Medical Center, Inc., University of Vermont Health Network, Inc., and the Green Mountain Care Board in April 2025 and regarding the timing of the fund distribution.

(b) Following receipt of the report set forth in subsection (a) of this section, it is the intent of the General Assembly to identify funds appropriated by this act to address shortfalls in primary care investments in fiscal year 2026 that may be duplicated by the distribution of settlement funds described in subsection (a) of this section and that can be redirected through the fiscal year 2026 budget adjustment act to provide additional supports to providers of primary care, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and other health care services in this State.

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE; GLOBAL COMMITMENT

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall use the funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act for payment required under the intergovernmental agreement between the Agency of Human Services and the managed care entity, the Department of Vermont Health Access, as provided for in the Global Commitment for Health Waiver approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of $27,887,533 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds as follows:

(1) $24,714,000 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with $35,286,000 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of $60,000,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund established by 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) $3,173,533 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to $4,997,210 is transferred from the Agency of Human Services Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act.

Sec. E.301.1 GLOBAL COMMITMENT APPROPRIATIONS; TRANSFER; REPORT

(a) To facilitate fiscal year 2026 closeout, the Secretary of Human Services, with the approval of the Secretary of Administration, may make transfers among the appropriations authorized for Medicaid and Medicaid waiver program expenses, including Global Commitment appropriations outside the Agency of Human Services. At least three business days prior to any transfer, the Agency of Human Services shall submit to the Joint Fiscal Office a proposal of transfers to be made pursuant to this section. A final report on all transfers made under this section shall be made to the Joint Fiscal Committee for review at the Committee's September 2026 meeting. The purpose of this section is to provide the Agency with limited authority to modify the appropriations to comply with the terms and conditions of the Global Commitment section 1115 demonstration approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

Sec. E.301.2 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 72a, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.105, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.301.2, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.300.2, is further amended to read:

Sec. 72a. MEDICAID HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES (HCBS) PLAN

* * *

(f) The Global Commitment Fund appropriated in subsection (e) of this section obligated in fiscal years 2023, 2024, ~~and~~ 2025, and 2026 for the purposes of bringing HCBS plan spending authority forward into fiscal ~~year~~ years 2024, ~~and fiscal year~~ 2025, and 2026, respectively. The funds appropriated in subsections (b), (c), and (e) of this section may be transferred on a net-neutral basis in fiscal years 2023, 2024, ~~and~~ 2025, and 2026 in the same manner as the Global Commitment appropriations in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.301. The Agency shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee in September 2023, September 2024, ~~and~~ September 2025, and September 2026, respectively, on transfers of appropriations made and final amounts expended by each department in fiscal years 2023, 2024, ~~and~~ 2025, and 2026, respectively, and any obligated funds carried forward to be expended in fiscal ~~year~~ years 2024, ~~and fiscal year~~ 2025, and 2026, respectively.

Sec. E.301.3 GLOBAL COMMITMENT FUND; HOSPITAL DIRECTED PAYMENT PROGRAM

(a) The Agency of Human Services may seek a State Directed Payment model with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This payment model will be for a Hospital Directed Payment program. Upon approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Agency of Human Services' Department of Vermont Health Access, the University of Vermont, and the University of Vermont Medical Center may enter into a mutual agreement on the implementation of the Hospital Directed Payment program.

(b) If the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approves a Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program within the State's Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver in fiscal year 2026 while the General Assembly is not in session, then, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511 and notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the Department of Finance and Management may approve the Agency of Human Services' allocation and expenditure of excess receipts for Global Commitment Fund spending up to the amount approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program.

(c) In fiscal year 2026, the Agency of Human Services may, to the extent permitted under federal law, to reasonably manage the timing of federal fiscal year 2026 Disproportionate Share Hospital payments to hospitals due to the impact the Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program payments received in fiscal year 2026 may have on hospitals' eligibility for Disproportionate Share Hospital payments.

(d) The Agency of Human Services shall report on the status of the Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program, the expenditure of excess

receipts, and the status of the program's potential impacts on Disproportionate Share Hospital payments at the September and November 2025 meetings of the Joint Fiscal Committee.

Sec. E.301.4 FISCAL YEAR 2026 RATE INCREASES; EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) The appropriations made in Secs. B.301, B.307, B.313, B.314, B.330, B.333, B.334, and B.334.1 of this act for rate increases for community providers shall take effect on November 1, 2025.

(b) The appropriation made in Sec. B.307 of this act for rate increases for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics shall take effect on November 1, 2025.

Sec. E.306 NURSING HOMES; SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES; EXTRAORDINARY FINANCIAL RELIEF

(a) On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access' Division of Rate Setting shall submit a report to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare containing proactive measures and targeted interventions that may be used to reduce the use and amount of future extraordinary financial relief for nursing homes.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Departments of Vermont Health Access and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living shall present to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare on the following:

(1) the number and name of all nursing homes in the State, including:

(A) whether a nursing home is a for-profit or nonprofit organization and the owner's contact information;

(B) the payer mix of each nursing home;

(C) the ratio of employees versus contracted traveler positions at each nursing home and the specific job titles of the contracted traveler positions; and

(D) the average length of patient stay at each nursing home;

(2) the number of skilled nursing facilities seeking extraordinary financial relief in fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025; and

(3) the number of skilled nursing facilities receiving extraordinary financial relief in fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025, including:

(A) the name of each skilled nursing facility;

(B) whether a skilled nursing facility receiving extraordinary financial relief is a for-profit or nonprofit organization;

(C) the amount of extraordinary financial relief received by each skilled nursing facility;

(D) the reason extraordinary financial relief was sought by each skilled nursing facility; and

(E) the reason extraordinary financial relief was awarded to each skilled nursing facility.

Sec. E.306.1 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.306.4 is amended to read:

Sec. E.306.4 MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAMS; INCOME ELIGIBILITY

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall make the following changes to the Medicare Savings Programs:

(1) increase the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program income threshold to ~~145~~ 150 percent of the federal poverty level; and

(2) increase the Qualifying Individual Program income threshold to the maximum percent of the federal poverty level allowed under federal law based on the increase to the income threshold for the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

Sec. E.306.2 OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR THE VERMONT HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGE

(a) The Department of Vermont Health Access shall maintain open enrollment for the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange from November 1, 2025 through January 15, 2026. The Department of Vermont Health Access and registered carriers shall allow a period of one calendar month beyond the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' deadline of December 15, 2025 for 2026 plan selection in order to encourage enrollment and to allow enrollees to make plan selection changes.

Sec. E.306.3 33 V.S.A. § 1811 is amended to read:

§ 1811. HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL EMPLOYERS

* * *

(m) A registered carrier shall allow for the enrollment through the Exchange of an individual, and of any individual who is eligible for coverage

under the terms of the health benefit plan because of a relationship to the individual, who is eligible for advance payments of federal premium tax credits under 26 U.S.C. § 36B, and whose household income is expected to be no greater than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Enrollment may take place at any time during the benefit year.

Sec. E.307 33 V.S.A. § 1902 is amended to read:

§ 1902. QUALIFICATION FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

* * *

(b) Workers with disabilities whose income is less than 250 percent of the federal poverty level shall be eligible for Medicaid. The income also must not exceed the Medicaid protected income level for one or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payment level for two, whichever is higher, after disregarding the earnings of the working individual with disabilities; Social Security disability insurance benefits, including Social Security retirement benefits converted automatically from Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), if applicable; any veteran's disability benefits; and, if the working individual with disabilities is married, all income of the spouse. ~~Earnings of the working individual with disabilities shall be documented by evidence of Federal Insurance Contributions Act tax payments, Self-Employment Contributions Act tax payments, or a written business plan approved and supported by a third-party investor or funding source.~~ Vermont Medicaid shall verify earnings of the working individual with disabilities. The Agency shall adopt rules governing the verification of earned income of the working individual with disabilities. The resource limit for this program shall be $10,000~~.00~~ for an individual and $15,000~~.00~~ for a couple at the time of enrollment in the program. Assets attributable to earnings made after enrollment in the program shall be disregarded.

Sec. E.307.1 MEDICAID PROGRAM EMERGENCY RULEMAKING

(a) The Agency of Human Services may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to amend Vermont's rules regarding the Medicaid program and the operation of the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange in response to state and federal law. The Agency may use the emergency rules process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844, but only in the event that new state or federal law require Vermont to amend or adopt its rules in a time frame that cannot be accomplished under the traditional rulemaking process. An emergency rule adopted under these exigent circumstances shall be deemed to meet the standard for the adoption of emergency rules required pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844(a).

Sec. E.311 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 109, Sec. 4 is amended to read:

Sec. 4. ~~SUNSET OF STATE YOUTH COUNCIL~~

~~3 V.S.A. § 3097 (State Youth Council) is repealed on February 1, 2026.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. E.312 HEALTH; PUBLIC HEALTH

(a) HIV/AIDS funding:

(1) In fiscal year 2026 and as provided in this section, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of $475,000 in AIDS Medication Rebates special funds to the Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations for client-based support services. The Department of Health AIDS Program shall meet at least quarterly with the Community Advisory Group with current information and data relating to service initiatives. The funds shall be allocated according to a Request for Proposal process.

(2) In fiscal year 2026, and as provided by this section, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of $295,000 from the General Fund for HIV and Harm Reduction Services to the following organizations:

(A) Vermont CARES: $140,000;

(B) AIDS Project of Southern Vermont: $100,000; and

(C) HIV/HCV Resource Center: $55,000.

(3) Ryan White Title II funds for AIDS services and the Vermont Medication Assistance Program shall be distributed in accordance with federal guidelines. The federal guidelines shall not apply to programs or services funded solely by State General Fund.

(A) The Secretary of Human Services shall immediately notify the Joint Fiscal Committee if at any time there are insufficient funds in Vermont Medication Assistance Program to assist all eligible individuals. The Secretary shall work in collaboration with persons living with HIV/AIDS to develop a plan to continue access to Vermont Medication Assistance Program medications until such time as the General Assembly can take action.

(B) As provided in this section, the Secretary of Human Services shall work in collaboration with the Vermont Medication Assistance Program Advisory Committee, which shall be composed of not less than 50 percent of members who are living with HIV/AIDS. If a modification to the program's eligibility requirements or benefit coverage is considered, the Committee shall make recommendations regarding the program's formulary of approved medication, related laboratory testing, nutritional supplements, and eligibility for the program.

(4) In fiscal year 2026, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of $400,000 General Fund for HIV and Harm Reduction Services not later than September 1, 2025. The method by which these prevention funds are distributed shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Department of Health and the Vermont AIDS service organizations and other Vermont HIV/AIDS prevention providers.

(5) In fiscal year 2026, the Department of Health shall not reduce any grants to the Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations or syringe service programs from funds appropriated for HIV/AIDS services to levels below those in fiscal year 2025 without receiving prior approval from the Joint Fiscal Committee.

Sec. E.312.1 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 56, is further amended to read:

Sec. E.100 EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 75 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 for the following:

* * *

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

* * *

(F) Office of the State Treasurer:

(i) one Director – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division; and

(ii) one Communications and Outreach Manager – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division;

* * *

(d) The establishment of 23 new exempt limited service positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 as follows:

* * *

(2) ~~Agency of Administration~~ Department of Health – Health Equity Advisory Commission:

(A) one Private Secretary.

* * *

Sec. E.312.2 3 V.S.A. § 5003 is amended to read:

§ 5003. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RACIAL EQUITY

(a) The Executive Director of Racial Equity (Director) shall work with the agencies and departments to implement a program of continuing coordination and improvement of activities in State government in order to combat systemic racial disparities and measure progress toward fair and impartial governance, including:

(1) overseeing a comprehensive organizational review to identify systemic racism in each of the three branches of State government and inventory systems in place that engender racial disparities;

(2) managing and overseeing the statewide collection of race-based data to determine the nature and scope of racial discrimination within all systems of State government; and

(3) developing a model fairness and diversity policy and reviewing and making recommendations regarding the fairness and diversity policies held by all State government systems~~; and~~

~~(4) temporarily overseeing the establishment of the Health Equity Advisory Commission established pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 252 until the Office of Health Equity is established~~.

* * *

Sec. E.312.3 18 V.S.A. § 252 is amended to read:

§ 252. HEALTH EQUITY ADVISORY COMMISSION

* * *

(c) Powers and duties. The Advisory Commission shall:

(1) provide guidance on the development of the Office of Health Equity~~,~~ ~~which shall be established based on the Advisory Commission's recommendations not later than January 1, 2023~~, including on:

(A) the structure, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of the Office;

(B) whether the Office shall be independent and, if not, in which State agency or department it shall be situated;

(C) how the Office shall be staffed;

(D) the populations served and specific issues addressed by the Office; and

(E) the duties of the Office, including how grant funds shall be managed and distributed; ~~and~~

~~(F) the time frame and necessary steps to establish the Office;~~

(2) provide advice and make recommendations to the Office of Health Equity, Commissioner, and General Assembly once established, including input on:

(A) any rules or policies proposed by the Office or Department of Health;

(B) the awarding of grants and the development of programs and services;

(C) the needs, priorities, programs, and policies relating to the health of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities; and

(D) any other issue on which the Office of Health Equity, Department of Health, or General Assembly requests assistance from the Advisory Commission;

(3) review, monitor, and advise all State agencies regarding the impact of current and emerging State policies, procedures, practices, laws, and rules on the health of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities;

(4) identify and examine the limitations and problems associated with existing laws, rules, programs, and services related to the health status of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities;

(5) advise the Department of Health and the General Assembly on any funding decisions relating to eliminating health disparities and promoting health equity, including the distribution of federal monies related to COVID-19;

(6) to the extent funds are available for the purpose, distribute grants that stimulate the development of community-based and neighborhood-based projects that will improve the health outcomes of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities; and

(7) advise the General Assembly on efforts to improve cultural competency, cultural humility, and antiracism in the health care system through training and continuing education requirements for health care providers and other clinical professionals.

(d) Assistance. The Advisory Commission shall have the administrative, legal, and technical assistance of the ~~Agency of Administration at the request of the Executive Director of Racial Equity~~ Department of Health.

* * *

(f) Meetings.

(1) ~~The Executive Director of Racial Equity or designee shall call the first meeting of the Advisory Commission to occur on or before September 1, 2021.~~

~~(2)~~ The Advisory Commission shall select a chair and vice chair at its first meeting and annually thereafter.

~~(3)~~(2) The Advisory Commission shall adopt procedures to govern its proceedings, including voting procedures and how the staggered terms shall be apportioned among members.

~~(4)~~(3) All meetings of the Advisory Commission and any subcommittees of the Advisory Commission shall be open to the public with opportunities for public comment provided on a regular basis.

* * *

(h) Compensation and reimbursement. Appointed members of the Advisory Commission shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for meetings ~~as deemed appropriate by the Advisory Commission within the appropriation provided~~. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the ~~Agency of Administration~~ Department of Health.

Sec. E.312.4 18 V.S.A. § 254 is added to read:

§ 254. OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

(a) There is established the Office of Health Equity within the Department of Health for the purpose of eliminating avoidable and unjust disparities in health among Vermonters. The Office shall use a systemic and comprehensive approach that addresses those social, economic, and environmental factors that influence health outcomes.

(b) The Office of Health Equity shall be directed by an Executive Director, an individual who shall be qualified by reason of education, expertise, and experience and who may have a professional degree in public health, social or environmental justice, or a related field. The Executive Director shall serve on a full-time basis and shall be exempt from classified service.

Sec. E.312.5 18 V.S.A. § 4812 is added to read:

§ 4812. SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION SPECIAL FUND

(a) The Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund is established and managed by the Vermont Department of Health in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5.

(b) Thirty percent of the revenues raised by the cannabis excise tax imposed pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 7902, not to exceed $10,000,000 per fiscal year, shall be deposited into this fund for substance misuse prevention costs.

(c) Any unencumbered and unexpended spending authority reverted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 703 may be immediately re-established the following fiscal year in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 511.

(d) Notwithstanding any provisions of 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5 to the contrary, all interest earned by this fund shall be retained by this fund.

Sec. E.312.6 SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION FUNDING; REPEAL

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 7909 (substance misuse prevention funding) is repealed.

Sec. E.312.7 PREVENTION EXPENDITURES; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2026, the Department of Health shall, in consultation with other departments of the Agency of Human Services, provide a report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare with information on total or estimated expenditures made by the State on substance use prevention efforts in fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026.

(1) The report shall include information on the following:

(A) all State and federal funds, including special funds, monies have been appropriated from or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts;

(B) the total amounts appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts;

(C) the recipients of appropriations made from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts or the beneficiaries of grants or subgrants and how monies have been used both according to policy priorities and expenditure category;

(D) the amount of monies appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts that have been obligated;

(E) the amount of monies appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts that remain unencumbered or unexpended; and

(F) the extent to which monies appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts are subject to reversion or any federal obligation deadlines.

Sec. E.316 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.316 is amended to read:

Sec. E.316 STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP; FACILITY PLANNING FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH

(a) The Department for Children and Families, in consultation with the Department of Buildings and General Services, shall assemble a stakeholder working group to provide regular input on the planning, design, development, and implementation of the temporary stabilization facility for youth and on the development of a long-term plan for the high-end system of care.

* * *

(f) The stakeholder working group shall cease to exist on June 30, ~~2025~~ 2027.

Sec. E.316.1 33 V.S.A. § 125 is added to read:

§ 125. BUDGETARY INFLATION; DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Annually, as part of its budget presentation, the Department shall inform the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare the cost of adding a one percent increase over the previous fiscal year's funding for community-contracted direct service providers.

Sec. E.316.2 SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAMS; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2026, the Commissioner for Children and Families and the Chief Superior Judge shall jointly submit a report to the House Committees on Human Services and on Judiciary and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Judiciary containing a proposal for funding supervised visitation programs. The proposal shall address and recommend sustainable funding for statewide coordination, equitable funding among supervised visitation locations, and access for residents of counties that do not currently provide supervised visitation services. The Commissioner and Chief Superior Judge shall consult the Center for Crime Victim Services, the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and supervised visitation providers in the preparation of the report.

Sec. E.317 33 V.S.A. § 4922 is amended to read:

§ 4922. RULEMAKING

(a) On or before September 1, ~~2025~~ 2026, the Commissioner shall file proposed rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 implementing the provisions of this subchapter to become effective on April 1, ~~2026~~ 2027. These shall include:

(1) rules setting forth criteria for determining whether to conduct an assessment or an investigation;

(2) rules setting out procedures for assessment and service delivery;

(3) rules outlining procedures for investigations;

(4) rules for conducting the administrative review conference;

(5) rules regarding access to and maintenance of Department records of investigations, assessments, reviews, and responses;

(6) rules regarding the tiered Registry as required by section 4916 of this title;

(7) rules requiring notice and appeal procedures for alternatives to substantiation; and

(8) rules implementing subsections 4916(c) and (e) of this title.

(b) The rules shall strike an appropriate balance between protecting children and respecting the rights of a parent or guardian, including a parent or guardian with disabilities, and shall recognize that persons with a disability can be successful parents. The rules shall include the possible use of adaptive equipment and supports.

~~(c) These rules shall be adopted no later than July 1, 2009.~~

Sec. E.318 33 V.S.A. § 3505 is amended to read:

§ 3505. SUPPLEMENTAL CHILD CARE GRANTS

(a)(1) The Commissioner for Children and Families may ~~reserve~~ utilize up to one-half of one percent of ~~the child care family assistance program~~ funds appropriated for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program in a fiscal year for extraordinary financial relief to assist child care programs that are at risk of closing due to financial hardship. The Commissioner shall develop guidelines for providing assistance and shall prioritize extraordinary financial relief to child care programs in areas of the State with high poverty and low access to high quality child care. If the Commissioner determines a child care program is at risk of closure because its operations are not fiscally sustainable, ~~he or she~~ they may provide assistance to transition children served by the child care operator in an orderly fashion and to help secure other child care opportunities

for children served by the program in an effort to minimize the disruption of services. The Commissioner has the authority to request tax returns and other financial documents to verify the financial hardship and ability to sustain operations.

* * *

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY HOUSING

(a) To the extent emergency housing is available and within the funds appropriated, the Commissioner for Children and Families shall ensure that General Assistance Emergency Housing is provided in fiscal year 2026 to households that attest to lack of a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and have a member who:

(1) is 65 years of age or older;

(2) has a disability that can be documented by:

(A) receipt of Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance; or

(B) a form developed by the Department as a means of documenting a qualifying disability or health condition that requires:

(i) the applicant's name, date of birth, and the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number or other identifying number;

(ii) a description of the applicant's disability or health condition;

(iii) a description of the risk posed to the applicant's health, safety, or welfare if temporary emergency housing is not authorized pursuant to this section; and

(iv) a certification of a health care provider, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9481, that includes the provider's credentials, credential number, address, and phone number;

(3) is a child 19 years of age or under;

(4) is pregnant;

(5) has experienced the death of a spouse, domestic partner, or minor child that caused the household to lose its housing;

(6) has experienced a natural disaster, such as a flood, fire, or hurricane;

(7) is under a court-ordered eviction or constructive eviction due to circumstances over which the household has no control; or

(8) is experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, hate violence, or other dangerous or life-

threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a household member that caused the household to lose its housing.

(b)(1) General Assistance Emergency Housing shall be provided in a community-based shelter whenever possible. If there is inadequate community-based shelter space available within the Agency of Human Services district in which the household presents itself, the household shall be provided emergency housing in a hotel or motel within the district, if available, until adequate community-based shelter space becomes available in the district. The utilization of hotel and motel rooms pursuant to this subdivision shall be capped at 1,100 rooms per night between July 1, 2025 through November 30, 2025 and between April 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026.

(2) The maximum number of days that an eligible household receives emergency housing in a hotel or motel under this section, per 12-month period, shall not exceed 80 days.

(3) The Department shall provide emergency winter housing to households meeting the eligibility criteria in subsection (a) of this section between December 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026. Emergency housing in a hotel or motel provided pursuant to this subdivision shall not count toward the maximum days of eligibility per 12-month period provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(4)(A) Notwithstanding any rule or law to the contrary, the Department shall require all households applying for or receiving General Assistance Emergency Housing to engage in their own search for and accept any available alternative housing placements. All applicants and eligible households shall regularly provide information to the Department, not less frequently than monthly, about their efforts to secure an alternative housing placement. If the Department determines that a household, at the time of application or during the term of the household's authorization, has not made efforts to secure an alternative housing placement, or has access to an alternative housing placement, the Department shall deny the application or terminate the authorization at the end of the current authorization period.

(B) For purposes of this subdivision (4), "alternative housing placements" may include shelter beds and pods; placements with family or friends; permanent housing solutions, including tiny homes, manufactured homes, and apartments; residential treatment beds for physical health, long-term care, substance use, or mental health; nursing home beds; and recovery homes.

(c) Emergency housing provided pursuant to this section shall replace the catastrophic and noncatastrophic categories previously adopted by the Department in rule.

(d) Emergency housing required pursuant to this section may be provided through approved community-based shelters, new unit generation, open units, licensed hotels or motels, or other appropriate shelter space. The Department shall, when available, prioritize emergency housing at housing or shelter placements other than hotels or motels.

(e) Case management services provided by case managers employed by or under contract with the Agency of Human Services or reimbursed through an Agency-funded grant shall include assisting clients with finding appropriate housing.

(f) The Commissioner for Children and Families shall apply the General Assistance Emergency Housing rules approved by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules on March 13, 2025 for the administration of this section.

(g) On or before the last day of each month from July 2025 through June 2026, the Department for Children and Families, or other relevant agency or department, shall continue submitting a similar report to that due pursuant to 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 81, Sec. 6(b) to the Joint Fiscal Committee, House Committee on Human Services, and Senate Committee on Health and Welfare. Additionally, this report shall include the Department's monthly expenditure on General Assistance Emergency Housing.

(h) For emergency housing provided in a hotel or motel beginning on July 1, 2024 and thereafter, the Department for Children and Families shall not pay a hotel or motel establishment more than the hotel's lowest advertised room rate and not more than $80 a day per room to shelter a household experiencing homelessness. The Department for Children and Families may shelter a household in more than one hotel or motel room depending on the household's size and composition.

(i) The Department for Children and Families shall apply the following rules to participating hotels and motels:

(1) Section 2650.1 of the Department for Children and Families' General Assistance (CVR 13-170-260);

(2) Department of Health, Licensed Lodging Establishment Rule (CVR 13-140-023); and

(3) Department of Public Safety, Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code (CVR 28-070-001).

(j)(1) The Department for Children and Families may work with either a shelter provider or a community housing agency to enter into a full or partial facility lease or sales agreement with a hotel or motel provider. Any facility conversion under this section shall comply with the Office of Economic Opportunity's shelter standards.

(2) If the Department for Children and Families determines that a contractual agreement with a licensed hotel or motel operator to secure temporary emergency housing capacity is beneficial to improve the quality, cleanliness, or access to services for those households temporarily housed in the facility, the Department shall be authorized to enter into such an agreement in accordance with the per-room rate identified in subsection (h) of this section; provided, however, that in no event shall such an agreement cause a household to become unhoused. The Department for Children and Families may include provisions to address access to services or related needs within the contractual agreement.

(k) Of the amount appropriated to implement this section, not more than $500,000 shall be used for security costs.

(l) As used in this section:

(1) "Community-based shelter" means a shelter that meets the Vermont Housing Opportunity Grant Program's Standards of Provision of Assistance.

(2) "Household" means an individual and any dependents for whom the individual is legally responsible and who live in Vermont. "Household" includes individuals who reside together as one economic unit, including those who are married, parties to a civil union, or unmarried.

Sec. E.321.1 CONTRACTING FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

(a) In contracting with emergency shelter organizations for operations and services, the Department for Children and Families shall prioritize contracts with organizations that are in close proximity to the community served to ensure that an organization familiar with the specific needs of a community serve its population of unhoused residents.

Sec. E.324 EXPEDITED CRISIS FUEL ASSISTANCE

(a) The Commissioner for Children and Families or designee may authorize crisis fuel assistance to those income-eligible households that have applied for an expedited seasonal fuel benefit but have not yet received it if the benefit cannot be executed in time to prevent them from running out of fuel. The crisis fuel grants authorized pursuant to this section count toward the crisis

fuel grants allowed per household for the winter heating season pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 2609(b).

Sec. E.325 DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES; OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.325 of this act, $29,343,655 shall be used by the Department for Children and Families' Office of Economic Opportunity to issue grants to community agencies to assist individuals experiencing homelessness by preserving existing services, increasing services, or increasing resources available statewide. These funds may be granted alone or in conjunction with federal Emergency Solutions Grants funds. Grant decisions and the administration of funds shall be done in consultation with the two U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-recognized continuum of care programs.

Sec. E. 326 DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES; OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY; WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE

(a) Of the special fund appropriation in Sec. B.326 of this act, $750,000 is for the replacement and repair of home heating equipment.

Sec. E.329 33 V.S.A. § 506 is added to read:

§ 506. BUDGETARY INFLATION; DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Annually, as part of its budget presentation, the Department shall inform the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare the cost of adding a one percent increase over the previous fiscal year's funding for community-contracted direct service providers.

Sec. E.333 DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SERVICES; PAYMENT REFORM

(a) The Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living's payment reform process for developmental disability services shall not be implemented prior to July 1, 2026.

(b) Between July 1, 2025 and implementation of the payment reform process for developmental disability services, the Department shall align conflict-free case management with the existing payment model.

Sec. E.338 CORRECTIONS; CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

(a) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 3709(a), the special fund appropriation of $152,000 for the supplemental facility payments to Newport and Springfield shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.338.1 [Deleted.]

Sec. E.338.2 CORRECTIONS; TREATMENT-FOCUSED FACILITY

(a) The $250,000 General Fund appropriated to the Department of Corrections in Sec. B.1100(i)(1) of this act shall be used to retain a consultant and develop an implementation plan to transition the Northeast Correctional Complex or the Caledonia County Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility for incarcerated Vermonters.

(b) On or before December 1, 2025, the Department of Corrections shall submit a written report to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee concerning the consultant's findings and recommendations related to transitioning either the Northeast Correctional Complex or the Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility. The report shall contain the following:

(1) a detailed transition plan;

(2) expected outcomes and measures of success;

(3) an assessment of how transitioning either the Northeast Correctional Complex or Caledonia County Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility aligns with best practices for residential treatment programs; and

(4) input from the Department's current medical providers, including an analysis of how the program developed would impact any contract with the Department's third-party medical provider.

Sec. E.345 18 V.S.A. § 9374(h) is amended to read:

(h)(1)(A) Except as otherwise provided in subdivisions (1)(C) and (2) of this subsection (h), the expenses of the Board shall be borne as follows:

(i) 40.0 percent by the State from State monies;

(ii) ~~28.8~~ 36.0 percent by the hospitals;

(iii) ~~23.2~~ 24.0 percent by nonprofit hospital and medical service corporations licensed under 8 V.S.A. chapter 123 or 125, health insurance companies licensed under 8 V.S.A. chapter 101, and health maintenance organizations licensed under 8 V.S.A. chapter 139~~; and~~

~~(iv) 8.0 percent by accountable care organizations~~.

(B) Expenses under subdivision (A)(iii) of this subdivision (1) shall be allocated to persons licensed under Title 8 based on premiums paid for health care coverage, which for the purposes of this subdivision (1) shall include major medical, comprehensive medical, hospital or surgical coverage,

and comprehensive health care services plans, but shall not include long-term care, limited benefits, disability, credit or stop loss, or excess loss insurance coverage.

(C) ~~Expenses~~ Amounts assessed pursuant to the provisions of ~~section~~ sections 9441 and 9382 of this title shall not be assessed in accordance with the formula set forth in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (1).

(2) The Board may determine the scope of the incurred expenses to be allocated pursuant to the formula set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection if, in the Board's discretion, the expenses to be allocated are in the best interests of the regulated entities and of the State.

(3) If the amount of the proportional assessment to any entity calculated in accordance with the formula set forth in subdivision (1)(A) of this subsection would be less than $150~~.00~~, the Board shall assess the entity a minimum fee of $150~~.00~~. The Board shall apply the amounts collected based on the difference between each applicable entity's proportional assessment amount and $150~~.00~~ to reduce the total amount assessed to the regulated entities pursuant to subdivisions (1)(A)(ii) ~~(iv)~~(iii) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. E.500 EDUCATION; FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

(a) The Global Commitment appropriation in Sec. B.500 of this act shall be used for physician claims for determining medical necessity of Individualized Education Programs. These services are intended to increase access to quality health care for uninsured persons, underinsured persons, and Medicaid beneficiaries.

Sec. E.500.1 AGENCY OF EDUCATION; EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION FUNDING

(a) The $1,000,000 General Fund appropriated to the Agency of Education in Sec. B.500 of this act is to provide additional resources during the State's education transformation. Prior to the expenditure of these funds, the Agency shall submit a detailed, unambiguous plan of expenditures related to the transformation of the public education system to the Joint Fiscal Committee, which shall consult with the chairs of the House and Senate Committees on Education when reviewing the Agency's plan.

Sec. E.502 EDUCATION; SPECIAL EDUCATION: FORMULA GRANTS

(a) Of the appropriation authorized in Sec. B.502 of this act, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an amount not to exceed $5,236,200 shall be used by the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 as funding for 16 V.S.A. § 2967(b)(2)-(6). In distributing such funds, the

Secretary shall not be limited by the restrictions contained within 16 V.S.A. § 2969(c) and (d).

(b) Of the appropriation authorized in Sec. B.502 of this act, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an amount not to exceed $2,000,000 shall be used by the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 as funding for 16 V.S.A. § 2975. In distributing such funds, the Secretary shall not be limited by the restrictions contained within 16 V.S.A. § 2969(c) and (d).

Sec. E.503 EDUCATION; STATE-PLACED STUDENTS

(a) The Independence Place Program of ANEW Place shall be considered a 24-hour residential program for the purposes of reimbursement of education costs.

Sec. E.504 ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.504 of this act, $3,958,344 General Fund shall be granted to adult education and literacy providers, pursuant to the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program established in 16 V.S.A. § 945.

Sec. E.504.1 EDUCATION; FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, of the Education Fund appropriation in Sec. B.504.1 of this act, the amount of:

(1) $921,500 is available for dual enrollment programs notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 944(f)(2);

(2) $2,400,000 is available to support the Vermont Virtual High School;

(3) $400,000 is available for secondary school reform grants;

(4) $4,200,000 is available for Early College pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 947(b); and

(5) $2,638,896 is available for the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program.

(b) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.504 of this act, $921,500 from the General Fund is available for dual enrollment programs.

Sec. E.504.2 16 V.S.A. § 4011 is amended to read:

§ 4011. EDUCATION PAYMENTS

(a) Annually, the General Assembly shall appropriate funds to pay for statewide education spending and a portion of a base education amount for each adult education and secondary credential program student.

(b) For each fiscal year, the base education amount shall be $6,800~~.00~~, increased by the most recent New England Economic Project Cumulative Price

Index, as of November 15, for state and local government purchases of goods and services from fiscal year 2005 through the fiscal year for which the amount is being determined, plus an additional one-tenth of one percent.

* * *

(f) Annually, ~~the Secretary shall pay to a local adult education and literacy provider, as defined in section 942 of this title, that provides an adult education and secondary credential program~~ from funds appropriated for this subsection to the Agency in an amount equal to 26 percent of the base education amount for each student who completes the diagnostic portions of ~~the~~ an adult education and secondary credential program, based on an average of the previous two years~~; 40~~, the Secretary shall pay to a local adult education and literacy provider, as defined in section 942 of this title, that provides an adult education and secondary credential program an amount that shall be calculated pursuant to the funding formula contained in the State Board of Education adult education rules. Forty percent of the payment required under this subsection shall be from State funds appropriated from the Education Fund and 60 percent of the payment required under this subsection shall be from State funds appropriated from the General Fund.

* * *

Sec. E.504.3 ADULT EDUCATION; FUNDING; REPORT

(a) On or before December 1, 2025, the Agency of Administration and Agency of Education, in consultation with local adult education and literacy providers, shall jointly submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, and the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations with recommendations to modernize adult education funding to ensure funds are distributed equitably across all regions of the State.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall make a recommendation to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, and the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations on any updates to the adult education funding formula pursuant to the recommendations made in the report in subsection (a) of this section. The Secretary of Administration shall also make a recommendation on any administrative changes to adult education, including which agency or department outside of the Agency of Education is best suited to manage adult education grants.

(c) For fiscal year 2026, the Agency of Education shall negotiate in good faith to extend the existing contracts with local adult education and literacy providers for a term of one year. The Agency of Education shall endeavor to maintain the terms of the existing contracts to the greatest extent possible.

(d) For fiscal year 2026, the Agency of Education shall consult with local adult education and literacy providers prior to distributing funding and shall, notwithstanding any law to the contrary, distribute any funds according to a per-head basis formula.

Sec. E.507.1 ENGLISH LEARNER; CATEGORICAL AID

(a) The funds appropriated in Sec. B.507.1 of this act shall be used to provide categorical aid to school districts for English Learner services, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 4013.

Sec. E.511 EDUCATION; TECHNICAL EDUCATION

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. 1561(c) and (d) or any other provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2026 career technical center supplemental assistance grants shall be calculated using the fiscal year 2025 base education amount.

Sec. E.514 STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

(a) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(g)(2), the annual contribution to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System shall be $212,752,627, of which $199,377,627 shall be the State's contribution and $13,375,000 shall be contributed from local school systems or educational entities pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1944c.

(b) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(c)(2), of the annual contribution, $41,414,649 is the "normal contribution" and $171,337,978 is the "accrued liability contribution."

Sec. E.514.1 VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING BUDGET; SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) Of the $3,810,655 appropriated in Sec. B.514.1 of this act, $2,719,271 constitutes the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System operating budget, and $1,091,384 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System.

Sec. E.515 RETIRED TEACHERS' HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL BENEFITS

(a) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944b(b)(2) and 16 V.S.A. § 1944b(h)(1), the annual contribution to the Retired Teachers' Health and Medical Benefits plan shall be $79,952,589, of which $71,052,589 shall be the State's contribution and $8,900,000 shall be from the annual charge for teacher health care contributed by employers pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §1944d. Of the annual contribution, $24,712,382 is the "normal contribution" and $55,240,207 is the "accrued liability contribution."

Sec. E.600 UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

(a) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue warrants to pay 1/12 of the appropriation in Sec. B.600 of this act to the University of Vermont on or about the 15th day of each calendar month of the year.

(b) Of this appropriation, $380,362 shall be transferred to the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) to comply with State matching fund requirements necessary for the receipt of available federal or private funds, or both.

Sec. E.602 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

(a) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue warrants to pay 1/12 of the appropriation in Sec. B.602 of this act to the Vermont State Colleges on or about the 15th day of each calendar month of the year.

(b) Of this appropriation, $427,898 shall be transferred to the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center to comply with State matching fund requirements necessary for the receipt of available federal or private funds, or both.

Sec. E.602.1 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.602.2, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 67, 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.101, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113 Sec. E.602.1, is further amended to read:

Sec. E.602.2 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

(a) The Vermont State College (VSC) system shall transform itself into a fully integrated system that achieves financial stability in a responsible and sustainable way in order to meet each of these strategic priorities:

* * *

(b) VSC shall meet the following requirements during the transformation of its system required under subsection (a) of this section and shall accommodate the oversight of the General Assembly in so doing.

(1) VSC shall reduce its structural deficit by $5,000,000~~.00~~ per year for three years and by $3,500,000~~.00 per year for~~ the following ~~two years~~ year through a combination of annual operating expense reductions and increased enrollment revenues, for a total ~~$22,000,000.00~~ $18,500,000 by the end of fiscal year 2026. These reductions shall be structural in nature and shall not be met by use of one-time funds. The VSC Board of Trustees, through the Chancellor or designee, shall report the results of these structural reductions to the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations annually during the Chancellor's budget presentation.

* * *

Sec. E.603 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES; ALLIED HEALTH

(a) If Global Commitment Fund monies are unavailable, the total grant funding for the Vermont State Colleges shall be maintained through the General Fund or other State funding sources.

(b) The Vermont State Colleges shall use the Global Commitment appropriation in Sec. B.603 of this act to support the dental hygiene, respiratory therapy, and nursing programs that graduate approximately 315 health care providers annually. These graduates deliver direct, high-quality health care services to Medicaid beneficiaries or uninsured or underinsured persons.

Sec. E.605 VERMONT STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

(a) Of the funds appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605 of this act:

(1) $25,000 shall be deposited into the Trust Fund established in 16 V.S.A. § 2845;

(2) not more than $300,000 may be used by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for a student aspirational initiative to serve one or more high schools; and

(3) not less than $1,000,000 shall be used to continue the Vermont Trades Scholarship Program established in 2022 Act and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 14.

(b) Of the funds appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605 of this act that remain after accounting for the

expenditures set forth in subsection (a) of this section, not less than 93 percent shall be used for direct student aid.

(c) After accounting for the expenditures set forth in subsection (a) of this section, up to seven percent of the funds appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605 of this act or otherwise currently or previously appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation or provided to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation by an agency or department of the State for the administration of a program or initiative may be used by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for its costs of administration. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation may recoup its reasonable costs of collecting the forgivable loans in repayment. Funds shall not be used for indirect costs. To the extent that any of these funds are federal funds, allocation for expenses associated with administering the funds shall be consistent with federal grant requirements.

Sec. E.605.1 NEED-BASED STIPEND FOR DUAL ENROLLMENT AND EARLY COLLEGE STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, the sum of $41,225 Education Fund and $41,225 General Fund is appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for dual enrollment and need-based stipend purposes to fund a flat-rate, need-based stipend or voucher program for financially disadvantaged students enrolled in a dual enrollment course pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 944 or in early college pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 946 to be used for the purchase of books, cost of transportation, and payment of fees. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall establish the criteria for program eligibility. Funds shall be granted to eligible students on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are depleted.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall report on the program to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Commerce and Economic Development and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Sec. E.715 REPEALS; SUNSET OF PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX CLEAN WATER SURCHARGE

(a) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.10 (sunset of clean water surcharge), as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, is repealed.

(b) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.11(a)(5) (effective date of sunset of clean water surcharge) is repealed.

Sec. E.715.1 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.1(b) is amended to read:

(b) Purpose and intent.

(1) The purpose of Secs. I.1–I.12 of this act is to promote the development and improvement of housing for Vermonters.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly:

(A) to extend the clean water surcharge to provide ~~an interim~~ a source of revenue for addressing water quality issues throughout the State; and

(B) to continue its work on identifying a long-term funding source or sources that are sufficient in scope and targeted in design to address these water quality issues~~; and~~

~~(C) once one or more long-term funding sources are identified and enacted, but not later than July 1, 2027, to reduce the amount of the clean water surcharge to 0.04 percent~~.

Sec. E.715.2 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.12 is amended to read:

Sec. I.12. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. I.1–I.12 shall take effect on July 1, 2017~~, except that Sec. I.10 (allocating clean water surcharge revenue to Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund) shall take effect on July 1, 2027~~.

Sec. E.715.3 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.7(d) is amended to read:

(d) To compensate for this reduction of available property transfer tax revenue, it is the intent of the General Assembly through this act to provide for the transfer of $2,500,000.00 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund, as follows:

(1) Sec. D.100 of this act appropriates $11,304,840.00 in fiscal year 2018 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Upon the effective date of this act, $1,500,000.00 shall revert to the Fund, resulting in a fiscal year 2018 total appropriation to the Board of $9,804,840.00. In fiscal year 2018 only, the amount of $1,500,000.00 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(2) As provided in Sec. I.9 of this act, ~~from July 1, 2017 until July 1, 2027,~~ pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9602a, the first $1,000,000.00 in revenue generated by the clean water surcharge of ~~0.2~~ 0.22 percent shall be transferred to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund. In fiscal year 2018 only, the Commissioner shall transfer the amount of $1,000,000.00 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the General Fund.

(3) ~~After July 1, 2027, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9602a as amended in Sec. I.10 of this act, $1,000,000.00 in total revenue generated by the clean water surcharge of 0.04 percent shall be transferred to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

(4) ~~As provided in Sec. I.11 of this act, the clean water surcharge will be repealed in its entirety on July 1, 2039.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. E.900 19 V.S.A. § 11a is amended to read:

§ 11a. TRANSPORTATION ~~FUNDS APPROPRIATED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY~~ FUND APPROPRIATIONS

~~(a)~~ No transportation funds shall be appropriated for the support of government other than for the Agency, the Board, Transportation Pay Act Funds, construction of transportation capital facilities, transportation debt service, and the operation of information centers by the Department of Buildings and General Services~~, and the Department of Public Safety~~. ~~The amount of transportation funds appropriated to the Department of Public Safety shall not exceed:~~

~~(1) $25,250,000.00 in fiscal year 2014;~~

~~(2) $22,750,000.00 in fiscal years 2015 and 2016;~~

~~(3) $21,150,000.00 in fiscal year 2017; and~~

~~(4) $20,250,000.00 in fiscal year 2018 and in succeeding fiscal years.~~

~~(b) In fiscal year 2018 and in succeeding fiscal years, of the funds appropriated to the Department of Public Safety pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the amount of $2,100,000.00 is allocated exclusively for the purchase, outfitting, assignment, and disposal of State Police vehicles. Any unexpended and unencumbered funds remaining in this allocation at the close of a fiscal year shall revert to the Transportation Fund. The Department of Public Safety may periodically recommend to the General Assembly that this allocation be adjusted to reflect market conditions for the vehicles and equipment.~~

Sec. E.917 TOWN HIGHWAY NON-FEDERAL DISASTERS; PILOT FUND

(a) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 3709(a), the amount of $1,150,000 is appropriated in fiscal year 2026 from the PILOT Special Fund established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3709 to the Agency of Transportation for the Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters Program.

(b) The amounts appropriated pursuant to this section shall only be spent for the purpose of providing grants in relation to non-federal disasters pursuant

to the provisions of 19 V.S.A. § 306(d). Any amounts appropriated pursuant to this section that remain unused at the close of fiscal year 2026 shall revert to the PILOT Special Fund established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

* * * Fiscal Year 2025 Adjustments, Appropriations, and Amendments * * *

Sec. F.100 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.105 is amended to read:

Sec. B.105 Agency of digital services - communications and information technology

Personal services	82,994,362	82,994,362
Operating expenses	~~62,547,212~~	61,761,212
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574
Source of funds		
General fund	209,808	209,808
Special funds	511,723	511,723
Internal service funds	~~144,820,043~~	144,034,043
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574

Sec. F.101 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.145 is amended to read:

Sec. B.145 Total general government

Source of funds		
General fund	117,405,610	117,405,610
Transportation fund	4,292,149	4,292,149
Special funds	31,882,209	31,882,209
Federal funds	1,467,374	1,467,374
Internal service funds	~~214,635,950~~	213,849,950
Interdepartmental transfers	7,053,789	7,053,789
Enterprise funds	4,298	4,298
Pension trust funds	4,800,305	4,800,305
Private purpose trust funds	1,329,205	1,329,205
Total	~~382,870,889~~	382,084,889

Sec. F.102 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.204 is amended to read:

Sec. B.204 Judiciary

Personal services	~~58,439,095~~	58,827,799
Operating expenses	~~12,479,384~~	14,640,960
Grants	121,030	121,030
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789
Source of funds		
General fund	~~63,414,698~~	65,964,978
Special funds	4,503,401	4,503,401
Federal funds	953,928	953,928
Interdepartmental transfers	2,167,482	2,167,482
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789

Sec. F.103 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.205 is amended to read:

Sec. B.205 State's attorneys

Personal services	~~17,309,679~~	17,548,979
Operating expenses	~~2,034,016~~	2,202,516
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495
Source of funds		
General fund	~~18,734,634~~	19,142,434
Federal funds	31,000	31,000
Interdepartmental transfers	578,061	578,061
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495

Sec. F.104 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.206.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.206.1 Crime Victims Advocates

Personal services	3,016,156	3,016,156
Operating expenses	~~104,396~~	142,396
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552

Sec. F.105 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.208 is amended to read:

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	~~4,620,756~~	5,397,783
Operating expenses	6,022,923	6,022,923
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,179,193~~	8,092,770
Special funds	4,105	4,105
Federal funds	396,362	396,362
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,064,019~~	2,927,469
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706

Sec. F.106 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.210 is amended to read:

Sec. B.210 Public safety - criminal justice services

Personal services	~~5,387,100~~	4,705,897
Operating expenses	2,152,467	2,152,467
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364

Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,829,099~~	2,172,295
Special funds	~~4,975,847~~	3,951,448
Federal funds	734,621	734,621
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364

Sec. F.107 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.236 is amended to read:

Sec. B.236 Human rights commission

Personal services	~~927,697~~	952,559
Operating expenses	~~115,103~~	125,378
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,077,937
Source of funds		
General fund	~~953,800~~	988,937
Federal funds	89,000	89,000
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,077,937

Sec. F.108 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.241 is amended to read:

Sec. B.241 Total protection to persons and property

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,238,448~~	233,526,438
Transportation fund	20,250,000	20,250,000
Special funds	~~119,824,272~~	118,799,873
Tobacco fund	672,579	672,579
Federal funds	162,959,452	162,959,452
Interdepartmental transfers	~~16,031,869~~	14,895,319
Enterprise funds	15,070,107	15,070,107
Total	~~563,046,727~~	566,173,768

Sec. F.109 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.300 is amended to read:

Sec. B.300 Human services - agency of human services - secretary's office

Personal services	~~16,219,746~~	18,219,746
Operating expenses	~~7,220,486~~	6,062,286
Grants	3,795,202	3,795,202
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,913,202~~	11,923,905
Special funds	135,517	135,517
Federal funds	~~13,565,080~~	11,606,177
Global Commitment fund	~~0~~	4,300,000
Interdepartmental transfers	~~621,635~~	111,635
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234

Sec. F.110 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.301 is amended to read:

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Source of funds		
General fund	~~668,380,623~~	716,109,638
Special funds	32,047,905	32,047,905
Tobacco fund	21,049,373	21,049,373
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
Federal funds	~~1,285,494,243~~	1,363,223,270
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,487,210~~	4,124,245
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988

Sec. F.111 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.305 is amended to read:

Sec. B.305 AHS - administrative fund

Personal services	330,000	330,000
Operating expenses	~~13,170,000~~	16,870,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Source of funds		
Interdepartmental transfers	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000

Sec. F.112 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.306 is amended to read:

Sec. B.306 Department of Vermont health access - administration

Personal services	~~134,929,148~~	136,693,560
Operating expenses	~~44,171,193~~	39,250,661
Grants	3,112,301	3,112,301
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,872,315~~	42,023,781
Special funds	4,733,015	4,733,015
Federal funds	~~128,790,580~~	124,836,223
Global Commitment fund	4,308,574	4,308,574
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,508,158~~	3,154,929
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522

Sec. F.113 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.307 is amended to read:

Sec. B.307 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – global commitment

Personal services	547,983	547,983
Grants	~~899,550,794~~	964,407,046
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029

Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029

Sec. F.114 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.309 is amended to read:

Sec. B.309 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – state only

Grants	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Source of funds		
General fund	~~62,151,546~~	62,308,757
Global Commitment fund	~~882,402~~	5,471,838
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595

Sec. F.115 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.310 is amended to read:

Sec. B.310 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid non-waiver matched

Grants	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,511,405~~	13,459,034
Federal funds	~~22,483,483~~	24,773,397
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431

Sec. F.116 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.311 is amended to read:

Sec. B.311 Health - administration and support

Personal services	8,373,168	8,373,168
Operating expenses	~~7,519,722~~	8,166,662
Grants	7,985,727	7,985,727
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,189,843~~	3,513,313
Special funds	2,308,186	2,308,186
Federal funds	~~11,040,433~~	11,363,903
Global Commitment fund	7,173,924	7,173,924
Interdepartmental transfers	166,231	166,231
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557

Sec. F.117 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.312 is amended to read:

Sec. B.312 Health - public health

Personal services	67,812,371	67,812,371
Operating expenses	11,025,497	11,025,497
Grants	~~46,766,832~~	46,866,832
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,908,892~~	13,008,892
Special funds	24,906,804	24,906,804
Tobacco fund	1,088,918	1,088,918
Federal funds	64,038,301	64,038,301
Global Commitment fund	17,036,150	17,036,150
Interdepartmental transfers	5,600,635	5,600,635
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700

Sec. F.118 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.313 is amended to read:

Sec. B.313 Health - substance use programs

Personal services	6,570,967	6,570,967
Operating expenses	511,500	511,500
Grants	~~58,215,510~~	59,240,635
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,672,061~~	7,697,186
Special funds	2,413,678	2,413,678
Tobacco fund	949,917	949,917
Federal funds	15,456,754	15,456,754
Global Commitment fund	39,805,567	39,805,567
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102

Sec. F.119 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.314 is amended to read:

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	50,191,086	50,191,086
Operating expenses	~~5,517,999~~	5,709,973
Grants	~~270,625,138~~	272,536,080
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139
Source of funds		
General fund	~~25,555,311~~	26,279,270
Special funds	1,718,092	1,718,092
Federal funds	~~11,436,913~~	12,661,803
Global Commitment fund	~~287,609,767~~	287,763,834
Interdepartmental transfers	14,140	14,140
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139

Sec. F.120 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.316 is amended to read:

Sec. B.316 Department for children and families - administration & support services

Personal services	~~46,644,080~~	44,844,080
Operating expenses	~~17,560,755~~	19,402,705
Grants	5,627,175	5,627,175
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,722,724~~	40,113,958
Special funds	2,781,912	2,781,912
Federal funds	~~24,448,223~~	24,098,939
Global Commitment fund	2,417,024	2,417,024
Interdepartmental transfers	462,127	462,127
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960

Sec. F.121 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.317 is amended to read:

Sec. B.317 Department for children and families - family services

Personal services	~~45,197,694~~	45,286,553
Operating expenses	5,315,309	5,315,309
Grants	~~98,251,027~~	97,732,465
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327
Source of funds		
General fund	~~58,838,741~~	59,984,059
Special funds	729,587	729,587
Federal funds	~~34,666,196~~	36,180,206
Global Commitment fund	~~54,514,506~~	51,425,475
Interdepartmental transfers	15,000	15,000
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327

Sec. F.122 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.318 is amended to read:

Sec. B.318 Department for children and families - child development

Personal services	5,908,038	5,908,038
Operating expenses	813,321	813,321
Grants	~~223,329,336~~	211,815,836
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195
Source of funds		
General fund	~~76,723,518~~	51,443,165
Special funds	~~96,312,000~~	109,512,000
Federal funds	~~43,511,414~~	42,902,383
Global Commitment fund	~~13,503,763~~	14,679,647
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195

Sec. F.123 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.319 is amended to read:

Sec. B.319 Department for children and families - office of child support

Personal services	~~13,157,660~~	13,061,794
Operating expenses	3,759,992	3,759,992
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786
Source of funds		
General fund	~~5,200,064~~	5,163,429
Special funds	455,719	455,719
Federal funds	~~10,874,269~~	10,815,038
Interdepartmental transfers	387,600	387,600
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786

Sec. F.124 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.320 is amended to read:

Sec. B.320 Department for children and families - aid to aged, blind and disabled

Personal services	~~2,252,206~~	2,481,741
Grants	~~10,717,444~~	10,369,155
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896
Source of funds		
General fund	~~7,376,133~~	7,368,843
Global Commitment fund	~~5,593,517~~	5,482,053
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896

Sec. F.125 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.321 is amended to read:

Sec. B.321 Department for children and families - general assistance

Personal services	15,000	15,000
Grants	~~11,054,252~~	10,702,625
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625
Source of funds		
General fund	~~10,811,345~~	10,486,987
Federal funds	~~11,320~~	11,070
Global Commitment fund	~~246,587~~	219,568
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625

Sec. F.126 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.322 is amended to read:

Sec. B.322 Department for children and families - 3SquaresVT

Grants	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Source of funds		
Federal funds	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812

Sec. F.127 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.323 is amended to read:

Sec. B.323 Department for children and families - reach up

Operating expenses	23,821	23,821
Grants	~~37,230,488~~	36,730,493
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314
Source of funds		
General fund	~~24,733,042~~	24,233,047
Special funds	5,970,229	5,970,229
Federal funds	2,806,330	2,806,330
Global Commitment fund	3,744,708	3,744,708
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314

Sec. F.128 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.325 is amended to read:

Sec. B.325 Department for children and families - office of economic opportunity

Personal services	~~817,029~~	1,042,639
Operating expenses	100,407	100,407
Grants	~~35,466,283~~	35,812,536
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582
Source of funds		
General fund	~~28,178,010~~	28,687,068
Special funds	83,135	83,135
Federal funds	~~4,935,273~~	4,998,078
Global Commitment fund	3,187,301	3,187,301
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582

Sec. F.129 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.329 is amended to read:

Sec. B.329 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - administration & support

Personal services	~~45,217,977~~	46,217,977
Operating expenses	~~6,472,558~~	6,714,680
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657
Source of funds		
General fund	~~22,916,281~~	24,037,342
Special funds	1,390,457	1,390,457
Federal funds	~~26,063,097~~	26,184,158
Global Commitment fund	35,000	35,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,285,700	1,285,700
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657

Sec. F.130 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.330 is amended to read:

Sec. B.330 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - advocacy and independent living grants

Grants	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Source of funds		
General fund	~~8,392,303~~	8,504,605
Federal funds	7,321,114	7,321,114
Global Commitment fund	~~8,857,643~~	8,956,079
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798

Sec. F.131 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.332 is amended to read:

Sec. B.332 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - vocational rehabilitation

Grants	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,371,845~~	371,845
Federal funds	7,558,000	7,558,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,250,000	1,250,000
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845

Sec. F.132 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.333 is amended to read:

Sec. B.333 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - developmental services

Grants	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Source of funds		
General fund	132,732	132,732
Special funds	15,463	15,463
Federal funds	403,573	403,573
Global Commitment fund	~~328,697,576~~	330,660,503
Interdepartmental transfers	50,000	50,000
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271

Sec. F.133 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - TBI home and community based waiver

Grants	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520

Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520

Sec. F.134 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334.1 Disabilities, aging and independent living - Long Term Care

Grants	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Source of funds		
General fund	498,579	498,579
Federal funds	2,450,000	2,450,000
Global Commitment fund	~~290,635,966~~	344,427,543
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122

Sec. F.135 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.338 is amended to read:

Sec. B.338 Corrections - correctional services

Personal services	~~147,472,104~~	148,472,104
Operating expenses	~~24,914,205~~	25,249,795
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899
Source of funds		
General fund	~~162,807,888~~	163,643,478
Special funds	935,963	935,963
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~499,888~~	999,888
Global Commitment fund	2,746,255	2,746,255
Interdepartmental transfers	396,315	396,315
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899

Sec. F.136 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.342 is amended to read:

Sec. B.342 Vermont veterans' home - care and support services

Personal services	~~17,631,222~~	17,595,290
Operating expenses	~~5,013,462~~	13,247,462
Grants	0	1,583,157
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909
Source of funds		
General fund	~~4,320,687~~	11,224,018
Special funds	~~10,051,903~~	12,450,095
Federal funds	~~8,272,094~~	8,751,796
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909

Sec. F.137 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.347 is amended to read:

Sec. B.347 Total human services

Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,328,118,806~~	1,364,156,647
Special funds	~~202,800,452~~	218,398,644
Tobacco fund	23,088,208	23,088,208
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~1,803,398,922~~	1,882,012,745
Global Commitment fund	~~1,980,839,553~~	2,108,560,133
Internal service funds	490,853	490,853
Interdepartmental transfers	~~32,893,535~~	34,367,341
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~5,404,708,886~~	5,664,153,128

Sec. F.138 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.501 is amended to read:

Sec. B.501 Education - education services

Personal services	~~28,237,700~~	28,312,700
Operating expenses	1,134,912	1,134,912
Grants	322,345,763	322,345,763
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,387,955~~	6,462,955
Special funds	3,033,144	3,033,144
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Federal funds	340,584,414	340,584,414
Interdepartmental transfers	962,474	962,474
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375

Sec. F.139 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.503 is amended to read:

Sec. B.503 Education - state-placed students

Grants	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000

Sec. F.140 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504 Education - adult education and literacy

Grants	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820

Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,778,133~~	4,081,770
Federal funds	916,050	916,050
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820

Sec. F.141 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504.1 Education - Flexible Pathways

Grants	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Source of funds		
General fund	921,500	921,500
Education fund	~~10,440,255~~	10,642,679
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179

Sec. F.142 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.505 is amended to read:

Sec. B.505 Education - adjusted education payment

Grants	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394

Sec. F.143 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.508 is amended to read:

Sec. B.508 Education - nutrition

Grants	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000

Sec. F.144 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.516 is amended to read:

Sec. B.516 Total general education

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,890,519~~	229,269,156
Special funds	23,651,687	23,651,687
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Education fund	~~2,323,283,242~~	2,308,585,666
Federal funds	354,654,849	354,654,849
Global Commitment fund	260,000	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,467,771	1,467,771
Pension trust funds	3,572,780	3,572,780
Total	~~2,936,531,236~~	2,922,212,297

Sec. F.145 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.704 is amended to read:

Sec. B.704 Forests, parks and recreation - forestry

Personal services	~~7,880,566~~	7,913,766
Operating expenses	1,005,046	1,005,046
Grants	~~1,712,423~~	1,713,923
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,299,512~~	6,334,212
Special funds	547,215	547,215
Federal funds	3,394,931	3,394,931
Interdepartmental transfers	356,377	356,377
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735

Sec. F.146 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.710 is amended to read:

Sec. B.710 Environmental conservation - air and waste management

Personal services	27,995,328	27,995,328
Operating expenses	~~10,788,954~~	10,816,954
Grants	4,943,000	4,943,000
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282
Source of funds		
General fund	~~199,372~~	227,372
Special funds	24,643,580	24,643,580
Federal funds	18,800,064	18,800,064
Interdepartmental transfers	84,266	84,266
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282

Sec. F.147 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.711 is amended to read:

Sec. B.711 Environmental conservation - office of water programs

Personal services	50,153,806	50,153,806
Operating expenses	~~8,362,915~~	8,370,915
Grants	92,365,140	92,365,140
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861
Source of funds		
General fund	~~11,887,629~~	11,895,629
Special funds	30,967,150	30,967,150
Federal funds	107,154,542	107,154,542
Interdepartmental transfers	872,540	872,540
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861

Sec. F.148 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.714 is amended to read:

Sec. B.714 Total natural resources

Source of funds		
General fund	~~42,792,800~~	42,863,500
Special funds	81,275,829	81,275,829
Fish and wildlife fund	10,418,331	10,418,331
Federal funds	152,068,301	152,068,301
Interdepartmental transfers	14,131,324	14,131,324
Total	~~300,686,585~~	300,757,285

Sec. F.149 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.100 is amended to read:

Sec. D.100 ALLOCATIONS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

(a) This act contains the following amounts allocated to special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. These allocations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of $575,662 is allocated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of $575,662 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(2) Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 from the property transfer tax and surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of $2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 314 shall be offset by the reduction of $1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and $1,000,000 from the surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2025 appropriation of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the $1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, the $1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall be restored.

(3) Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), amounts in excess of ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 from the property transfer tax deposited into the

Municipal and Regional Planning Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. The ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 shall be allocated as follows:

(A) ~~$6,404,540~~ $7,300,358 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) ~~$931,773~~ $1,187,721 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) ~~$436,060~~ $564,034 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. F.150 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.102 is amended to read:

Sec. D.102 REVERSIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

* * *

3150892104 MH – Case Management Serv	~~$350,000.00~~	$350,199.34

* * *

1100892208 AOA – VT Housing Finance Agency	$3,000,000.00
1100892403 AOA – Health Equity Community Grants	$500,000.00
1120020000 Tuition Assistance Program	$133,877.86
1120892401 DHR – New Position in DHR Ops	$477,769.00
1120892402 DHR – New Position in VTHR Ops	$40,726.07
1140010000 Tax Operation Costs	$1,267,062.22
1140060000 Reappraisal and Listing Payments	$35,270.75
1140070000 Use Tax Reimbursement Program	$37,864.25
1140330000 Renter Rebates	$2,186,940.33
1140892403 Tax – Child Care Contr Positions	$3,591,823.02
1260980000 Debt Service	$235,445.15
1266892401 VPIC – Pension System Assets	$5,000.00
2100892201 AG – Racial Disparities	$48,465.00
2120892203 JUD – County Court House HVAC	$800,000.00
2120892402 JUD – Essex County Courthouse Reno	$50,000.00

2130400000 SIUS Parent Account	$395,749.64
2150010000 Mil Admin/TAGO	$142,789.80
2150050000 Mil Vet Affairs Office	$100,000.00
2160892201 CCVS – VT Forensic Nursing	$246.43
2160892304 CCVS – Kurn Hattin Survivor	$250.00
2200010000 Administration Division	$167,222.00
3310000000 Commission on Women	$25,390.43
3330892401 GMCB – VHCURES Database Implemen	$545,782.90
3400892111 Supp New Americans Refugee	$23,431.00
3400892301 AHSCO – Refugee Resettlement	$1,293.00
3420892405 HD – Regional Emergency Med	$8,295.01
3440050000 DCFS – AABD	$35,310.73
3440892110 DCF – Grants to Reachup	$5.10
3440892203 DCF – Parent Child Ctrs Cap Imp	$20,708.22
3440892214 DCF – Child Care Provider Workfor	$294.79
4100500000 VT Department of Labor	$8,000,000.00
5100070000 Education Services	$100,000.00
5100892101 AOE – VSC Committee Per Diem	$16,295.33
5100892102 AOA – Advisory Group Per Diem	$9,018.00
5100892103 AOE – ESESAG Per Diems	$8,960.00
5100892201 AOE – Comm Pub Sch Emp Hlth Ben	$29,050.00
5100892202 AOE – Task Force Equit Inclusive	$6,150.00
5100892302 AOE – Ethnic&Social Equity Per D	$14,386.24
6100010000 Administration Management and Planning	$402,052.99
6100040000 Property Tax Assessment Approp	$11,692.11
6140880005 152/00 State Asst Munic Poll Cont	$126.26
7100892301 Everyone Eats	$144,565.43
7120892304 DED – Relocated and Remote Worker	$127,314.33
8100002100 Department of Motor Vehicles	$2,482.81

* * *

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the Education Fund from the accounts indicated:

5100010000 Administration	$301,041.03
5100050000 State-Placed Students	$13,687,528.41
5100090000 Education Grant	$359,570.31
5100110000 Small School Grant	$593,700.00
5100200000 Education – Technical Education	$1,802,347.44
5100210000 Education – Flexible Pathways	$1,312,334.72
5100892405 AOE – Universal School Meals	$6,201,479.69

Sec. F.151 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.100 is amended to read:

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

* * *

(d) The conversion of eight limited service positions to exempt permanent status is authorized in fiscal year 2025 as follows:

(1) Office of the Defender General:

(A) one Administrative Services Tech;

(B) two DG IT Specialist II's;

(C) one ODG Legal Assistant I;

(D) two Staff Attorney I's;

(E) one Financial Specialist III; and

(F) one Admin Secretary.

* * *

Sec. F.152 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.301 is amended to read:

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE; GLOBAL COMMITMENT

* * *

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of ~~$24,301,185~~ $28,307,335 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds under Global Commitment as follows:

(1) ~~$21,295,850~~ $25,302,000 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with

~~$29,204,150~~ $34,698,000 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of ~~$50,500,000~~ $60,000,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund created in 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) $3,005,335 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to ~~$4,487,210~~ $3,614,245 is transferred from the Agency of Human Services Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act.

Sec. F.153 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.109 is amended to read:

Sec. G.109 PAY ACT APPROPRIATIONS; FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

(a) Executive Branch. The first and second years of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association for the Defender General, Non-Management, Supervisory, and Corrections bargaining units, and, for the purpose of appropriation, the State's Attorneys' offices bargaining unit, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; the collective bargaining agreement with the Vermont Troopers' Association for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; and salary increases for employees in the Executive Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows:

(1) Fiscal year 2025.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

(2) Fiscal year 2026.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from

the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

Sec. F.154 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 7 is amended to read:

Sec. 7. TELEPHONE TAX; REPEAL; TRANSITION

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 8521 (telephone personal property tax) is repealed on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. The final monthly installment payment of the telephone personal property tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8521 levied on the net book value of the taxpayer's personal property as of December 31, ~~2024~~ 2025 shall be due on or before July 25, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(b) 32 V.S.A. § 8522 (alternative telephone gross revenues tax) is repealed on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027. The final quarterly payment of the alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due on or before January 25, ~~2026~~ 2027.

(c) Any taxpayer who paid the alternative tax imposed by 32 V.S.A. § 8522 prior to the repeal of the tax on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027 shall become subject to the income tax imposed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 151 beginning with the taxpayer's first income tax year starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. No alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due for any period included in the taxpayer's income tax filing for tax years starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(d) In fiscal year ~~2025~~ 2026, the Division of Property Valuation and Review of the Department of Taxes and all communications service providers with taxable communications property in Vermont shall be subject to the inventory and valuation provisions prescribed in 32 V.S.A. § 4452, as applicable.

Sec. F.155 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

* * *

(3) Secs. 8–12 (communications property tax) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 and shall apply to grand lists lodged on or after April 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

Sec. F.156 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 166, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. TRANSFER AND APPROPRIATION

Notwithstanding 7 V.S.A. § 845(c), in fiscal year 2025:

(1) $500,000~~.00~~ is transferred from the Cannabis Regulation Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 845 to the Cannabis Business Development Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987; and

(2) $500,000.00 is appropriated from the Cannabis Business ~~19~~ Development Fund to the ~~Agency of Commerce and Community Development~~ Department of Economic Development to fund technical assistance and provide loans and grants pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987.

Sec. F.157 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 78 is amended to read:

Sec. 78. ~~TRANSFERS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX~~

~~Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), or any other provision of law to the contrary, amounts in excess of $32,954,775.00 from the property transfer tax shall be transferred into the General Fund. Of this amount:~~

~~(1) $6,106,335.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~

~~(2) $1,279,740.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. F.158 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 96 is amended to read:

Sec. 96. APPROPRIATION; RENT ARREARS ASSISTANCE FUND

The sum of $2,500,000~~.00~~ is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Vermont State Housing Authority~~ Department of Housing and Community Development in fiscal year 2025 for the Rent Arrears Assistance Fund established by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 45.

Sec. F.159 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 3, as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 75, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.119, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 106, is further amended to read:

Sec. 3. MANUFACTURED HOME IMPROVEMENT AND REPAIR PROGRAM

(a) ~~Amounts~~ Of the amounts available from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery funds, $4,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Manufactured Home Improvement and Repair Program and shall be used for one or more of the following purposes:

* * *

Sec. F.160 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 113b is amended to read:

Sec. 113b. APPROPRIATION; ~~NATURAL RESOURCES~~ LAND USE REVIEW BOARD

The sum of ~~$1,300,000.00~~ $400,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Natural Resources~~ Land Use Review Board in fiscal year 2025.

Sec. F.161 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 24a is amended to read:

Sec. 24a. COMPENSATION FOR OVERPAYMENT

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, ~~the sum of $29,224.00~~ a $29,224 credit shall be ~~transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of~~ applied to the Canaan Town School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the ~~Town of~~ Canaan Town School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. ~~The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Canaan.~~

(b) ~~Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $5,924.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Bloomfield in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Bloomfield for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Bloomfield.~~

~~(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,575.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Brunswick in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Brunswick for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Brunswick.~~

~~(d) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $6,145.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of East Haven in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of East Haven for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of East Haven.~~

~~(e) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,046.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Granby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Granby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Granby.~~

~~(f) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $10,034.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Guildhall in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Guildhall for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Guildhall.~~

~~(g) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $20,536.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Kirby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Kirby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Kirby.~~

~~(h) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,402.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Lemington in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Lemington for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Lemington.~~

~~(i) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $11,464.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Maidstone in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Maidstone for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Maidstone.~~

~~(j) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $4,349.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Norton in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Norton for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating~~

~~average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Norton.~~

~~(k) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,657.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Victory in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Victory for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Victory.~~

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a $68,132 credit shall be applied to the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership.

Sec. F.162 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1102, as added by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 47, is amended to read:

Sec. B.1102 FISCAL YEAR 2023 ONE-TIME TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2023, funds are appropriated from the Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951) for new and ongoing initiatives as follows:

(1) $40,010,000 to the Agency of Digital Services to be used as follows:

(A) $11,800,000 for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system upgrade of Human Capital Management and core statewide financial accounting system and integration with the Department of Labor and Agency of Transportation financial systems;

* * *

Sec. F.163 3 V.S.A. § 3306 is amended to read:

§ 3306. TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND

* * *

(b) Funds. The Fund shall consist of:

(1) any amounts transferred ~~or appropriated~~ to it by the General Assembly; and

(2) any interest earned by the Fund.

* * *

Sec. F.164 WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND; REPEAL

(a) 10 V.S.A. § 543 (Workforce Education and Training Fund) is repealed.

Sec. F.165 18 V.S.A. § 9502 is amended to read:

§ 9502. TOBACCO TRUST FUND

(a)(1) The Tobacco Trust Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the purposes of creating a self-sustaining, perpetual fund for tobacco cessation and prevention that is not dependent upon tobacco sales volume.

(2) The Trust Fund shall ~~comprise~~ be composed of:

(A) ~~appropriations~~ transfers made by the General Assembly; and

(B) ~~transfers from the Litigation Settlement Fund pursuant to subdivision (b) of this section; and~~

~~(C)~~ contributions from any other source.

(3) The State Treasurer shall not disburse monies from the Trust Fund, except upon appropriation by the General Assembly. In any fiscal year, total appropriations from the Trust Fund shall not exceed seven percent of the fair market value of the Fund at the end of the prior fiscal year.

(4) The Trust Fund shall be administered by the State Treasurer. The Treasurer may invest monies in the Fund in accordance with the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 434. All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain in the Fund. The Treasurer's annual financial report to the Governor and the General Assembly shall contain an accounting of receipts, disbursements, and earnings of the Fund.

(b) ~~Unless otherwise authorized by the General Assembly on or before June 30, 2000, and on June 30 of each subsequent fiscal year, any unencumbered balance in the Litigation Settlement Fund shall be transferred to the Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. F.166 32 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Loan" means a loan that is interest free or below market value.

(2) "State agency" means an Executive Branch agency, department, commission, office, or board.

* * *

Sec. F.167 32 V.S.A. § 706 is amended to read:

§ 706. TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS

Notwithstanding any authority granted elsewhere, all transfers of appropriations shall be made pursuant to this section upon the initiative of the Governor or upon the request of a secretary or commissioner.

(1) With the approval of the Governor, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may transfer balances of appropriations not to exceed ~~$50,000.00~~ $100,000 made under any appropriation act for the support of the government from one component of an agency, department, or other unit of State government to any component of the same agency, department, or unit.

(2) Except as specified in ~~subdivisions~~ subdivision (1) ~~and (4)~~ of this section, the transfer of balances of appropriations may be made only with the approval of the Emergency Board.

(3) For the specific purpose of balancing and closing out fund accounts at the end of a fiscal year, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may adjust a balance within an account of an agency or department in an amount not to exceed ~~$100.00~~ $200.

* * *

Sec. F.168 32 V.S.A. § 902 is amended to read:

§ 902. AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW MONEY

* * *

(b) The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of and expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing of such notes as the same fall due without further order or authority from the ~~General Fund or from the Transportation or other applicable funds or from the proceeds of bonds or notes~~ governmental debt service funds established in section 951a of this chapter. The authority hereby granted is in addition to and not in limitation of any other authority. Such notes shall be sold at public or private sale with or without published notice, as the State Treasurer may determine to be in the best interests of the State.

Sec. F.169 32 V.S.A. § 951a is amended to read:

§ 951a. DEBT SERVICE FUNDS

(a) Three governmental debt service funds are hereby established:

* * *

(b) Financial resources in each fund shall consist of ~~appropriations by the General Assembly to fulfill debt service obligations,~~ the transfer of funding sources by the General Assembly to fulfill future debt service obligations, bond proceeds raised to fund a permanent reserve required by a trust agreement entered into to secure bonds, transfers of appropriations effected pursuant to section 706 of this title, investment income earned on balances held in trust agreement accounts as required by a trust agreement, and such other amounts as directed by the General Assembly or that are specifically authorized by provisions of this title. Each debt service fund shall account for the accumulation of resources and the fulfillment of debt service obligations within the current fiscal year and the accumulation of resources for debt service obligations maturing in future fiscal years.

* * *

Sec. F.170 32 V.S.A. § 954 is amended to read:

§ 954. PROCEEDS

(a) The proceeds arising from the sale of bonds, inclusive of any premiums, shall be applied to the purposes for which they were authorized, and the purposes ~~shall~~ may be considered to include ~~the expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing the bonds and any notes issued under section 955 of this title, and~~ underwriters' fees and amounts for reserves, but no purchasers of the bonds shall be in any way bound to see to the proper application of the proceeds. The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of, investment return on, and maturity value of the bonds and notes as the same fall due or accrue without further order or authority. The State Treasurer, with the approval of the Governor, may establish sinking funds, reserve funds, or other special funds of the State as the State Treasurer may deem for the best interests of the State. To the extent not otherwise provided, the amount necessary each year to fulfill the maturing principal and interest of, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on all the bonds then outstanding shall be included in and made a part of the annual appropriation bill for the expense of State government, and the principal and interest on, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on the bonds as may come due before appropriations for their fulfillment have been made shall be fulfilled from the applicable debt service fund.

(b) The ~~State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the~~ estimated cost of bond issuance or issuances ~~to the entities to which funds are appropriated by a~~

~~capital construction act and for which bonding is required as the source of funds. If estimated receipts are insufficient, the State Treasurer shall allocate additional costs to the entities. Any remaining receipts shall not be expended, but carried forward to be available for future capital construction acts. If the source of funds appropriated by a capital construction act is other than by issuance of bonds, the State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the estimated cost of ongoing debt management services to the entities to which those funds are appropriated~~ shall be appropriated annually from the funds from which transfers are made to fund debt service costs.

* * *

Sec. F.171 VERMONT TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY FUND; REPEAL

(a) 33 V.S.A. chapter 78 (Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund) is repealed.

Sec. F.172 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 38 is amended to read:

Sec. 38. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

(a) Creation; administration. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall design and implement a Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program and shall create and administer a revolving loan fund to provide subsidized loans for rental housing developments that serve middle-income households.

(b) Loans; eligibility; criteria.

* * *

(7) The Agency shall use one or more legal mechanisms to ensure that:

(A) a subsidized unit remains affordable to a household earning the applicable percent of area median income for the longer of:

(i) seven years; or

(ii) full repayment of the loan plus three years; and

(B) during the affordability period determined pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (7), the annual increase in rent for a subsidized unit does not exceed three percent or an amount otherwise authorized by the Agency.

* * *

Sec. F.173 32 V.S.A. § 308b is amended to read:

§ 308b. HUMAN SERVICES CASELOAD RESERVE

(a) There is created within the General Fund a Human Services Caseload Reserve. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be subject to an appropriation

by the General Assembly or approval by the Emergency Board. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be limited to Agency of Human Services caseload-related needs primarily in the Departments for Children and Families, of Health, of Mental Health, of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, of Vermont Health Access, and settlement costs associated with managing the Global Commitment waiver.

(b) The Secretary of Administration may transfer to the Human Services Caseload Reserve any General Fund ~~carry-forward~~ carryforward directly attributable to Agency of Human Services caseload reductions and the effective management of related federal receipts, with the exclusion of the Department of Corrections.

(c) The Human Services Caseload Reserve shall contain two ~~sub-accounts~~ subaccounts:

(1) A ~~sub-account~~ subaccount for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses. Each fiscal year ~~beginning with fiscal year 2020~~, the Department of Finance and Management shall adjust the amount reserved for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses to equal the amount specified in the ~~Comprehensive~~ Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year occurring two years prior for the estimated amount of incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses associated with the current Medicaid Global Commitment waiver.

* * *

Sec. F.174 CHILD CARE CONTRIBUTION SPECIAL FUND; UNALLOCATED AND UNRESERVED BALANCE

(a) In fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration shall unreserve and transfer funds from the Human Services Caseload Reserve to the Child Care Contribution Special Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 10554 as necessary to maintain a balance that appropriately supports the State's statutory obligations under the Child Care Financial Assistance Program established in 33 V.S.A. §§ 3512 and 3513.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that any unreserved and unallocated balance in the Child Care Contribution Special Fund shall remain in the Fund to support the future establishment of a reserve for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program.

Sec. F.175 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; FACILITY WORK PROGRAMS; STRATEGIC PLAN

(a) Findings and intent.

(1) The General Assembly finds that a significant budget deficit has developed within previously existing programs despite a wage structure that pays incarcerated individuals in Vermont at rates ranging from $0.25 to $1.35 per hour, significantly below the federal minimum wage.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly that all Department of Corrections facility work programs operate in a manner that is fiscally sustainable to the extent possible within current statutory limitations and effective in preparing offenders for meaningful employment upon release.

(b) Strategic plan. On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Corrections shall, in consultation with the Department of Labor, submit a strategic plan with proposed benchmarks for improvement to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary. The strategic plan shall include:

(1) A business plan to improve program efficiency and self-sustainability to ensure all facility work programs, including Vermont Correctional Industries, vocational training programs, and other paid facility duties, operate without recurring deficits or to clearly identify funding sources to address the deficits.

(2) A comprehensive evaluation of the skills provided through facility work programs to determine if those skills are transferable to employment opportunities post-incarceration. The evaluation shall include consideration of expanding technical training and certification opportunities that carry recognized value in the labor market.

(3) An analysis of facility work programs to determine if each program serves a sufficient portion of the incarcerated population to justify its administration. The analysis shall also consider whether participants gain meaningful and valuable work experiences.

(4) A review of wages paid to facility work program participants, the implications of wage structures on program outcomes, and the appropriate use of funds in relation to program objectives.

(c) In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, the Department of Corrections shall submit timely reports to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary, or the Joint Fiscal Committee and the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee when the General Assembly is not in session, on the development of facility work program deficits. The Department shall include in these reports any financial or operational actions taken to address deficits, increase oversight, and prevent future deficits.

Sec. F.176 MEDICAID PROVIDERS WITH STABILIZATION NEEDS; GRANT ELIGIBILITY

(a) All Vermont Medicaid participating providers with demonstrated stabilization needs and a plan to achieve sustainability shall be eligible to apply for funds appropriated pursuant to 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), including substance use residential treatment facilities, federally qualified health centers, residential mental health providers, and other providers of health care and human services.

(b) On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall submit a report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations. The report shall include:

(1) A detailed account of grants distributed pursuant to the appropriation made in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), as added by this act. This shall include the dollar amount and recipient of each grant.

(2) A description of each grant recipient's financial status prior to receipt of the grant, a summary of the impact of the grant for each recipient, and a summary of a revised long-term sustainability plan for each grant recipient.

(3) An analysis of grant outcomes and any recommendations for enhancing the financial stability of Vermont Medicaid providers.

Sec. F.177 ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM AND HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAM TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 945 and any other provision of law to the contrary, a high school may award a high school diploma to any student who meets the following criteria:

(1) Prior to July 1, 2024, the student was participating in the High School Completion Program as the program existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

(2) The student has met the requirements of the student's individual graduation plan and would have been eligible to receive a diploma pursuant to the High School Completion Program as it existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

Sec. F.178 SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; DISCRETIONARY EXEMPTIONS

(a) For the remainder of federal fiscal year 2025, the Department for Children and Families shall utilize the State's allocation of discretionary exemptions in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to the extent permitted by federal regulation for the purposes of:

(1) extending benefits to Program participants who would otherwise experience a disruption of benefits; and

(2) ensuring that Program participants are not accruing any time-limited benefit work requirement countable months.

Sec. F.179 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 19, Secs. 5 and 6 are amended to read:

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 4 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

(b) ~~Sec. 5 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.~~

~~(c)~~ All other sections shall take effect 30 calendar days after passage.

Sec. F.180 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 82, Sec. 1, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 108, Sec. 3, is further amended to read:

Sec. 1. REIMBURSEMENT TO MUNICIPALITIES OF STATE EDUCATION PROPERTY TAXES THAT WERE ABATED DUE TO FLOODING

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Taxes may approve an application by a municipality for reimbursement of State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426. To be eligible for reimbursement under this section, prior to November 15, ~~202~~4 2025, a municipality must have abated, in proportion to the abated municipal tax, under 24 V.S.A. § 1535 the State education property taxes that were assessed on eligible property, after application of any property tax credit allowed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 154.

(2) As used in this subsection, "eligible property" means property lost or destroyed due directly or indirectly to severe storms and flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, provided the loss or destruction resulted in one or more of the following:

(A) a 50 percent or greater loss in value to the primary structure on the property;

(B) loss of use by the property owner of the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more;

(C) loss of access by the property owner to utilities for the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more; or

(D) condemnation of the primary structure on the property under federal, State, or municipal law, as applicable.

(b) If a municipality demonstrates that, due to disruption to tax collections resulting from flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, the municipality incurred unanticipated interest expenses on funds borrowed to make State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426, the municipality may be reimbursed by an amount equal to its reasonable interest expenses under this subsection, provided the amount of reimbursed interest expenses shall not exceed eight percent.

* * *

Sec. F.181 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106 is amended to read:

Sec. E.106 CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND APPROPRIATIONS; REVERSION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SPENDING AUTHORITY

* * *

(b) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall revert all unobligated American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority prior to December 31, 2024. The total amount of American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority reverted in accordance with this subsection shall equal the amount of new spending authority established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511 for the following purposes in the following order:

* * *

(3) $30,000,000 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of: affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units~~,~~ including improvements to manufactured homes and communities~~,~~; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness~~,~~; recovery residences~~,~~; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home and community based services.

Sec. F.182 CARRYFORWARD AUTHORITY

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law and subject to the approval of the Secretary of Administration, General Fund, Transportation Fund, Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund, Education Fund, Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951), Clean Water Fund (21932), and Agricultural Water Quality Fund (21933) appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Executive Branch shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, General Fund appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Legislative and Judicial Branches shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. G.100 EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. B.1101, C.100, C.101, C.102, C.103, C.104, C.105, C.106, C.107, E.127.3, E.142.1, E.142.2, E.306.1, E.312.1, F.100, F.101, F.102, F.103, F.104, F.105, F.106, F.107, F.108, F.109, F.110, F.111, F.112, F.113, F.114, F.115, F.116, F.117, F.118, F.119, F.120, F.121, F.122, F.123, F.124, F.125, F.126, F.127, F.128, F.129, F.130, F.131, F.132, F.133, F.134, F.135, F.136, F.137, F.138, F.139, F.140, F.141, F.142, F.143, F.144, F.145, F.146, F.147, F.148, F.149, F.150, F.151, F.152, F.153, F.156, F.157, F.158, F.159, F.160, F.162, F.163, F.164, F.165, F.166, F.167, F.168, F.169, F.170, F.171, F.172, F.173, F.174, F.175, F.176, F.177, F.178, F.179, F.181, and F.182 shall take effect on passage.

(b) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Secs. E.111 and E.111.1 shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and shall apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2024.

(c) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. E.111.2 shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and shall apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2025.

(d) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. E.111.3 shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and shall apply to taxable years and periods beginning on and after January 1, 2025 and ending on or before December 31, 2025.

(e) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Secs. F.154 and F.155 shall take effect retroactively on March 31, 2025.

(f) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. F.161 shall take effect retroactively on July 1, 2024.

(g) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. F.180 shall take effect retroactively on November 15, 2024.

(h) All remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And by renumbering all of the sections of the bill to be numerically correct (including internal references) and adjusting all of the totals to be arithmetically correct.

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

Senator Cummings, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations?, Senators Perchlik, Baruth, Brennan, Lyons, Norris, Watson and Westman moved to amend the proposal of amendment of the Committee on Appropriations as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. B. 203, defender general - assigned counsel, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. B. 203 to read as follows:

Sec. B.203 Defender general - assigned counsel

Personal services	7,887,975
Operating expenses	64,500
Total	7,952,475
Source of funds	
General fund	7,952,475
Total	7,952,475

Second: By striking out Sec. B.208, public safety - administration, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. B.2028 to read as follows:

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	6,289,651
Operating expenses	6,380,415
Grants	278,285
Total	12,948,351
Source of funds	
General fund	7,630,863
Special funds	4,105

Federal funds	1,089,155
Interdepartmental transfers	4,224,228
Total	12,948,351

Third: In Sec. B.1100, fiscal year 2026 one-time appropriations, by striking out subdivision (n) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (n) to read as follows:

(n) Department of Housing and Community Development. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $9,100,000 General Fund for the Vermont Bond Bank Vermont Infrastructure Sustainability Fund;

(2) $14,500,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Finance Agency Rental Revolving Loan Fund, the Middle-Income Homeownership Development Program, and the First Generation Homebuyer Program. No less than $1,000,000 of these funds shall be for the First Generation Homebuyer Program;

(3) $4,300,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Improvement Program 2.0 and for staff to support the Program; and

(4) $15,000 General Fund for the Residential Universal Design Study Committee.

Fourth: In Sec. B.1101, fiscal year 2025 closeout, in subsection (a), by striking out "$138,520,000" and inserting "$138,970,000" in lieu thereof.

Fifth: In Sec. B.1103(a)(3)(A), one-time capital appropriations, by striking out "$1,000,000" and inserting "$1,100,000" in lieu thereof.

Sixth: In Sec. C.102, fiscal year 2025 fund transfers, in subdivision (b)(2)(B), by striking out"$8,037,352" and inserting "$8,242,871" in lieu thereof.

Seventh: In Sec. C.102, fiscal year 2025 fund transfers, in subdivision (b)(3), by striking out "$65,060,450.50" and inserting "$65,260,450.50" in lieu thereof.

Eighth: In Sec. D.101, fund transfers, following subdivision (a)(1)(H) by inserting a new subdivision (a)(1)(I) to read as follows:

(I) Farm Security Special Fund: $1,000,000.

Ninth: In Sec. D.102, reversions, by striking out "$5,000,000.00" and inserting "$6,000,000.00" in lieu thereof.

Tenth: By striking out Sec. E.100, positions, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. E.100 to read as follows:

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 12 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2026 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

(A) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Pre-charge Administrator.

(B) Office of the Secretary of State:

(i) one Administrative Services Coordinator IV.

(C) Green Mountain Care Board:

(i) one Reference-based Pricing Director;

(ii) one Reference-based Pricing Project Manager; and

(iii) one Operations, Procurement, and Contractual Oversight Manager.

(D) Department of Fish and Wildlife:

(i) one Fish and Wildlife Specialist.

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

(A) State Labor Relations Board:

(i) one Staff Attorney; and

(ii) one Labor Relations IT Staff.

(B) Office of the Attorney General:

(i) one Assistant Attorney General.

(C) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(i) one Financial and IT Specialist; and

(ii) two Transport Deputies.

(b) The establishment of four permanent positions to be established through existing vacant positions is authorized in fiscal year 2026 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

(A) Criminal Justice Council:

(i) one Canine Head Trainer.

(B) Cannabis Control Board:

(i) one Compliance and Enforcement Attorney.

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

(A) Human Rights Commission:

(i) one Intake Specialist; and

(ii) one Staff Attorney Investigator.

(c) The establishment of one classified limited service position is authorized in fiscal year 2026:

(1) Office of the State Treasurer:

(A) one Climate Superfund Specialist.

(d) The conversion of 11 limited service positions to permanent exempt status is authorized in fiscal year 2026 as follows:

(1) Land Use Review Board:

(A) two District Coordinators.

(2) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(A) six Deputy State's Attorneys;

(B) two Legal Assistants; and

(C) one Victim Advocate.

Eleventh: In Sec. E.127.3, calculation of federal funding appropriation reduction, in subdivision (b)(2)(B)(i), following "pursuant to", by striking out "32 V.S.A. § 308c(b)(3)" and inserting "Sec. E.127.4 of this act" in lieu thereof.

Twelfth: In Sec. E.504.3, adult education funding; report, by striking out subsection (d) in its entirety.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations, as amended?, was agreed to.

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 488.

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

An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

Senate Resolution Adopted

S.R. 13.

Senate resolution of the following title was read the third time and adopted:

Senate resolution strongly objecting to the manner and circumstances under which U.S. immigration authorities arrested and detained Mohsen Mahdawi and strongly advocating that he be afforded due process under the law and released immediately from detention.

Message from the House No. 51

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 364. An act relating to approval of the annexation of property by the Village of Swanton.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 36. An act relating to the Medicaid payment model for residential substance use disorder treatment services.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposals of amendment to the following House bills:

H. 13. An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for community-based service providers.

H. 206. An act relating to the Uniform Commercial Code.

And has concurred therein.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill of the following title:

H. 398. An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

And has concurred therein with a further proposal of amendment thereto, in

the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The Governor has informed the House that on April 29, 2025, he approved and signed bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 118. An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes.

H. 259. An act relating to preventing workplace violence in hospitals.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, May 1, 2025.

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025

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 Appropriations

H. 461.

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 expanding employee access to unpaid leave.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 153.

By Senators Ram Hinsdale and Clarkson,

An act relating to the creation of the Extreme Temperature Worker Protection Act.

To the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time and referred:

H. 364.

An act relating to approval of the annexation of property by the Village of Swanton.

To the Committee on Rules.

Third Reading Ordered

S.R. 12.

Senator Weeks, for the Committee on Economic Housing and General Affairs, to which was referred Senate resolution entitled:

Senate resolution reaffirming the friendship between the State of Vermont and Taiwan and supporting enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations.

Reported that the resolution ought to adopted.

Thereupon, the Senate Resolution was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, and third reading of the Senate resolution was ordered, on a roll call, Yeas 27, Nays 0.

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: Baruth, Beck, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Bongartz, Brennan, Norris.

Points of Order; Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 493.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Beck moved to amend the Senate proposal of amendment as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be Sec. E.234 to read as follows:

Sec. E.234. REPEAL; CLEAN HEAT STANDARD

30 V.S.A. chapter 94 (Clean Heat Standard) is repealed.

Second: By adding a new section to be Sec. E.111.4 to read as follows:

Sec. E.111.4. REPEAL; CLEAN HEAT STANDARD TAX DATA SHARING

32 V.S.A. § 3102(e)(23) (confidentiality of tax records) is repealed.

Third: By adding a new section to be Sec. E.111.5 to read as follows:

Sec. E.111.5. 33 V.S.A. § 2504 is added to read:

§ 2504. FUEL TAX REPORT

On or before January 15 annually, the Commissioner of Taxes shall publish a report on the fuel tax collected pursuant to section 2503 of this chapter. The report shall include the aggregated data broken out by type of the volumes and types of heating fuel sold annually in Vermont, and the number of entities that paid. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) shall not apply to this report.

Fourth: By adding a new section to be Sec. E.700 to read as follows:

Sec. E.700. REPEAL; GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS ACT; CAUSE OF ACTION

10 V.S.A. § 594 (cause of action) is repealed.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate proposal of amended be amended as recommended by Senator Beck?, Senator Beck requested that the question be divided and the *fourth* instance be considered separately.

Thereupon, Senator Baruth raised a *point of order* under Sec. 402 of Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedures on the grounds that the proposals of amendment offered by Senator Beck were *not germane* to the bill and therefore could not be considered by the Senate.

Thereupon, the President *sustained* the point of order and ruled that the proposals of amendment offered by Senator Beck were *not germane* to the bill as it did not satisfy the criteria of Mason’s Rule 402 regarding germaneness.

The President thereupon declared that the proposals of amendment offered by Senator Beck could *not* be considered by the Senate.

Thereupon, Senator Beck moved that the rules be suspended in order to permit consideration of the proposals of amendment on their merits, despite being not germane pursuant to Sec. 402 of Mason's Manual of Legislative procedure, which was disagreed to on a roll call, Yeas 13, Nays 17 (the 3/4ths majority not being attained).

Senator Beck, 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, Collamore, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

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

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Beck moved to amend the Senate proposal of amendment by adding a new section to be Sec. E.710, to read as follows:

Sec. E.710. LOW AND ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE RULE; ENFORCEMENT DELAY

On or before July 1, 2026, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall update the Vermont Low Emission Vehicle and Zero Emission Vehicle Rules to delay implementation and enforcement until 2028. The update shall comply with the Clean Air Act's requirement to be identical to the rules adopted by California. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Secretary shall not take any enforcement action pursuant to these rules until 2028 regardless of when the rule update takes effect.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate proposal of amendment be amended as recommended by Senator Beck?, Senator Perchlik raised a *point of order* under Sec. 402 of Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure on the grounds that the proposal of amendment offered by Senator Beck was *not germane* to the bill and therefore could not be considered by the Senate.

Thereupon, the President *sustained* the point of order and ruled that the proposal of amendment offered by Senator Beck was *not germane* to the bill as it did not satisfy the criteria of Mason's Rule 402 regarding germaneness.

The President thereupon declared that the proposal of amendment offered by Senator Beck could *not* be considered by the Senate and the proposal of amendment was ordered stricken.

Thereupon, Senator Beck moved that the rules be suspended in order to permit consideration of the proposal of amendment on its merits, despite being not germane pursuant to Sec. 402 of Mason's Manual of Legislative procedure, which was disagreed to on a roll call, Yeas 14, Nays 16 (the 3/4ths majority not being attained).

Senator Ingalls, 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, Douglass, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Mattos, Norris, Weeks, Westman, Williams.

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

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment, on a roll call, Yeas 20, Nays 10.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Chittenden, Clarkson, Cummings, Gulick, Harrison, Hashim, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Westman, White.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Brock, Collamore, Douglass, Hardy, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Vyhovsky, Weeks, Williams.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 219.

Senator Plunkett, for the Committee on Institutions, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, 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. 41.

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

An act relating to abuse of the dead body of a person.

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. 13 V.S.A. § 3761a is added to read:

§ 3761a. ABUSE OF THE DEAD BODY OF A PERSON

(a) No person shall, knowingly without legal authorization, intentionally burn, mutilate, disfigure, dismember, or destroy the dead body of a person.

(b) No person shall violate subsection (a) of this section for the purpose of concealing a crime or avoiding apprehension, prosecution, or conviction of a crime.

(c) No person shall commit sexual conduct upon the dead body of a person.

(d)(1) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section shall be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than $5,000.00, or both.

(2) A person who violates subsection (b) or (c) of this section shall be imprisoned not more than 15 years or fined not more than $10,000.00, or both.

(e) As used in this section:

(1) "Dead body of a person" does not include the cremated remains of a person.

(2) "Sexual conduct" means any of the following committed against the dead body of a person:

(A) any conduct involving contact between the penis and the vulva, the penis and the penis, the penis and the anus, the mouth and the penis, the mouth and the anus, the vulva and the vulva, or the mouth and the vulva;

(B) any intrusion, however slight, by any part of an individual's body or any object into any part of a dead human body with the intent of arousing, appealing to, or gratifying the lust, passions, or sexual desire of any individual;

(C) any touching of the dead human body with the intent of arousing, appealing to, or gratifying the lust, passions, or sexual desire of any individual;

(D) masturbation; or

(E) bestiality.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 5211 is amended to read:

§ 5211. UNAUTHORIZED BURIAL OR REMOVAL; PENALTY

A person who buries, entombs, transports, or removes the dead body of a person without a burial-transit permit so to do, or in any other manner or at

any other time or place than as specified in such permit, shall be ~~imprisoned not more than five years or fined~~ subject to a civil penalty of not more than $1,000.00~~, or both~~.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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. 137.

Senator Cummings, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out Sec. 22, virtual currency kiosk moratorium, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof four new sections to be Secs. 22–25 to read as follows:

Sec. 22. 8 V.S.A. § 2571 is amended to read:

§ 2571. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Blockchain" has the same meaning as in 12 V.S.A. § 1913(a)(1).

(2) "Blockchain analytics" means a software service that uses data from various virtual currencies and their applicable blockchains to provide a risk rating specific to digital wallet addresses from users of virtual-currency kiosks.

(3) "Digital wallet" means hardware or software that enables individuals to store and use virtual currency.

(4) "Digital wallet address" means an alphanumeric identifier representing a destination on a blockchain for a virtual currency transfer that is associated with a digital wallet.

(5) "Exchange," used as a verb, means to assume or exercise control of virtual currency from or on behalf of a person, including momentarily, to buy, sell, trade, or convert:

(A) virtual currency for money, monetary value, bank credit, or one or more forms of virtual currency, or other consideration; or

(B) money, monetary value, bank credit, or other consideration for one or more forms of virtual currency.

(6) "Existing customer" means a consumer who:

(A) is engaging in a transaction at a virtual-currency kiosk in Vermont; and

(B) whose first transaction with the virtual-currency kiosk operator occurred more than 30 days prior.

(7) "New customer" means a consumer who:

(A) is engaging in a transaction at a virtual-currency kiosk in Vermont; and

(B) whose first transaction with the virtual-currency kiosk operator occurred not more than 30 days prior.

~~(2)~~(8) "Transfer" means to assume or exercise control of virtual currency from or on behalf of a person and to:

(A) credit the virtual currency to the account or digital wallet of another person;

(B) move the virtual currency from one account or digital wallet of a person to another account or digital wallet of the same person; or

(C) relinquish or transfer control or ownership of virtual currency to another person, digital wallet, distributed ledger address, or smart contract.

Sec. 23. 8 V.S.A. § 2574 is amended to read:

§ 2574. REQUIRED DISCLOSURES

(a) Licensee disclosures, generally. A person licensed under subchapter 2 of this chapter to engage in virtual-currency business activity shall provide the disclosures required by this section and any additional disclosure the Commissioner determines reasonably necessary for the protection of the public.

(1) A disclosure required by this section must be made separately from any other information provided by the licensee and in a clear and conspicuous manner in a record the person may keep.

(2) The Commissioner may waive one or more requirements in subsections (b)–(d) of this section and approve alternative disclosures proposed by a licensee if the Commissioner determines that the alternative

disclosure is more appropriate for the virtual-currency business activity and provides the same or equivalent information and protection to the public.

(b) Licensee disclosures prior to business activity. Before engaging in virtual-currency business activity with a person, a licensee shall disclose, to the extent applicable to the virtual-currency business activity the licensee will undertake with the person:

(1) a schedule of fees and charges the licensee may assess, the manner by which fees and charges will be calculated if they are not set in advance and disclosed, and the timing of the fees and charges, including general disclosure regarding mark-ups and mark-downs on purchases, sales, or exchanges of virtual currency in which the licensee or any affiliate thereof is acting in a principal capacity;

(2) whether the product or service provided by the licensee is covered by:

(A) a form of insurance or is otherwise guaranteed against loss by an agency of the United States:

(i) up to the full U.S. dollar equivalent of virtual currency purchased from the licensee or for control of virtual currency by the licensee as of the date of the placement or purchase, including the maximum amount provided by insurance under the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or otherwise available from the Securities Investor Protection Corporation; or

(ii) if not provided at the full U.S. dollar equivalent of virtual currency purchased from the licensee or for control of virtual currency by the licensee, the maximum amount of coverage for each person expressed in the U.S. dollar equivalent of the virtual currency; or

(B) private insurance against theft or loss, including cyber theft or theft by other means;

(3) the irrevocability of a transfer or exchange and any exception to irrevocability;

(4) a description of:

(A) liability for an unauthorized, mistaken, or accidental transfer or exchange;

(B) the person's responsibility to provide notice to the licensee of the transfer or exchange;

(C) the basis for any recovery by the person from the licensee;

(D) general error-resolution rights applicable to the transfer or exchange; and

(E) the method for the person to update the person's contact information with the licensee;

(5) that the date or time when the transfer or exchange is made and the person's account is debited may differ from the date or time when the person initiates the instruction to make the transfer or exchange;

(6) whether the person has a right to stop a preauthorized payment or revoke authorization for a transfer and the procedure to initiate a stop-payment order or revoke authorization for a subsequent transfer;

(7) the person's right to receive a receipt, trade ticket, or other evidence of the transfer or exchange;

(8) the person's right to at least 30 days' prior notice of a change in the licensee's fee schedule, other terms and conditions of operating its virtual-currency business activity with the person, and the policies applicable to the person's account; and

(9) that virtual currency is not money.

(c) Disclosures.

(1) Disclosures prior to each virtual-currency transaction. In connection with any virtual-currency transaction effected through a ~~money transmission~~ virtual-currency kiosk in this State, or in any transaction where the licensee or any affiliate thereof is acting in a principal capacity in a sale of virtual currency to, or purchase of virtual currency from, a customer, then immediately prior to effecting such a purchase or sale transaction with or on behalf of a customer, a licensee shall prominently disclose and shall require the customer to acknowledge and confirm the terms and conditions of the virtual-currency transaction, which shall include the following:

~~(1)~~(A) the type, value, date, precise time, and amount of the transaction; ~~and~~

~~(2)~~(B) the consideration charged for the transaction, including:

~~(A)~~(i) any charge, fee, commission, or other consideration for any trade, exchange, conversion, or transfer involving virtual currency; and

~~(B)~~(ii) any difference between the price paid by the customer for any virtual currency and the prevailing market price of such virtual currency, if any;

(C) for a customer of a virtual-currency kiosk, a description of the virtual-currency kiosk operator's refund policy, which shall be consistent with the requirements specified in subsections 2577(k) and (l) of this subchapter;

(D) for a customer of a virtual-currency kiosk, the customer warning described in subdivision (g)(1) of this section; and

(E) the daily transaction limit, if applicable.

(2) Disclosures for new kiosk accounts. When opening an account for a new customer, and prior to entering into an initial transaction for, on behalf of, or with such customer, each virtual-currency kiosk operator shall disclose relevant terms and conditions associated with its products, services, and activities and with virtual currency, generally, including disclosures substantially similar to the following:

(A) the customer's liability for unauthorized virtual-currency transactions;

(B) under what circumstances the virtual-currency kiosk operator will, absent a court or government order, disclose information concerning the customer's account to third parties;

(C) the customer's right to receive periodic account statements and valuations from the virtual-currency kiosk operator;

(D) the customer's right to receive a receipt, trade ticket, or other evidence of a transaction;

(E) the customer's right to prior notice of a change in the virtual-currency kiosk operator's rules or policies;

(F) a statement of the material risks associated with virtual-currency transactions, generally, as described in subsection (h) of this section;

(G) the name and telephone number of the Department of Financial Regulation and a statement disclosing that a customer may contact the Department with questions or complaints about a licensee; and

(H) such other disclosures as are customarily given in connection with the opening of customer accounts.

(d) Licensee receipt requirements. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (e) of this section, at the conclusion of a virtual-currency transaction with or on behalf of a person, a licensee shall provide the person with a receipt that contains:

(1) the name and contact information of the licensee, including information the person may need to ask a question or file a complaint;

(2) the type, value, date, precise time, and amount of the transaction expressed in U.S. currency;

(3) the consideration charged for the transaction, including:

(A) any charge, fee, commission, or other consideration for any trade, exchange, conversion, or transfer involving virtual currency; or

(B) the amount of any difference between the price paid by the customer for any virtual currency and the prevailing market price of such virtual currency, if any; and

(4) any other information required pursuant to section 2562 of this title.

(e) Licensee daily confirmation. If a licensee discloses that it will provide a daily confirmation in the initial disclosure under subsection ~~(e)~~(b) of this section, the licensee may elect to provide a single, daily confirmation for all transactions with or on behalf of a person on that day instead of a per-transaction confirmation.

(f) Kiosk transaction receipt. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, a virtual-currency kiosk operator shall provide a customer with both a paper and an electronic receipt in a retainable form for each virtual-currency transaction completed at a virtual-currency kiosk. In addition to the information required to be included in a receipt under subsection (d) of this section or under section 2562 of this title, each receipt for virtual-currency transaction completed at a virtual-currency kiosk shall include:

(1) the identification of any applicable digital wallet address to which virtual currency is transmitted;

(2) the full name of the account owner;

(3) any unique transaction identifiers;

(4) a prominent statement of the virtual-currency kiosk operator's refund obligations under this section, in a form approved by the Commissioner;

(5) a statement of the operator's liability for nondelivery or delayed delivery of virtual currency; and

(6) the name and telephone number of the Department of Financial Regulation and a statement disclosing that a customer may contact the Department with questions or complaints about an operator.

(g) Customer warning.

(1) Prior to entering into a virtual-currency transaction with a customer at a virtual-currency kiosk, and as required by subdivision (c)(1)(D) of this

section, each virtual-currency kiosk operator shall ensure a warning is disclosed to the customer substantially similar to the following:

Customer Notice. Please Read Carefully.

Did you receive a phone call from your bank, software provider, the police, or were you directed to make a payment for Social Security, a utility bill, an investment, warrants, or bail money at this kiosk? STOP

Is anyone on the phone pressuring you to make a payment of any kind? STOP

I understand that the purchase and sale of cryptocurrency may be a final, irreversible, and nonrefundable transaction.

I confirm I am sending funds to a digital wallet I own or directly have control over. I confirm that I am using funds gained from my own initiative to make my transaction.

(2) A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall ensure a customer has a readily accessible opportunity to end a transaction for any reason prior to its completion.

(h) Statement of material risks. As used in subdivision (c)(2)(F) of this section, a statement of material risks associated with virtual-currency transactions, generally, shall include disclosures substantially similar to the following:

(1) Virtual currency is not legal tender, is not backed by the government, and accounts and value balances are not subject to Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or Securities Investor Protection Corporation protections.

(2) Legislative and regulatory changes or actions at the State, federal, or international level may adversely affect the use, transfer, exchange, and value of virtual currency.

(3) Transactions in virtual currency may be irreversible and, accordingly, losses due to fraudulent or accidental transactions may not be recoverable.

(4) Some virtual-currency transactions shall be deemed to be made when recorded on a public ledger, which is not necessarily the date or time that the customer initiates the transaction.

(5) The value of virtual currency may be derived from the continued willingness of market participants to exchange fiat currency for virtual currency, which may result in the potential for permanent and total loss of

value of a particular virtual currency should the market for that virtual currency disappear.

(6) There is no assurance that a person who accepts a virtual currency as payment today will continue to do so in the future.

(7) The volatility and unpredictability of the price of virtual currency relative to fiat currency may result in significant loss over a short period of time.

(8) The nature of virtual currency may lead to an increased risk of fraud or cyber attack.

(9) The nature of virtual currency means that any technological difficulties experienced by the virtual-currency kiosk operator may prevent the access or use of a customer's virtual currency.

(10) Any bond or trust account maintained by the virtual-currency kiosk operator for the benefit of its customers may not be sufficient to cover all losses incurred by customers.

Sec. 24. 8 V.S.A. § 2577 is amended to read:

§ 2577. VIRTUAL-CURRENCY KIOSK OPERATORS

(a) Daily transaction limit.

(1) A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall not accept or dispense more than ~~$1,000.00~~ $2,000.00 of cash in a day in connection with virtual-currency transactions with a single, new customer in this State via one or more ~~money transmission~~ virtual-currency kiosks.

(2) A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall not accept or dispense more than $5,000.00 of cash in a day in connection with virtual-currency transactions with a single, existing customer in this State via one or more virtual-currency kiosks.

(b) Fee cap. The aggregate fees and charges, directly or indirectly, charged to a customer related to a single transaction or series of related transactions involving virtual currency effected through a money transmission kiosk in this State, including any difference between the price charged to a customer to buy, sell, exchange, swap, or convert virtual currency and the prevailing market value of such virtual currency at the time of such transaction, shall not exceed the greater of the following:

(1) $5.00; or

(2) ~~three~~ 15 percent of the U.S. dollar equivalent of virtual currency involved in the transaction or transactions.

(c) Single transaction. The purchase, sale, exchange, swap, or conversion of virtual currency, or the subsequent transfer of virtual currency, in a series of transactions shall be deemed to be a single transaction for purposes of ~~subsection (b)~~ subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

(d) Licensing requirement. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall comply with the licensing requirements of this subchapter to the extent that the virtual-currency kiosk operator engages in virtual-currency business activity.

(e) Operator accountability. If a virtual-currency kiosk operator allows or facilitates another person to engage in virtual-currency business activity via a ~~money transmission~~ virtual-currency kiosk in this State that is owned, operated, or managed by the virtual-currency kiosk operator, the virtual-currency kiosk operator shall do all of the following:

(1) ensure that the person engaging in virtual-currency business activity is licensed under subchapter 2 of this chapter to engage in virtual-currency business activity and complies with all other applicable provisions of this chapter;

(2) ensure that any charges collected from a customer via the ~~money transmission~~ virtual-currency kiosk comply with the ~~limits provided by~~ fee cap established in subsection (b) of this section; and

(3) comply with all other applicable provisions of this chapter.

(f) Moratorium. To protect the public safety and welfare and safeguard the rights of consumers, virtual-currency kiosks shall not be permitted to operate in Vermont prior to July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. This moratorium shall not apply to a virtual-currency kiosk that was duly licensed and operational in Vermont on or before June 30, 2024.

(g) ~~Report. On or before January 15, 2025, the Commissioner of Financial Regulation shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Finance on whether the requirements of this section coupled with relevant federal requirements are sufficient to protect customers in Vermont from fraudulent activity. If deemed necessary and appropriate by the Commissioner, the Commissioner may make recommendations for additional statutory or regulatory safeguards. In addition, the Commissioner shall make recommendations for enhanced oversight and monitoring of virtual-currency kiosks for the purpose of minimizing their use for illicit activities as described in the U.S. Government Accountability Office report on virtual currencies, GAO-22-105462, dated December 2021.~~ Customer identification. For each virtual-currency transaction occurring at a virtual-currency kiosk in this State, the virtual-currency kiosk operator shall verify the identity of the customer prior to

accepting payment from the customer. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall not allow a customer to engage in any transaction at a virtual-currency kiosk under any name, account, or identity other than the customer's own true name and identity. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall obtain a copy of a government-issued identification card that identifies the customer and shall collect additional customer information, including the customer's name, date of birth, telephone number, address, and email address prior to accepting any payment from a customer at a virtual-currency kiosk in this State. In addition, a virtual-currency kiosk operator shall take a photograph of the customer in a retainable format at the virtual-currency kiosk for each transaction. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall be strictly liable for any violation of this subsection.

(h) Customer support. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall offer live, toll-free, telephone customer support during the hours of operation of a virtual-currency kiosk. The customer support telephone number shall be displayed on the virtual-currency kiosk or on the virtual-currency kiosk screen.

(i) Mandatory live screening.

(1) A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall identify and speak by telephone with:

(A) a new customer over 60 years of age prior to such customer's first virtual-currency transaction with the virtual-currency kiosk operator; or

(B) a customer attempting to conduct more than $5,000.00 in virtual-currency transactions during any consecutive 10-day period.

(2) The virtual-currency kiosk operator's approval of a transaction subject to a mandatory live screening under this subsection shall be dependent upon its assessment of its communication with the customer during the screening.

(3) A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall record and retain a copy of each mandatory live screening.

(4) During the mandatory live screening, the virtual-currency kiosk operator shall:

(A) positively identify the customer;

(B) reconfirm any attestations made by the customer at the virtual-currency kiosk;

(C) discuss the purpose of the transaction; and

(D) discuss types of fraudulent schemes relating to virtual currency.

(j) Blockchain analytics. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall use blockchain analytics software and retain an established third party that specializes in performing blockchain analytics to assist in the prevention of sending purchased virtual currency from a virtual-currency kiosk operator to a digital wallet known to be affiliated with fraudulent activity at the time of a transaction. The Commissioner may request evidence from any virtual-currency kiosk operator of its current use of blockchain analytics.

(k) Full refund for new customers. The virtual-currency kiosk operator shall provide a full refund to a customer who was fraudulently induced to engage in a virtual-currency kiosk transaction, provided the fraudulently induced transaction occurred while the customer was a new customer and further provided the customer contacts the virtual-currency kiosk operator and a law enforcement or government agency to inform the operator and the agency of the fraudulent nature of the transaction within 90 days after the customer's last virtual-currency transaction with the virtual-currency kiosk operator. The refund shall include any fees charged in association with the fraudulently induced transaction.

(l) Fee refund for existing customers. The virtual-currency kiosk operator shall provide a fee refund to an existing customer who has been fraudulently induced to engage in a virtual-currency kiosk transaction, provided the customer contacts the virtual-currency kiosk operator and a law enforcement or government agency to inform the operator and the agency of the fraudulent nature of the transaction within 90 days after the last fraudulently induced transaction. The refund shall include all fees charged in association with the fraudulently induced transaction.

(m) Fraud prevention. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall take reasonable steps to detect and prevent fraud, including establishing and maintaining a written antifraud policy. The antifraud policy shall, at a minimum, include the following:

(1) the identification and assessment of fraud-related risk areas;

(2) procedures and controls to protect against identified risks;

(3) allocation of responsibility for monitoring risks;

(4) procedures for the periodic evaluation and revision of the antifraud procedures, controls, and monitoring mechanisms;

(5) procedures and controls that prevent more than one customer from using the same digital wallet;

(6) procedures and controls that enable the virtual-currency kiosk operator to prevent a digital wallet from being used at a virtual-currency kiosk

it operates if the operator knows or reasonably should know the digital wallet is affiliated with fraudulent activities; and

(7) policies and procedures for using a risk-based method for monitoring customers on a post transaction basis.

(n) Due diligence policy. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall maintain, implement, and enforce a written Enhanced Due Diligence Policy. The Policy shall be reviewed and approved by the virtual-currency kiosk operator's board of directors or an equivalent governing body of the virtual-currency kiosk operator. The Policy shall identify, at a minimum, individuals who are at risk of fraud based on age or mental capacity.

(o) Compliance policies. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall maintain, implement, and enforce written compliance policies and procedures. Such policies and procedures shall be reviewed and approved by the virtual-currency kiosk operator's board of directors or an equivalent governing body of the virtual-currency kiosk operator.

(p) Compliance officer.

(1) A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall designate and employ a compliance officer who meets the following requirements:

(A) is qualified to coordinate and monitor compliance with this section and all other applicable federal and State laws and regulations;

(B) is employed full-time by the virtual-currency kiosk operator; and

(C) is not an individual who owns more than 20 percent of the virtual-currency kiosk operator by whom the individual is employed.

(2) Compliance responsibilities required under federal and State law and regulation shall be completed by one or more full-time employees of the virtual-currency kiosk operator.

(q) Consumer protection officer. A virtual-currency kiosk operator shall designate and employ a consumer protection officer who meets the following requirements:

(1) is qualified to coordinate and monitor compliance with this section and all other applicable federal and State laws and regulations;

(2) is employed full-time by the virtual-currency kiosk operator; and

(3) is not an individual who owns more than 20 percent of the virtual-currency kiosk operator by whom the individual is employed.

(r) The Commissioner may adopt rules the Commissioner deems necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of this section, including with respect to

what constitutes fraudulent activity or a fraudulently induced transaction in the context of customer transactions at a virtual-currency kiosk.

Sec. 25. 8 V.S.A. § 13301 is amended to read:

§ 13301. CORPORATORS OF MUTUAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

(a) Persons named in the organizational documents constitute the original board of corporators of a mutual financial institution. Membership on this board continues until terminated by death, resignation, or disqualification as provided in this section.

(b) All corporators shall be residents of the geographic area that the financial institution serves or an area proximate to this geographic area. A person ~~may~~ shall not continue as a corporator after ceasing to be a resident of the financial institution's geographic area or an area proximate to this geographic area.

(c) Any corporator failing to attend the annual meeting of the board of corporators for two successive years ceases to be a member of the board unless reelected by a vote of the remaining corporators.

(d) The number of corporators may be fixed or altered by the internal governance documents of the financial institution, and vacancies may be filled by election at any annual meeting.

(e) More than 50 percent of all corporators shall be depositors of the financial institution.

(f) At least two-thirds of all corporators shall be independent. As used in this subsection, an "independent corporator" means an individual who is not an employee, director, or officer of the financial institution, its subsidiaries, or its affiliates.

(g) Corporators shall be fiduciaries of the depositor base and shall exercise their authority in the best interests of the depositors with a duty of loyalty and care. In exercising their duties as corporators, corporators shall consider the interests of the depositors, the borrowers, and other customers of the financial institution; the general benefit and economic well-being of the communities served by the financial institution; and the safety, soundness, and general business needs of the financial institution.

and by renumbering the remaining section to be numerically correct.

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.

Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

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

H. 493.

Message from the House No. 52

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 463. An act relating to technical corrections for the 2025 legislative session.

And has concurred therein.

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 50. An act relating to increasing the size of solar net metering projects that qualify for expedited registration.

And has concurred therein with proposal of amendment thereto, in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 24. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 2, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, May 2, 2025.

FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Rick Swanson of Stowe.

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the 1st day of May, 2025, he signed bills originating in the Senate of the following titles:

S. 9. An act relating to after-hours access to orders against sexual assault.

S. 30. An act relating to updating and reorganizing the health insurance statutes in 8 V.S.A. chapter 107.

Message from the House No. 53

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

H. 488. An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

And has refused to concur therein and asks for a Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses;

The Speaker appointed as members of such Committee on the part of the House:

Rep. Walker of Swanton
Rep. Corcoran of Bennington
Rep. Burke of Brattleboro.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

H. 493. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

And has refused to concur therein and asks for a Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses;

The Speaker appointed as members of such Committee on the part of the House:

Rep. Scheu of Middlebury
Rep. Harrison of Chittenden
Rep. Bluemle of Burlington.

Message from the House No. 54

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 505. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Barre.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 218. An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

And has concurred therein.

The House has concurred in the adoption of a proposed amendment to the Vermont Constitution entitled:

Prop 3. Declaration of Rights; right to collectively bargain.

The Governor has informed the House that on May 1, 2025, he approved and signed bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 10. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Barre.

H. 243. An act relating to the regulation of business organizations.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 119. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Oak Meadow homeschool curriculum developer and distance learning school on its 50th anniversary and extending best wishes for the future.

H.C.R. 120. House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as National Tennis Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 121. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Rutland High School cheerleading program on winning a record 11th consecutive Division I championship.

H.C.R. 122. House concurrent resolution recognizing the week of May 6–12 as National Nurses Week in Vermont.

H.C.R. 123. House concurrent resolution honoring Shaun Murphy of Guilford for his nearly quarter century of exemplary educational governance public service.

H.C.R. 124. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Bennington Free Library on its 160th anniversary.

H.C.R. 125. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 30th anniversary of Garlic Town U.S.A., a celebration of "flavor, community, and tradition".

H.C.R. 126. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Spirit of the ADA Award winners.

H.C.R. 127. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of Act 91 of 2000, establishing Vermont as the first state to legalize civil unions.

H.C.R. 128. House concurrent resolution designating May 6, 2025 as Homelessness Awareness Day in Vermont.

H.C.R. 129. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered concurrent resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

S.C.R. 5. Senate concurrent resolution commemorating the centennial of Porter Medical Center in Middlebury.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Bills Referred to Committee on Finance

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Finance:

H. 401. An act relating to exemptions for food manufacturing establishments.

H. 472. An act relating to professions and occupations regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation.

Bill Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, the following bill having failed to meet crossover and being released by the Committee on Rules was referred to its committee of jurisdiction:

H. 364. An act relating to approval of the annexation of property by the Village of Swanton.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time:

H. 505. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Barre.

And pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, was referred to the Committee on Rules.

Bills Passed in Concurrence with Proposals of Amendment

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

H. 41. An act relating to abuse of the dead body of a person.

H. 137. An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 219.

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

An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

Senate Resolution Adopted

S.R. 12.

Senate resolution of the following title was read the third time and adopted:

Senate resolution reaffirming the friendship between the State of Vermont and Taiwan and supporting enhanced Vermont-Taiwan bilateral relations and Taiwan's participation in international organizations.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 98.

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

An act relating to confirmatory adoptions.

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. 15A V.S.A. § 1-114 is added to read:

§ 1-114. CONFIRMATORY ADOPTION FOR CHILDREN BORN THROUGH ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Assisted reproduction" means a method of causing pregnancy other than sexual intercourse and includes:

(A) intrauterine, intracervical, or vaginal insemination;

(B) donation of gametes;

(C) donation of embryos;

(D) in vitro fertilization and transfer of embryos; and

(E) intracytoplasmic sperm injection.

(2) "Donor" means a person who contributes a gamete or gametes or an embryo or embryos to another person for assisted reproduction or gestation, whether or not for consideration. This term does not include:

(A) a person who gives birth to a child conceived by assisted reproduction except as otherwise provided in 15C V.S.A. chapter 8; or

(B) a parent under 15C V.S.A. chapter 7 or an intended parent under 15C V.S.A. chapter 8.

(3) "Marriage" includes civil union and any legal relationship that provides substantially the same rights, benefits, and responsibilities as marriage and is recognized as valid in the state or jurisdiction in which it was entered.

(4) "Petitioners" means the persons filing a petition for adoption in accordance with this section.

(b) Whenever a child is born as a result of assisted reproduction and the person or persons who did not give birth are a parent pursuant to 15C V.S.A. § 703 or presumed parent pursuant to 15C V.S.A. § 401 and the parents seek to file a petition to confirm parentage through an adoption of the child, the court shall permit the parents to file a petition for adoption in accordance with this section.

(c) A complete petition shall comprise the following:

(1) the petition for adoption signed by all parents;

(2) a copy of the petitioners' marriage certificate, if petitioners are married;

(3) a declaration signed by the parents explaining the circumstances of the child's birth through assisted reproduction, attesting to their consent to assisted reproduction, and stating that there are no other persons with a claim to parentage of the child under Title 15C; and

(4) a certified copy of the child's birth certificate.

(d) A complete petition for adoption, as described in subsection (c) of this section, shall serve as the petitioners' written consents to adoption and no additional consent or notice shall be required.

(e) If the petitioners conceived through assisted reproduction with donor gametes or donor embryos, the court shall not require notice of the adoption to the donor or consent to the adoption by the donor.

(f) Unless otherwise ordered by the court for good cause shown and supported by written findings of the court demonstrating good cause, for purposes of evaluating and granting a petition for adoption pursuant to this section, the court shall not require:

(1) an in-person hearing or appearance, although the court may require a remote hearing;

(2) an investigation or home study by, a notice to, or the approval of the Department for Children and Families;

(3) a criminal-record check;

(4) verification that the child is not registered with the federal register for missing children or the central register; or

(5) a minimum residency period in the home of the petitioners.

(g) The court shall grant the adoption under this section and issue an adoption decree promptly after the filing of a complete petition and upon finding that:

(1) for marital parents, the parent who gave birth and the spouse were married at the time of the child's birth and the child was born through assisted reproduction; or

(2) for nonmarital parents:

(A) the person who gave birth and the nonmarital parent consented to the assisted reproduction; and

(B) no other person has a claim to parentage pursuant to Title 15C or that any other person with a claim to parentage of the child who is required to be provided notice of, or who must consent to, the adoption has been notified or provided consent to the adoption.

(h) Unless notice has been waived or consent given for the adoption, a copy of the petition and notice of a proceeding under this section shall be served upon any person entitled to notice within 30 days after the petition is filed. The notice shall include the address and telephone number of the court where the petition is pending and a statement that the person served with the notice and petition shall file a written appearance in the proceeding within 20 days after service in order to participate in the proceeding and to receive further notice of the proceeding, including notice of the time and place of any hearing. Service of the notice and petition shall be made in a manner appropriate under the Vermont Rules of Probate Procedure unless the court otherwise directs. Proof of service on each person entitled to receive notice shall be on file with the court before the court acts on the petition.

(i) A petition to adopt a child pursuant to this section shall not be denied on the basis that any of the petitioners' parentage is already presumed or legally recognized in Vermont.

(j) When parentage is presumed or legally recognized pursuant to 15C V.S.A. § 201, the fact that a person did not petition for adoption pursuant to this section shall not be considered as evidence when two or more presumptions conflict, nor in determining the best interests of the child.

Sec. 2. 14 V.S.A. § 2622 is amended to read:

§ 2622. DEFINITIONS

As used in this article:

(1) "Child" means an individual who is under 18 years of age and who is the subject of a petition for guardianship filed pursuant to section 2623 of this title.

(2) "Child in need of guardianship" means:

(A) A child who the parties consent is in need of adult care because of any one of the following:

(i) The child's custodial parent has a serious or terminal illness.

(ii) A custodial parent's physical or mental health prevents the parent from providing proper care and supervision for the child.

(iii) The child's home is no longer habitable as the result of a natural disaster.

(iv) A custodial parent of the child is incarcerated.

(v) A custodial parent of the child is on active military duty.

(vi) A custodial parent of the child is unavailable to care for the child because the parent has been subject to an adverse immigration action.

(vii) The parties have articulated and agreed to another reason that guardianship is in the best interests of the child.

(B) A child who is:

(i) abandoned or abused by the child's parent;

(ii) without proper parental care, subsistence, education, medical, or other care necessary for the child's well-being; or

(iii) without or beyond the control of the child's parent.

(3) "Custodial parent" means a parent who, at the time of the commencement of the guardianship proceeding, has the right and responsibility to provide the routine daily care and control of the child. The rights of the custodial parent may be held solely or shared and may be subject to the court-ordered right of the other parent to have contact with the child. If physical parental rights and responsibilities are shared pursuant to court order, both parents shall be considered "custodial parents" for purposes of this subdivision.

(4) "Nonconsensual guardianship" means a guardianship with respect to which:

(A) a parent is opposed to establishing the guardianship; or

(B) a parent seeks to terminate a guardianship that the parent previously agreed to establish.

(5) "Noncustodial parent" means a parent who is not a custodial parent at the time of the commencement of the guardianship proceeding.

(6) "Parent" means a child's biological or adoptive parent, including custodial parents; noncustodial parents; parents with legal or physical responsibilities, or both; and parents whose rights have never been adjudicated.

(7) "Parent-child contact" means the right of a parent to have visitation with the child by court order.

(8) "Standby guardianship" means a consensual guardianship agreement between the custodial parent and their chosen guardian that meets the requirements of section 2626a of this title, in which the custodial parent has been subject to an adverse immigration action that has rendered the parent unavailable to care for their child.

(9) "Adverse immigration action" means:

(A) arrest or apprehension by any federal law enforcement officer for an alleged violation of federal immigration law;

(B) arrest, detention, or custody by the Department of Homeland Security, or a federal, state, or local agency authorized by or acting on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security, for an alleged violation of federal immigration law;

(C) departure from the United States under an order of removal, deportation, exclusion, voluntary departure, or expedited removal or a stipulation of voluntary departure;

(D) the denial, revocation, or delay of the issuance of a visa or transportation letter by the Department of State;

(E) the denial, revocation, or delay of the issuance of a parole document or reentry permit by the Department of Homeland Security; or

(F) the denial of admission or entry into the United States by the Department of Homeland Security or other local or state officer acting on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security.

Sec. 3. 14 V.S.A. § 2623 is amended to read:

§ 2623. PETITION FOR GUARDIANSHIP OF MINOR; SERVICE

(a) A parent or a person interested in the welfare of a minor may file a petition with the Probate Division of the Superior Court for the appointment of a guardian for a child. The petition shall state:

(1) the names and addresses of the parents, the child, and the proposed guardian;

(2) the proposed guardian's relationship to the child;

(3) the names of all members of the proposed guardian's household and each person's relationship to the proposed guardian and the child;

(4) that the child is alleged to be a child in need of guardianship;

(5) specific reasons with supporting facts why guardianship is sought;

(6) whether the parties agree that the child is in need of guardianship and that the proposed guardian should be appointed as guardian;

(7) the child's current school and grade level;

(8) if the proposed guardian intends to change the child's current school, the name and location of the proposed new school and the estimated date when the child would enroll;

(9) the places where the child has lived during the last five years, and the names and present addresses of the persons with whom the child has lived during that period; ~~and~~

(10) any prior or current court proceedings, child support matters, or parent-child contact orders involving the child;

(11) whether the petition seeks a standby guardianship and the reasons for the request, including the adverse immigration action that the custodial parent is subject to; and

(12) whether the petition is an emergency petition filed pursuant to subdivision 2625(f)(1) of this title.

(b)(1) A petition for guardianship of a child under this section shall be served on all parties and interested persons as provided by Rule 4 of the Vermont Rules of Probate Procedure.

(2)(A) The Probate Division may waive the notice requirements of subdivision (1) of this subsection (b) with respect to a parent if the court finds that:

(i) the identity of the parent is unknown; ~~or~~

(ii) the location of the parent is unknown and cannot be determined with reasonable effort; or

(iii)(I) the custodial parent is detained as the result of an adverse immigration action; and

(II) the guardian and the custodial parent's attorney are unable to contact the custodial parent after making reasonable efforts.

(B) After a guardianship for a child is created, the Probate Division shall reopen the proceeding at the request of a parent of the child who did not receive notice of the proceeding as required by this subsection (b).

Sec. 4. 14 V.S.A. § 2625 is amended to read:

§ 2625. HEARING; COUNSEL; GUARDIAN AD LITEM

(a) The Probate Division shall schedule a hearing upon the filing of the petition and shall provide notice of the hearing to all parties and interested persons who were provided notice under subdivision 2623(c)(1) of this title.

(b) The child shall attend the hearing if ~~he or she~~ the child is 14 years of age or older unless the child's presence is excused by the court for good cause. The child may attend the hearing if ~~he or she~~ the child is less than 14 years of age.

(c) The court shall appoint counsel for the child if the child will be called as a witness. In all other cases, the court may appoint counsel for the child.

(d)(1) The child may be called as a witness only if the court finds after hearing that:

(A) the child's testimony is necessary to assist the court in determining the issue before it;

(B) the probative value of the child's testimony outweighs the potential detriment to the child; and

(C) the evidence sought is not reasonably available by any other means.

(2) The examination of a child called as a witness may be conducted by the court in chambers in the presence of such other persons as the court may specify and shall be recorded.

(e) The court may appoint a guardian ad litem for the child on motion of a party or on the court's own motion.

(f)(1) The court may grant an emergency guardianship petition filed ex parte by the proposed guardian, or by the custodial parent's attorney in the case of a standby guardianship petition filed pursuant to section 2626a of this title, if the court finds that:

(A)(i) both parents are deceased or medically incapacitated; ~~and~~ or

(ii) in the case of a standby guardianship petition filed pursuant to section 2626a of this title, the custodial parent has been subject to an adverse

immigration action that renders the parent unavailable to care for the child; and

(B) the best interests of the child require that a guardian be appointed without delay and before a hearing is held.

(2) If the court grants an emergency guardianship petition pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection (f), it shall schedule a hearing on the petition as soon as practicable and in no event more than three business days after the petition is filed.

Sec. 5. 14 V.S.A. § 2626a is added to read:

§ 2626a. CONSENSUAL STANDBY GUARDIANSHIP

(a)(1) If the petition requests a consensual standby guardianship, the petition shall include or be accompanied by a consent signed by the custodial parent attesting that the custodial parent understands the nature of the standby guardianship and knowingly and voluntarily consents to the standby guardianship.

(2) The consent required by this subsection shall be on a form approved by the Court Administrator.

(b)(1) The court shall schedule a hearing on the petition within 14 days. The custodial parent shall be permitted to appear at and participate in the hearing remotely.

(2) On or before the date of the hearing, the parties shall file an agreement between the proposed guardian and the custodial parents. The agreement shall provide:

(A) that the parties are creating a standby guardianship that is effective only if the custodial parent has been subject to an adverse immigration action that renders the custodial parent unavailable to care for the child;

(B) the responsibilities of the guardian;

(C) the responsibilities of the parents;

(D) the expected duration of the guardianship, if known;

(E) parent-child contact and parental involvement in decision making; and

(F) that the guardianship shall presumptively terminate if the custodial parent is released from custody and reunited with the child.

(3) Any party may notify the court that the guardianship is presumptively terminated pursuant to subdivision (2)(F) of this subsection.

(c) Vermont Rule of Probate Procedure 43 (relaxed rules of evidence in probate proceedings) shall apply to hearings under this section.

(d) The court shall grant the petition if it finds after the hearing by clear and convincing evidence that:

(1) the child is a child in need of guardianship as defined in subdivision 2622(2)(A) of this title because the parent has been subject to an adverse immigration action that renders the parent unavailable to care for the child;

(2) the child's custodial parents knowingly and voluntarily consented to the standby guardianship;

(3) the guardian or the custodial parent's attorney made reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the proceeding;

(4) the agreement is voluntary;

(5) the proposed guardian is suitable; and

(6) the guardianship is in the best interests of the child.

(e) There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the guardianship is in the best interests of the child if:

(1) the custodial parent has been subject to an adverse immigration action and is unavailable to care for their child;

(2) all parties consented to the guardianship; and

(3) the custodial parent is represented by an attorney.

(f) If the court grants the petition, it shall approve the agreement at the hearing and issue an order establishing a guardianship under section 2628 of this title within 45 days after the petition was filed, unless the court extends the time for issuing the order for good cause shown. The order shall be consistent with the terms of the parties' agreement unless the court finds that the agreement was not reached voluntarily or is not in the best interests of the child.

Sec. 6. 14 V.S.A. § 2628 is amended to read:

§ 2628. GUARDIANSHIP ORDER

(a) If the court grants a petition for guardianship of a child under subsection 2626(d), 2626a(d), or 2627(d) of this title, the court shall enter an order establishing a guardianship and naming the proposed guardian as the child's guardian.

(b) A guardianship order issued under this section shall include provisions addressing the following matters:

(1) the powers and duties of the guardian consistent with section 2629 of this title;

(2) the expected duration of the guardianship, if known;

(3) a family plan on a form approved by the Court Administrator that:

(A) in a consensual case is consistent with the parties' agreement; or

(B) in a nonconsensual case includes, at a minimum, provisions that address parent-child contact consistent with section 2630 of this title; and

(4) the process for reviewing the order consistent with section 2631 of this title.

Sec. 7. 14 V.S.A. § 2629 is amended to read:

§ 2629. POWERS AND DUTIES OF GUARDIAN

(a) The court shall specify the powers and duties of the guardian in the guardianship order.

(b) The duties of a custodial guardian shall include the duty to:

(1) take custody of the child and establish ~~his or her~~ the child's place of residence, provided that a guardian shall not change the residence of the child to a location outside the State of Vermont without prior authorization by the court following notice to the parties and an opportunity for hearing;

(2) make decisions related to the child's education;

(3) make decisions related to the child's physical and mental health, including consent to medical treatment and medication;

(4) make decisions concerning the child's contact with others, provided that the guardian shall comply with all provisions of the guardianship order regarding parent-child contact and contact with siblings;

(5) receive funds paid for the support of the child, including child support and government benefits; and

(6) file an annual status report to the Probate Division, with a copy to each parent at ~~his or her~~ the parent's last known address, including the following information:

(A) the current address of the child and each parent;

(B) the child's health care and health needs, including any medical and mental health services the child received;

(C) the child's educational needs and progress, including the name of the child's school, day care, or other early education program, the child's grade level, and the child's educational achievements;

(D) contact between the child and ~~his or her~~ the child's parents, including the frequency and duration of the contact and whether it was supervised;

(E) how the parents have been involved in decision making for the child;

(F) how the guardian has carried out ~~his or her~~ the guardian's responsibilities and duties, including efforts made to include the child's parents in the child's life;

(G) the child's strengths, challenges, and any other areas of concern; and

(H) recommendations with supporting reasons as to whether the guardianship order should be continued, modified, or terminated.

(c) In the case of a standby guardianship petition filed pursuant to section 2626a of this title, the guardian shall provide status reports to the custodial parent at the parent's last known email address and to the custodial parent's attorney at the attorney's last known address.

Sec. 8. 14 V.S.A. § 2632 is amended to read:

§ 2632. TERMINATION

(a) A parent may file a motion to terminate a guardianship at any time. The motion shall be filed with the Probate Division that issued the guardianship order and served on all parties and interested persons.

(b)(1) If the motion to terminate is made with respect to a consensual guardianship established under section 2626 of this title or a standby guardianship established under section 2626a of this title, the court shall grant the motion and terminate the guardianship unless the guardian files a motion to continue the guardianship within 30 days after the motion to terminate is served. In the case of a standby guardianship established under section 2626a of this title, the court may, for good cause shown, accept filings that do not meet the format and signing requirements for the motion under Vermont Rules of Probate Procedure 10 and 11.

(2) If the guardian files a motion to continue the guardianship, the matter shall be set for hearing and treated as a nonconsensual guardianship proceeding under section 2627 of this title. The parent shall not be required to show a change in circumstances, and the court shall not grant the motion to

continue the guardianship unless the guardian establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the minor is a child in need of guardianship under subdivision 2622(2)(B) of this title. In the case of a standby guardianship established under section 2626 of this title, the custodial parent shall be permitted to appear at and participate in the hearing remotely.

(3) If the court grants the motion to continue, it shall issue an order establishing a guardianship under section 2628 of this title.

(c)(1) If the motion to terminate the guardianship is made with respect to a nonconsensual guardianship established under section 2627 or subdivision 2632(b)(3) of this title, the court shall dismiss the motion unless the parent establishes that a change in circumstances has occurred since the previous guardianship order was issued.

(2) If the court finds that a change in circumstances has occurred since the previous guardianship order was issued, the court shall grant the motion to terminate the guardianship unless the guardian establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the minor is a child in need of guardianship under subdivision 2622(2)(B) of this title.

Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 1 shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(b) Secs. 2–8 and this section shall take effect on passage.

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.

Proposals of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 494.

Senator Harrison, for the Committee on Institutions, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

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

First: In Sec. 1, legislative intent, by striking out subsection (a) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (a) to read as follows:

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that of the $111,965,288.44 authorized in this act, not more than $62,314,761.44 shall be appropriated in

the first year of the biennium, and the remainder shall be appropriated in the second year.

Second: By striking out Sec. 2, State buildings, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 2 to read as follows:

Sec. 2. STATE BUILDINGS

(a) The following sums are appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services, and the Commissioner is authorized to direct funds appropriated in this section to the projects contained in this section; however, no project shall be canceled unless the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions are notified before that action is taken.

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026:

(1) Statewide, major maintenance: $7,138,401.00

(2) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance: $1,500,000.00

(3) Statewide, Art in State Buildings Program: $75,000.00

(4) Rutland, Asa Bloomer Building roof repair and sewage system upgrades: $1,500,000.00

(5) Rutland, multimodal garage renovation: $600,000.00

(6) Middlesex, Print and Postal uninterruptable power supply upgrade: $58,279.44

(7) Waterbury, State Office Complex historic core roof replacement: $2,000,000.00

(8) Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs: $1,500,000.00

(c) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027:

(1) Statewide, major maintenance: $8,500,000.00

(2) Statewide, planning, reuse, and contingency: $250,000.00

(3) Statewide, physical security enhancements: $250,000.00

(4) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance: $850,000.00

(5) Statewide, Art in State Buildings Program: $75,000.00

(6) Montpelier, State House replacement of historic interior finishes: $50,000.00

(7) Montpelier, 120 State Street HVAC – steam lines interior renovation: $2,000,000.00

(8) Middlesex, Vermont State Archives roof replacement, main building: $1,000,000.00

(9) Waterbury, State Office Complex historic core roof replacement: $2,000,000.00

(10) Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs: $250,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026	$14,371,680.44
Appropriation – FY 2027	$15,225,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 2	$29,596,680.44

Third: By striking out Sec. 4, commerce and community development, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 4 to read as follows:

Sec. 4. COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance at statewide historic sites: $550,000.00

(2) Vermont Underwater Historic Preserves: $46,000.00

(3) Roadside historic site markers: $25,000.00

(4) Bennington, Battle Monument, maintenance of safety fencing, restoration, planning, and design: $425,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance at statewide historic sites: $550,000.00

(2) Vermont Underwater Historic Preserves: $46,000.00

(3) Roadside historic site markers: $25,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026	$1,046,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$621,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 4	$1,667,000.00

Fourth: By striking out Sec. 5, grant programs, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 5 to read as follows:

Sec. 5. GRANT PROGRAMS

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 for the Building Communities Grants established in 24 V.S.A. chapter 137:

(1) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Preservation Grant Program: $250,000.00

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: $250,000.00

(3) To the Vermont Council on the Arts for the Cultural Facilities Grant Program, the sum of which may be used to match funds that may be made available from the National Endowment for the Arts, provided that all capital funds are made available to the Cultural Facilities Grant Program: $250,000.00

(4) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Recreational Facilities Grant Program: $250,000.00

(5) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Human Services and Educational Facilities Competitive Grant Program: $250,000.00

(6) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Regional Economic Development Grant Program: $250,000.00

(7) To the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 for the Building Communities Grants established in 24 V.S.A. chapter 137:

(1) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Preservation Grant Program: $300,000.00

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: $300,000.00

(3) To the Vermont Council on the Arts for the Cultural Facilities Grant Program, the sum of which may be used to match funds that may be made available from the National Endowment for the Arts, provided that all capital funds are made available to the Cultural Facilities Grant Program: $300,000.00

(4) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Recreational Facilities Grant Program: $300,000.00

(5) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Human Services and Educational Facilities Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(6) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Regional Economic Development Grant Program: $300,000.00

(7) To the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the sums appropriated in subdivisions (a)(5) and (b)(5) of this section be equally allocated between grants for human services and grants for educational facilities.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$1,800,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$2,100,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 5	$3,900,000.00

Fifth: By striking out Sec. 14, judiciary, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new Sec. 14 to read as follows:

Sec. 14. JUDICIARY

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Judiciary for the following projects:

(1) Woodstock Courthouse, purchase and installation of backup power system: $100,000.00

(2) Essex County Courthouse, connector and security upgrades: $3,685,910.00

(3) Lamoille County Courthouse, purchase and installation of backup power system: $190,000.00

(b) The sum of $1,100,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$5,075,910.00
Total Appropriation – Section 14	$5,075,910.00

Sixth: In Sec. 19, FY 2026 and 2027; capital projects; FY 2026 appropriations act; intent; authorizations, by striking out subsection (c) and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c) Authorizations; Capital Infrastructure subaccount. In FY 2026, spending authority for the following capital projects from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments are authorized as follows:

(1) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide major maintenance: $861,599.00

(2) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide planning, reuse, and contingency: $250,000.00

(3) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide physical security enhancements: $250,000.00

(4) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for State House repointing: $219,500.00

(5) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for an uninterruptable power supply system for the Middlesex print and postal facility: $250,000.00

(6) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction: $6,900,000.00

(7) to the Vermont Veterans' Home for the design and construction of the American unit: $1,500,000.00

(8) to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Bennington Veterans Incubator Farm at the Vermont Veterans' Home: $45,000.00

(9) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Bennington, high school redevelopment housing infrastructure: $1,100,000.00

(10) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Barre, Prospect Heights housing infrastructure: $1,000,000.00

(11) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Brattleboro, Winston Prouty Center housing infrastructure: $1,000,000.00

(12) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for a grant to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to support a site study focused on economic development, parking, housing, and flood mitigation for the 1.6-acre parcel at 87 State Street and parcels at 89 State Street and 42 Court Street: $100,000.00

(13) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for a competitive grant to establish a new recovery residence, per the criteria of the Vermont Recovery Housing Program Action Plan: $250,000.00

(14) to the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the purchase of a fire apparatus: $275,000.00

(15) to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Lake Champlain Walleye Association, Inc. to upgrade and repair the Walleye rearing, restoration, and stocking infrastructure: $25,000.00

(16) to the Department of Public Safety for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the dry hydrant program: $35,000.00

Seventh: By adding a new section to be Sec. 22a to read as follows:

Sec. 22a. CASH FUND; JOINT FISCAL OFFICE; REPORT

On or before December 15, 2025, the Joint Fiscal Office shall submit a report to the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions on considerations for use of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments under 32 V.S.A. § 1001b that:

(1) provides the historical context, including the economic rationale, for the Cash Fund;

(2) compares financial management practices for expenditures made through cash and through bonded dollars, including long-term financial impacts;

(3) distinguishes between the intended uses of the Capital Infrastructure subaccount and the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount;

(4) describes, for each year since the Cash Fund's inception:

(A) the sources of funds; and

(B) the annual expenditures from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount; and

(5) outlines the current legislative process by which appropriations are made from the Cash Fund.

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

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposals of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Institutions.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Institutions?, Senators Norris and Perchlik moved that the report of the Committee on

Institutions be amended in Sec. 19, FY 2026 and 2027; capital projects; FY 2026 appropriations act; intent; authorizations, in subsection (c), by striking out subdivision (13) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (13) to read as follows:

(13) to the Department of Housing and Community Development for Hope Grove Recovery to establish a new recovery residence in St. Albans: $250,000.00

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the proposals of amendment of the Committee on Institutions, as amended, were agreed to.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the the bill be read a third time?, Senators White, Clarkson and Major moved to amend the Senate proposal of amendment by adding two new sections to be Sec. 23a and Sec. 23b to read as follows:

Sec. 23a. SOUTHEAST STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; PLAN

On or before December 15, 2025, the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall submit an actionable plan to the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions for use of the Southeast State Correctional Facility in Windsor. In developing the plan, the Commissioner shall take account of previous legislatively commissioned reports on the Southeast State Correctional Facility and may select a plan from among the uses identified in previous reports. If the Commissioner elects not to submit a plan from among the uses identified in previous reports, the Commissioner shall provide an explanation of the Commissioner's decision to submit a new use for the Southeast State Correctional Facility.

Sec. 23b. SOUTHEAST STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; TRANSFER TO TOWN OF WINDSOR

Notwithstanding 29 V.S.A. § 166(b), the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall, not earlier than January 15, 2026, transfer to the Town of Windsor the property known as the Southeast State Correctional Facility, located at 546 State Farm Road, Windsor, Vermont, provided that the Commissioner shall transfer the property only once:

(1) the State has removed from the property all unsafe buildings and fencing; and

(2) the sum of $2,000,000.00 is appropriated to accompany the transfer of the property to the Town of Windsor, Vermont.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate proposal of amendment be amended as recommended by Senators White, Clarkson and Major?, Senator White requested that the question be divided.

Thereupon, (Sec. 23a) of the proposal of amendment was disagreed to.

Thereupon, (Sec. 23b) of the proposal of amendment was disagreed to.

Thereupon, third reading of the bill was ordered.

Committee of Conference Appointed

H. 488.

An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

Was taken up. Pursuant to the request of the House, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Westman
Senator Perchlik
Senator White

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

Committee of Conference Appointed

H. 493.

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

Was taken up. Pursuant to the request of the House, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Perchlik
Senator Westman
Senator Lyons

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

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Plunkett addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Vyhovsky, his remarks were entered into the Journal.

“Mr. President,

“I’ve heard 'due process' talked about a lot over the past few weeks. And my cold lawyer's heart grew three sizes when I heard that phrase elevated to the status of a rallying cry.

"It has been said that due process is the cornerstone of our justice system, the promise we make to every person who stands before the law. This week, that promise was kept, and we saw that even lawyers and judges can be heroes.

"But I rise in warning: due process is not a law unto itself—it is a question to ask; it is a question to ask when a law is enforced — the question of 'What process is due?' — usually in very difficult circumstances. At those times, it is easy to fall back on procedures, and regulations, and policies; to simply read what is written and not think about the substance behind the process.

"And if I may read from a text, Mr. President? 'The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be or do either good or evil.' That was Hannah Arendt.

"Vermont has made up its mind.

"Vermonters know that the process to become a citizen should embody our nation's promise of freedom, and we know it should not be corrupted into a dishonest undue process that walks our friends, our neighbors, our guests, our workers, into jail.

"So, we must resist the temptation to let 'due process' alone define our actions. Injustice often thrives not through overt malice, but through unthinking acts of power without reflection. Instead, we must ask if every step we take is guided by the principles of fairness, liberty, and humanity. That is the process that is due.

"Thank you, Mr. President."

Senate Concurrent Resolution

The following joint concurrent resolution, having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, was adopted on the part of the Senate:

Offered By Senators Hardy and Heffernan,

Offered by Reps. Birong and others,

S.C.R. 5.

Senate concurrent resolution commemorating the centennial of Porter Medical Center in Middlebury.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having

requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Rep. Mrowicki,

H.C.R. 119.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Oak Meadow homeschool curriculum developer and distance learning school on its 50th anniversary and extending best wishes for the future.

Offered by Reps. Graning and others,

Offered by Senator Major,

H.C.R. 120.

House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2025 as National Tennis Month in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Howard and others,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 121.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Rutland High School cheerleading program on winning a record 11th consecutive Division I championship.

Offered by Reps. Cordes and others,

H.C.R. 122.

House concurrent resolution recognizing the week of May 6–12 as National Nurses Week in Vermont.

Offered by Reps. Eastes and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 123.

House concurrent resolution honoring Shaun Murphy of Guilford for his nearly quarter century of exemplary educational governance public service.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 124.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Bennington Free Library on its 160th anniversary.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 125.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 30th anniversary of Garlic Town U.S.A., a celebration of "flavor, community, and tradition".

Offered by Reps. Marcotte and others,

H.C.R. 126.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2024 Spirit of the ADA Award winners.

Offered by Rep. Emmons,

Offered by Senator Cummings,

H.C.R. 127.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of Act 91 of 2000, establishing Vermont as the first state to legalize civil unions.

Offered by Reps. McGill and others,

H.C.R. 128.

House concurrent resolution designating May 6, 2025 as Homelessness Awareness Day in Vermont.

Offered by Rep. Malay,

H.C.R. 129.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at nine o’clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 24.

TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

H. 454.

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 transforming Vermont's education governance, quality, and finance systems.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 25.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 25. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 9, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, May 9, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, May 13, 2025.

Third Reading Ordered

S.R. 14.

Senator Ingalls, for the Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred Senate resolution entitled:

Senate resolution strongly urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to expedite the establishment and implementation of an avian influenza vaccine national reserve and distribution system for small- and medium-sized poultry farms.

Reported that the resolution ought to be adopted.

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

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 36.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the Medicaid payment model for residential substance use disorder treatment services.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill as follows:

First: In Sec. 4, repeal, by striking out "public inebriates" and inserting in lieu thereof "persons who are incapacitated"

Second: By inserting a new Sec. 6 and a new section to be Sec. 7 to read as follows:

Sec. 6. REPORTS; SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING FOR PERSONS WHO ARE INCAPACITATED

(a)(1) The Departments of Health and of Mental Health's existing plan to expand services and programming for persons who are incapacitated pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 4810 shall prioritize Chittenden County.

(2) On or before February 15, 2026, the Departments of Health and of Mental Health shall jointly provide a presentation to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare describing efforts to expand services and programming for persons who are incapacitated pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(b) On or before February 15, 2026, the Department of Corrections shall provide a presentation to the House Committees on Corrections and Institutions, on Health Care, and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Institutions and on Health and Welfare describing efforts to reinstate the practice of connecting persons who are in a correctional facility due to incapacitation pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 4810 with appropriate community-based substance use recovery providers.

Sec. 7. REPORTS; HUMAN SERVICES BOARD PROCEEDINGS

(a) On or before December 15, 2025, the Agency of Human Services, in consultation with the Human Services Board, Office of the Attorney General, each of the Agency's departments with cases before the Human Services Board, community partners, and individuals with lived experience as appellants before the Board, shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and to the Senate

Committee on Health and Welfare providing the following information and recommendations regarding proceedings before the Board:

(1) a proposal that attorneys representing the Agency or departments participate in training that balances the attorney's ethical obligation to zealously represent the attorney's client with the respectful, trauma-informed treatment of appellants;

(2) an analysis of varying appeals processes specific to the Agency and each department with cases before the Board, including proposals and any legislative action necessary to improve consistency;

(3) a proposal to identify and collect currently unavailable data in a manner that ensures uniform data collection across the Agency and departments with cases before the Board, including data regarding cases resolved prior to reaching the stage of hearing officer or full Board involvement;

(4) recommendations for resolving potential appeals prior to reaching the Board; and

(5) any other recommendation requiring legislative action.

(b) On or before December 15, 2025, the Human Services Board, in collaboration with the Agency of Human Services, each of the Agency's departments with cases before the Board, the Office of the Attorney General, community partners, and individuals with lived experience as appellants before the Board, shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare providing the following information and recommendations regarding proceedings before the Board:

(1) a proposal to improve understanding of Board processes and accessibility to appellants, including the use of media and graphics to explain what the Board is and how it operates;

(2) a proposal for the exchange of periodic feedback as part of a continual quality improvement process between the Board, Agency, departments appearing before the Board, Office of the Attorney General, Vermont Legal Aid, and other relevant stakeholders;

(3) an analysis of how to enable an appellant to present a personal narrative without jeopardizing the appellant's case or disrupting the legal obligations of the Board and the attorneys representing the Agency or departments appearing before the Board; and

(4) recommendations to improve the reporting and analysis of data to the General Assembly, including information related to appeal requests

resolved prior to reaching the stage of hearing officer or full Board involvement.

and by renumbering the remaining section to be numerically correct,

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to the delivery and payment of certain services provided through the Agency of Human Services, services for persons who are incapacitated, and Human Services Board proceedings"

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

House Proposal of Amendment to Senate Proposal of Amendment Concurred In with Amendment

H. 398.

House proposal of amendment to Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

Was taken up.

The House concurs in the Senate proposal of amendment with further amendment thereto as follows:

In Sec. 1, 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, in section 280gg, by adding a new subsection to be subsection (e) to read as follows:

(e) A business shall not be eligible for financial assistance from the Vermont Disaster Recovery Loan Fund established by this subchapter 15 if the business has received disaster recovery financial assistance from the State for the same disaster event.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment to the Senate proposal of amendment?, Senators Chittenden, Beck, Brock, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy and Mattos moved that the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment to the Senate proposal of amendment with further proposal of amendment as follows:

In Sec. 1, 10 V.S.A. chapter 12, in section 280gg, by striking out subsection (e) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection (e) to read as follows:

(e) In determining whether to issue financial assistance from the Vermont Disaster Recovery Loan Fund established by this subchapter 15, the Authority shall consider whether a business has received disaster recovery financial assistance from the State for the same disaster event.

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

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 98.

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

An act relating to confirmatory adoptions.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposals of Amendment; Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

H. 494.

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

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the bill was ordered messaged to the House forthwith.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 491.

Senator Beck, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate.

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.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Ram Hinsdale addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Baruth, her remarks were entered into the Journal.

"Mr. President, colleagues,

"Today I rise to speak on a point of personal privilege with urgency and alarm for our communities, our young people, and our future.

"The Trump Administration is moving forward with proposals to slash or eliminate two lifelines that Vermonters depend on: FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and AmeriCorps, the national service program that brings young people and dedicated workers into our schools, clinics, town offices, non-profits, and disaster zones.

"These are not abstract federal programs. FEMA and AmeriCorps are woven into the very fabric of how we survive crises, rebuild after disaster, and strengthen our communities.

"Let me walk you through what this would mean — in dollars, in jobs, and in the spirit of service that makes Vermont who we are.

"First, FEMA. When the rains fall, when the rivers rise, when the storms come through and rip up our roads and flood out our downtowns — FEMA is there. Not because they appear with a checkbook (though we have certainly wished for that), but because Vermont has long been in partnership with the federal government to invest in disaster mitigation, recovery, and resilience.

"We've seen this firsthand — after Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, after the catastrophic floods of the last two summers, and after countless storms that may not have made national headlines but devastated local communities. FEMA dollars have rebuilt washed-out bridges in Washington County, reinforced floodplain protections in Brattleboro, and provided emergency aid to families and municipalities that would otherwise face financial ruin.

"Without FEMA, the full burden of those costs would fall on Vermont taxpayers — on small towns with limited budgets, on farmers trying to get crops back in the ground, and on homeowners who are already stretched thin. It reminds us who we are as Americans when we see the federal government and surrounding states send help when disaster strikes.

"And let's be clear about what FEMA cuts mean in numbers. FEMA's mitigation programs return $6 for every $1 invested. Eliminating FEMA's support would not just leave Vermont exposed to disaster; it would cost us many times more in long-term recovery.

"Next, AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps is sometimes called the 'domestic Peace Corps' — and here in Vermont, it's the backbone of our civic infrastructure. We are a state of service through and through.

"Every year, nearly 300 AmeriCorps members serve in Vermont, working with nonprofits, schools, health centers, and state agencies. These are the young people tutoring students in after-school programs, building affordable housing, running substance use prevention programs, staffing recovery centers, and helping communities navigate after disasters.

"AmeriCorps members don't just give their time — they build their futures. The program provides living stipends, education awards, job training, and a pipeline into Vermont's workforce. And they stay: roughly 1 in 3 AmeriCorps alumni remain in the communities where they served.

"But what happens if the Trump Administration succeeds in eliminating AmeriCorps? It's not just a number on a federal budget spreadsheet — it's real people and real services disappearing from our towns.

"So why is the Trump Administration targeting these programs?

"Why cut FEMA, when disasters are growing more frequent and more severe? Why cut AmeriCorps when we face a workforce shortage and a frayed social safety net?

"The answer is ideology — a small-minded, anti-public investment agenda that refuses to recognize the power of shared responsibility and national service.

"But here's the thing: Vermont knows better.

"We know that neighbors help neighbors. That we are stronger together. That no town, no farmer, no homeowner should face disaster alone. And that when young people step up to serve, we should support them — not pull the rug out from under them.

"Eliminating FEMA and AmeriCorps would be a direct attack on Vermont's economy, Vermont's resilience, and Vermont's spirit. It would force local taxpayers to bear impossible costs and send a cruel message to young people who want to serve their communities.

"And for what? To say we have no collective role in disaster relief, no role in national service, and no role in helping communities recover and thrive?

"Colleagues, we must reject that vision.

"Vermont has always believed in Freedom and Unity — that we are strongest when we stand together, when we care for one another, and when we invest in the systems that keep our communities safe and whole.

"Today, I ask you to join me in sending a clear message: We will fight to protect FEMA. We will fight to protect AmeriCorps. We will defend Vermont's right to resilience, to service, and to a government that works for the people.

"This is not just about policy. It's about who we are — as Vermonters, as public servants, and as a nation.

"Thank you."

Message from the House No. 55

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

H. 494. An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

And has refused to concur therein and asks for a Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses;

The Speaker appointed as members of such Committee on the part of the House:

Rep. Emmons of Springfield
Rep. Gregoire of Fairfield
Rep. Headrick of Burlington.

Message from the House No. 56

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 96. An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

And has concurred therein.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House proposal of amendment to Senate bill of the following title:

S. 27. An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

And has concurred therein.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 15. Joint resolution supporting Vermont's transgender and non-binary community and declaring Vermont's commitment to fighting discrimination and treating all citizens with respect and dignity.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

The Governor has informed the House that on May 5, 2025, he approved and signed bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 17. An act relating to approval of the adoption of the charter of the Town of Morristown.

H. 21. An act relating to service of writs of possession.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Tuesday, May 7, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Committee of Conference Appointed

H. 494.

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

Was taken up. Pursuant to the request of the House, the President announced the appointment of

Senator Harrison
Senator Plunkett
Senator Ingalls

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

Bills Referred to the Committee on Appropriations

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

H. 44. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving.

H. 167. An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In with Amendment

S. 50.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to increasing the size of solar net metering projects that qualify for expedited registration.

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. 30 V.S.A. § 8010 is amended to read:

§ 8010. SELF-GENERATION AND NET METERING

* * *

(c) In accordance with this section, the Commission shall adopt and implement rules that govern the installation and operation of net metering systems.

(1) The rules shall establish and maintain a net metering program that:

* * *

(G) accounts for changes over time in the cost of technology; ~~and~~

(H) allows a customer to retain ownership of the environmental attributes of energy generated by the customer's net metering system and of any associated tradeable renewable energy credits or to transfer those attributes and credits to the interconnecting retail provider, and:

(i) if the customer retains the attributes, reduces the value of the credit provided under this section for electricity generated by the customer's net metering system by an appropriate amount; and

(ii) if the customer transfers the attributes to the interconnecting provider, requires the provider to retain them for application toward compliance with sections 8004 and 8005 of this title; and

(I) allows a customer to change the customer's decision to retain or transfer the attributes once in the 120-day period after the net metering system is commissioned.

* * *

(3) The rules shall establish standards and procedures governing application for and issuance or revocation of a certificate of public good for net metering systems under the provisions of section 248 of this title. In establishing these standards and procedures:

* * *

(F) This subdivision (F) applies to an application for a net metering system with a capacity that is greater than ~~15~~ 25 kilowatts, unless the system is located on a new or existing structure the primary purpose of which is not the generation of electricity. With respect to such a system, the rules shall not waive or include provisions that are less stringent than each of the following:

(i) the requirement of subdivision 248(a)(4)(C) of this title to provide a copy of the application to the Agencies of Agriculture, Food and Markets and of Natural Resources; the Department of Public Service; the Division for Historic Preservation; the municipal legislative body; and the municipal and regional planning commissions; and

(ii) the requirements of subsection 248(f) (preapplication submittal) of this title.

(G) The rules shall establish an expedited registration procedure for net metering systems of 25 kilowatts and less in size.

* * *

Sec. 2. RULEMAKING

The Public Utility Commission shall update its Rule 5.100 to allow ground mounted photovoltaic net metering systems of 25 kilowatts and less to qualify for expedited registration. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Commission shall allow systems of 25 kilowatts and less to use the expedited registration before the rules are updated.

Sec. 3. 30 V.S.A. § 248(s) is amended to read:

(s) This subsection sets minimum setback requirements that shall apply to in-state ground-mounted solar electric generation facilities approved under this section, unless the facility is installed on a canopy constructed on an area primarily used for parking vehicles that is in existence or permitted on the date the application for the facility is filed.

(1) The minimum setbacks shall be:

(A) From a State or municipal highway, measured from the edge of the traveled way:

(i) 100 feet for a facility with a plant capacity exceeding 150 kW; ~~and~~

(ii) 40 feet for a facility with a plant capacity less than or equal to 150 kW but greater than ~~15~~ 25 kW; and

(iii) 10 feet for a facility with a plant capacity less than or equal to 25 kW.

(B) From each property boundary that is not a State or municipal highway:

(i) 50 feet for a facility with a plant capacity exceeding 150 kW; ~~and~~

(ii) 25 feet for a facility with a plant capacity less than or equal to 150 kW but greater than ~~15~~ 25 kW; and

(iii) 10 feet for a facility with a plant capacity less than or equal to 25 kW.

(2) ~~This subsection does not require a setback for a facility with a plant capacity equal to or less than 15 kW.~~ [Repealed.]

(3) On review of an application, the Commission may:

(A) require a larger setback than this subsection requires;

(B) approve an agreement to a smaller setback among the applicant, the municipal legislative body, and each owner of property adjoining the smaller setback; or

(C) require a setback for a facility constructed on an area primarily used for parking vehicles, if the application concerns such a facility.

(4) In this subsection:

(A) "kW" and "plant capacity" ~~shall~~ have the same meaning as in section 8002 of this title.

(B) "Setback" means the shortest distance between the nearest portion of a solar panel or support structure for a solar panel, at its point of attachment to the ground, and a property boundary or the edge of a highway's traveled way.

Sec. 4. 30 V.S.A. § 248(a)(7) is amended to read:

(7) When a certificate of public good under this section or amendment to such a certificate is issued for an in-state electric generation or energy storage facility with a capacity that is greater than ~~15~~ 25 kilowatts, the certificate holder within 45 days shall record a notice of the certificate or

amended certificate, on a form prescribed by the Commission, in the land records of each municipality in which a facility subject to the certificate is located ~~and shall submit proof of this recording to the Commission~~. The recording under this subsection shall be indexed as though the certificate holder were the grantor of a deed. The prescribed form shall not exceed one page and shall require identification of the land on which the facility is to be located by reference to the conveyance to the current landowner, the number of the certificate, and the name of each person to which the certificate was issued and shall include information on how to contact the Commission to view the certificate and supporting documents.

Sec. 5. PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION; DEFINITION OF SINGLE PLANT

On or before November 1, 2025, and with input from stakeholders, the Public Utility Commission shall submit a recommended amended definition of "plant" in 30 V.S.A. § 8002(18) and an overview of their process and explanation of the recommendation to the House Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy. In making its recommendation, the Commission shall consider:

(1) the land use benefits of collocation of energy generation facilities;

(2) the ability to ensure comprehensive review of collocated facilities; and

(3) the potential impacts to ratepayers associated with collocated facilities.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, Senator Watson moved that the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment with a further proposal of amendment by adding a new section to be Sec. 1a to read as follows:

Sec. 1a. NET METERING RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS OWNERSHIP

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) shall allow a customer who owns a net metering system that was commissioned between January 1, 2023 and July 1, 2025 to change the customer's decision to retain the attributes once. The customer shall be allowed to transfer the attributes to the utility by submitting a request to the PUC by September 2, 2025.

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

Proposal of Amendment; Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 491.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Vyhovsky moved 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. PROPERTY DOLLAR EQUIVALENT YIELD, INCOME DOLLAR EQUIVALENT YIELD, AND NONHOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026

For fiscal year 2026 only:

(1) Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5402b(b), the property dollar equivalent yield shall be $8,224.00.

(2) Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5402b(b), the income dollar equivalent yield shall be $12,346.00.

(3) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 5402(a)(1) and any other provision of law to the contrary, the nonhomestead property tax rate shall be $1.782 per $100.00 of equalized education property value.

(4)(A) For bills issued for fiscal year 2026, the Commissioner of Taxes shall increase the property tax credit determined pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 6066(a)(1) and (4) by 5.8 percent for each claimant. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 6067, and for purposes of this increase only, the cumulative credit under 32 V.S.A. § 6066(a)(1) and (4) shall also be increased by 5.8 percent.

(B) The increase in property tax credit provided under this subdivision (4) shall not be included in the calculation required under 32 V.S.A. § 5402b(a)(4).

Sec. 2. EDUCATION FUND RESERVE; PROPERTY TAX RATE OFFSET

In fiscal year 2026, $69,000,000.00 shall be reserved in the Education Fund to offset education property tax rate increases in fiscal year 2027. The Commissioner of Taxes shall assume that the $69,000,000.00 reserved under this section is unreserved and unallocated and applies to the calculation of the

fiscal year 2027 yields and nonhomestead rate when making the recommendation required pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5402b on or before December 1, 2025. The reserve created under this section shall be considered an authorized use of Education Fund monies pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 4025.

Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 6066 is amended to read:

§ 6066. COMPUTATION OF PROPERTY TAX CREDIT AND RENTER CREDIT

(a) An eligible claimant who owned the homestead on April 1 of the year in which the claim is filed shall be entitled to a credit for the prior year's homestead property tax liability amount determined as follows:

* * *

(6) Each dollar amount in this subsection shall be adjusted for inflation annually on or before November 15 by the Commissioner of Taxes. As used in this subdivision, "adjusted for inflation" means adjusting the dollar amount by the National Income and Product Accounts (NIPA) implicit price deflator for state and local government consumption expenditures and gross investment published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, from fiscal year 2025 through the fiscal year for which the amount is being determined and rounding upward to the nearest whole dollar amount.

* * *

Sec. 4. 32 V.S.A. § 5410 is amended to read:

§ 5410. DECLARATION OF HOMESTEAD

(a) A homestead owner shall declare ownership of a homestead for purposes of education property tax and provide the homestead owner's household income as defined in section 6061 of this title.

(b) Annually, on or before the due date for filing the Vermont income tax return, without extension, each homestead owner shall, on a form prescribed by the Commissioner, which shall be verified under the pains and penalties of perjury, declare the owner's homestead, if any, as of, or expected to be as of, April 1 of the year in which the declaration is made, and provide the homestead owner's household income as defined in section 6061 of this title.

* * *

Sec. 5. 32 V.S.A. § 6061 is amended to read:

§ 6061. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter unless the context requires otherwise:

* * *

(17) "Equalized value of the housesite in the taxable year" means the value of the housesite on the grand list for April 1 of the taxable year, divided by the number resulting from dividing the municipality's common level of appraisal ~~determined by equalization~~ of the ~~grand list for April 1 of the year preceding the~~ taxable year by the statewide adjustment of the taxable year as defined in subdivision 5401(17) of this title.

* * *

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

Which was disagreed to.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence, on a roll call, Yeas 26, Nays 2.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Harrison, Hart, Hashim, Heffernan, Ingalls, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: Hardy, Vyhovsky.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Clarkson, Lyons.

Senate Resolution Adopted

S.R. 14.

Senate resolution of the following title was read the third time and adopted:

Senate resolution strongly urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to expedite the establishment and implementation of an avian influenza vaccine national reserve and distribution system for small- and medium-sized poultry farms.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 27.

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

An act relating to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission.

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.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Gulick addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Hardy, her remarks were entered into the Journal.

"Thank you, Mr. President.

"I stand on a point of personal privilege. As we contemplate a massive overhaul of our education system and a very large task before us reforming education, I thought it might be helpful to share some numbers that are coming out of the office of the President of the United States and his administration. These are numbers from the Department of Education's annual budget tables - fiscal year 2024 disbursements. I wanted to share the estimated cuts for services, for supporting kids in the state of Vermont right now. We're looking at $100.2 million. We're looking at another $22.5 million in cuts to services supporting our workers in the state of Vermont around education, $3 billion in investment for two- and four-year colleges and trade development, and $672,000 dollars for community improvements that are related to schools and children.

"Specifically, the estimated cuts focused on $42.8 million for Title 1 schools, and this money serves over 50,000 students in the state of Vermont. $42.5 million for 15,000 of our kids who receive help with speech services, reading support and other assistance to get appropriate grade levels, and to ensure accessibility for students with disabilities. $6.7 million to ensure that our schools are safe to teach life skills, like career counseling and to set up our kids for success beyond the classroom, $6.5 million for before and after school programs to support working parents, and for clubs and sports to help our kids lead well rounded lives, $500,000 to support English language learners, another $885,000 for students enrolled in schools that are in rural communities and $336,000 to support students and military families. And then lastly, I just wanted to share that we're looking at a cut of $6.8 million for Career Tech Ed cuts, $13.8 million to ensure people who want a job, including those with disabilities, have the skills and access to the services that they need to help them find a job. And $1.9 million in competitive funding to help bring high pay and high skilled jobs to rural communities to train workers. I want us to think about these numbers as we embark in this incredibly heavy lift that we have before us.

"Thank you, Mr. President."

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, May 8, 2025.

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Christie Leary of Windsor.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 27.

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

An act relating to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission.

Third Readings Ordered

H. 339.

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to removing the repeal of 7 V.S.A. § 230.

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.

H. 364.

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

An act relating to approval of the annexation of property by the Village of Swanton.

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. 396.

Senator Bongartz, for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to the creation of the Mollie Beattie Distinguished Service Award.

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. 10 V.S.A. § 2614 is added to read:

§ 2614. MOLLIE BEATTIE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

In commemoration of the centennial of the Vermont State Parks in the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and in honor of the conservation and public land accessibility values of the late former Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Mollie Beattie, there is created the Mollie Beattie Distinguished Service Award. Annually, the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall present this award to either a current or former State employee or partner whose contributions honor the legacy of Mollie Beattie in advancing the conservation, accessibility, quality of recreational experience, or sustainability of Vermont's public lands.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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. 461.

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to expanding employee access to unpaid leave.

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. INTENT

It is the intent of the General Assembly to align Vermont's family leave policies with inclusive and equitable standards, ensuring that LGBTQ+ families, workers with low income, and individuals in nontraditional family structures have equal access to caregiving leave without undue burden.

Sec. 2. 21 V.S.A. § 471 is amended to read:

§ 471. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Bereavement leave" means a leave of absence from employment or self-employment by an individual due to the death of the individual's family member that occurs not more than one year after the family member's death. Bereavement leave includes leave taken in relation to the administration or settlement of the deceased family member's estate. Leave taken in relation to the administration or settlement of the deceased family member's estate shall not occur more than one year after the family member's death.

(2) "Domestic partner" means an individual with whom the employee has an enduring domestic relationship of a spousal nature, provided the employee and the domestic partner:

(A) have shared a residence for at least six consecutive months;

(B) are at least 18 years of age;

(C) are not married to or considered a domestic partner of another individual;

(D) are not related by blood closer than would bar marriage under State law; and

(E) have agreed between themselves to be responsible for each other's welfare.

(3) "Domestic violence" has the same meaning as in 15 V.S.A. § 1151 and includes the definition of "abuse" in 15 V.S.A. § 1101.

(4) "Employer" means ~~an individual, organization, or governmental body, partnership, association, corporation, legal representative, trustee, receiver, trustee in bankruptcy, and any common carrier by rail, motor, water, air, or express company doing business in or operating within this State that~~ a person who for the purposes of parental leave, bereavement leave, safe leave, and leave for a qualifying exigency employs 10 or more individuals who are employed for an average of at least 30 hours per week during a year and for

the purposes of family leave employs 15 or more individuals for an average of at least 30 hours per week during a year.

~~(2)~~(5) "Employee" means a person who, in consideration of direct or indirect gain or profit, has been continuously employed by the same employer for a period of one year for an average of at least 30 hours per week or meets the service requirement set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 825.801.

~~(3)~~(6) "Family leave" means a leave of absence from employment by an employee ~~who works for an employer that employs 15 or more individuals who are employed for an average of at least 30 hours per week during the year~~ for one of the following reasons:

(A) the serious health condition of the employee; or

(B) the serious health condition of the employee's ~~child, stepchild or ward who lives with the employee, foster child, parent, spouse, or parent of the employee's spouse~~ family member.

(7) "Family member" means:

(A) regardless of age, an employee's biological, adopted, or foster child; an employee's stepchild or legal ward; a child of the employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner; or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, regardless of legal documentation; an individual to whom the employee stood in loco parentis when the individual was under 18 years of age; or any individual for whom the employee provides caregiving responsibilities similar to those of a parent-child relationship;

(B)(i) a parent of an employee or an employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner, regardless of whether the relationship to the employee or the employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner is a biological, foster, adoptive, or step relationship;

(ii) a legal guardian of an employee or employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner; or

(iii) a person who stands in loco parentis for the employee or who stood in loco parentis when the employee or employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner was under 18 years of age;

(C) a person to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of any state or a civil union or domestic partner of an employee; or

(D) a grandparent, grandchild, or sibling of the employee or the employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner, regardless of whether the relationship to the employee or the employee's spouse or civil union or domestic partner is a biological, foster, adoptive, or step relationship.

~~(4)~~(8) "Health care provider" means a licensed health care provider or a health care provider as defined pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 825.125.

(9) "In loco parentis" means a relationship in which an individual has day-to-day responsibilities to care for and support a child, regardless of biological or legal ties.

~~(5)~~(10) "Parental leave" means a leave of absence from employment by an employee ~~who works for an employer that employs 10 or more individuals who are employed for an average of at least 30 hours per week during the year~~ for one of the following reasons:

(A) ~~the birth of~~ the employee's ~~child~~ pregnancy;

(B) the employee's recovery from childbirth or miscarriage;

(C) the birth of the employee's child and to care for or bond with the child within one year after the child's birth; or

~~(B)~~(D) the initial placement of a child ~~16~~ 18 years of age or younger with the employee for the purpose of adoption or foster care and to care for or bond with the child within one year after the placement for adoption or foster care.

(11) "Qualifying exigency" means a qualifying exigency identified pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 825.126 that is related to active duty service by a family member in the U.S. Armed Forces.

(12) "Safe leave" means a leave of absence from employment by an employee because:

(A) the employee or the employee's family member is a victim or alleged victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;

(B) the employee is using leave for one of the following reasons related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking:

(i) to seek or obtain medical care, counseling, or social or legal services, either for themselves or for a family member;

(ii) to recover from injuries;

(iii) to participate in safety planning, either for themselves or for a family member;

(iv) to relocate or secure safe housing, either for themselves or for a family member;

(v) to respond to a fatality or near fatality related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, either for themselves or for a family member; or

(vi) to meet with a State's Attorney or law enforcement officer, either for themselves or for a family member; and

(C) the employee is not the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of the domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

~~(6)~~(13) "Serious health condition" means:

(A) an accident, illness, injury, disease, or physical or mental condition that:

(i) poses imminent danger of death;

(ii) requires inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or

(iii) requires continuing treatment by a health care provider; or

(B) rehabilitation from an accident, illness, injury, disease, or physical or mental condition described in subdivision (A) of this subdivision ~~(6)~~(13), including treatment for substance use disorder.

(14) "Sexual assault" has the same meaning as in 12 V.S.A. § 5131.

(15) "Stalking" has the same meaning as in 12 V.S.A. § 5131.

(16) "U.S. Armed Forces" means:

(A) the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard;

(B) a reserve component of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard; or

(C) the National Guard of any state.

Sec. 3. 21 V.S.A. § 472 is amended to read:

§ 472. LEAVE

(a)(1) During any 12-month period, an employee shall be entitled to take unpaid leave for a period not to exceed 12 weeks:

~~(1)~~(A) for parental leave~~, during the employee's pregnancy and following the birth of an employee's child or within a year following the initial placement of a child 16 years of age or younger with the employee for the purpose of adoption.~~;

~~(2)~~(B) for family leave~~, for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's child, stepchild or ward of the employee who lives with the employee, foster child, parent, spouse, or parent of the employee's spouse~~;

(C) for safe leave; or

(D) for a qualifying exigency.

(2) During any 12-month period, an employee may use up to two weeks out of the 12 weeks of leave available pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection for bereavement leave, with not more than five workdays to be taken consecutively.

(b) During the leave, at the employee's option, the employee may use accrued sick leave ~~or,~~ vacation leave ~~or,~~ any other accrued paid leave, ~~not to exceed six weeks~~ or short-term disability insurance. Utilization of accrued paid leave or short-term disability insurance shall not extend the leave provided pursuant to this section.

* * *

(e)(1) An employee shall give the employer reasonable written notice of intent to take leave under this ~~subchapter~~ section. Notice shall include the date the leave is expected to commence and the estimated duration of the leave. If the leave is for a family member, the employer may request documentation identifying the qualifying family relationship.

(2) In the case of the adoption or birth of a child, an employer shall not require that notice be given more than six weeks prior to the anticipated commencement of the leave.

(3) In the case of an unanticipated serious health condition, a miscarriage, an unanticipated need for safe leave, a premature birth, the death of a family member, or a short-notice qualifying exigency, the employee shall give the employer notice of the commencement of the leave as soon as practicable.

(4)(A) In the case of a serious health condition of the employee or a member of the employee's family, an employer may require certification from a health care provider to verify the condition and the amount and necessity for the leave requested.

(B) An employer may require an employee to provide documentation of the need for safe leave. An employee may provide documentation from any one of the following sources:

(i) a court or a law enforcement or other government agency;

(ii) a domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking assistance program;

(iii) a legal, clerical, medical, or other professional from whom the employee, or the employee's family member, received counseling or other assistance concerning domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or

(iv) a self-attestation by the employee describing the circumstances supporting the need for safe leave; no further corroboration shall be required unless otherwise mandated by law.

(C) An employer may require an employee to provide documentation of the need for bereavement leave. An employee may provide any of the following forms of documentation:

(i) a death certificate;

(ii) a published obituary; or

(iii) a written notice or verification of death, burial, or memorial services from a mortuary, funeral home, burial society, crematorium, religious organization, or governmental agency.

(D) An employer may require an employee to provide documentation of the need for leave for a qualifying exigency as set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 825.309.

(E) An employer shall not disclose any private medical information or information relating to a safe leave that the employer receives pursuant to this subdivision (4) except to the extent the disclosure is permitted by law and:

(i) consented to by the employee in writing;

(ii) required pursuant to a court order; or

(iii) required pursuant to State or federal law.

~~(4)~~(5) An employee may return from leave earlier than estimated upon approval of the employer.

~~(5)~~(6) An employee shall provide reasonable notice to the employer of the need to extend leave to the extent provided by this subchapter.

(f) Upon return from leave taken under this subchapter, an employee shall be offered the same or comparable job at the same level of compensation, employment benefits, seniority, or any other term or condition of the employment existing on the day leave began. This ~~subchapter~~ subsection shall not apply if, prior to requesting leave, the employee had been given notice or had given notice that the employment would terminate. This subsection shall not apply if the employer can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that:

(1) during the period of leave the employee's job would have been terminated or the employee laid off for reasons unrelated to the leave or the condition for which the leave was granted; or

(2) the employee performed unique services and hiring a permanent replacement during the leave, after giving reasonable notice to the employee of intent to do so, was the only alternative available to the employer to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the employer's operation.

(g)(1) An employer may adopt a leave policy more generous than the leave policy provided by this subchapter.

(2)(A) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to diminish an employer's obligation to comply with any collective bargaining agreement or any employment benefit program or plan that provides greater leave rights than the rights provided by this subchapter.

(B) A collective bargaining agreement or employment benefit program or plan may not diminish rights provided by this subchapter.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subchapter, an employee may, at the time a need for parental or family leave arises, waive some or all the rights under this subchapter provided the waiver is informed and voluntary and any changes in conditions of employment related to any waiver shall be mutually agreed upon between employer and employee.

(h) Except for the serious health condition of the employee or safe leave when the employee is the victim or alleged victim, an employee who does not return to employment with the employer who provided the leave shall return to the employer the value of any compensation that the employer paid to or on behalf of the employee during the leave, except payments for accrued ~~sick leave or vacation~~ leave.

Sec. 4. 21 V.S.A. § 472a is amended to read:

§ 472a. SHORT-TERM FAMILY LEAVE

(a) In addition to the leave provided in section 472 of this title, an employee shall be entitled to take unpaid leave not to exceed four hours in any 30-day period and not to exceed 24 hours in any 12-month period. An employer may require that leave be taken in a minimum of two-hour segments and may be taken for any of the following purposes:

(1) To participate in preschool or school activities directly related to the academic educational advancement of the employee's ~~child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee~~ family member, such as a parent-teacher conference.

(2) To attend or to accompany the employee's ~~child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee or the employee's parent, spouse, or parent-in-law~~ family member to routine medical or dental appointments.

(3) To accompany the employee's ~~parent, spouse, or parent-in-law~~ family member to other appointments for professional services related to their care and well-being.

(4) To respond to a medical emergency involving the employee's ~~child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the employee or the employee's parent, spouse, or parent-in-law~~ family member.

* * *

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

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.

Proposals of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 481.

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to stormwater management.

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. 10 V.S.A. § 1264 is amended to read:

§ 1264. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

* * *

(c) Prohibitions.

* * *

(7) In accordance with the schedule established under subdivision (g)(3) of this section, a person shall not discharge stormwater from impervious surface of three or more acres in size without first obtaining an individual

permit or coverage under a general permit issued under this section if the discharge was never previously permitted or was permitted under an individual permit or general permit that did not incorporate the requirements of the 2002 Stormwater Management Manual or any subsequently adopted Stormwater Management Manual. The Secretary shall provide notice to all owners of property subject to the permit required under this subdivision.

(d) Exemptions.

* * *

(2) No permit is required under subdivision (c)(1), (5), or (7) of this section and for which a municipality has assumed full legal responsibility as part of a permit issued to the municipality by the Secretary. As used in this subdivision, "full legal responsibility" means legal control of the stormwater system, including a legal right to access the stormwater system, a legal duty to properly maintain the stormwater system, and a legal duty to repair and replace the stormwater system when it no longer adequately protects waters of the State. Notwithstanding the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 3254 to the contrary, when a municipality assumes or has assumed full legal responsibility for a stormwater system, the municipality may assess municipal special assessment fees on users of the stormwater system provided that a majority of the property owners subject to the special assessment fee consented and the impact fee assessed is a fair apportionment to the user of the cost of the improvement in accordance with the benefits the user received.

* * *

(g) General permits.

* * *

(3) Within 120 days after the adoption by the Secretary of the rules required under subsection (f) of this section, the Secretary shall issue a general permit under this section for discharges of stormwater from impervious surface of three or more acres in size, when the stormwater discharge previously was not permitted or was permitted under an individual permit or general permit that did not incorporate the requirements of the 2002 Stormwater Management Manual or any subsequently adopted Stormwater Management Manual. Under the general permit, the Secretary shall:

(A) Establish a schedule for implementation of the general permit by geographic area of the State. The schedule shall establish the date by which an owner of impervious surface shall apply for coverage under this subdivision (3). The schedule established by the Secretary shall require an owner of impervious surface subject to permitting under this subdivision to obtain coverage by the following dates:

(i) for impervious surface located within the Lake Champlain watershed, the Lake Memphremagog watershed, or the watershed of a stormwater-impaired water on or before October 1, ~~2023~~ 2028; and

(ii) for impervious surface located within all other watersheds of the State, ~~no~~ not later than October 1, ~~2033~~ 2038 or not later than five years after a binding stormwater-specific waste-load allocation has been established for that watershed, whichever occurs first.

(B) Establish criteria and technical standards, such as best management practices, for implementation of stormwater improvements for the retrofitting of impervious surface subject to permitting under this subdivision (3).

(C) Require that a discharge of stormwater from impervious surface subject to the requirements of this section comply with the standards of subsection (h) of this section for redevelopment of or renewal of a permit for existing impervious surface.

(D) Allow the use of stormwater impact fees, offsets, and phosphorus credit trading within the watershed of the water to which the stormwater discharges or runs off.

* * *

Sec. 2. REPEALS; SUNSET OF PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX CLEAN WATER SURCHARGE

(a) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.10 (sunset of clean water surcharge), as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, is repealed.

(b) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.11(a)(5) (effective date of sunset of clean water surcharge) is repealed.

Sec. 3. 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.1(b) is amended to read:

(b) Purpose and intent.

(1) The purpose of Secs. I.1–I.12 of this act is to promote the development and improvement of housing for Vermonters.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly:

(A) to extend the clean water surcharge to provide ~~an interim~~ a source of revenue for addressing water quality issues throughout the State; and

(B) to continue its work on identifying a long-term funding source or sources that are sufficient in scope and targeted in design to address these water quality issues~~; and~~

~~(C) once one or more long-term funding sources are identified and enacted, but not later than July 1, 2027, to reduce the amount of the clean water surcharge to 0.04 percent~~.

Sec. 4. 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.12 is amended to read:

Sec. I.12. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. I.1–I.12 shall take effect on July 1, 2017~~, except that Sec. I.10 (allocating clean water surcharge revenue to Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund) shall take effect on July 1, 2027~~.

Sec. 5. 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.7(d) is amended to read:

(d) To compensate for this reduction of available property transfer tax revenue, it is the intent of the General Assembly through this act to provide for the transfer of $2,500,000.00 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund, as follows:

(1) Sec. D.100 of this act appropriates $11,304,840.00 in fiscal year 2018 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Upon the effective date of this act, $1,500,000.00 shall revert to the Fund, resulting in a fiscal year 2018 total appropriation to the Board of $9,804,840.00. In fiscal year 2018 only, the amount of $1,500,000.00 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(2) As provided in Sec. I.9 of this act, ~~from July 1, 2017 until July 1, 2027,~~ pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9602a, the first $1,000,000.00 in revenue generated by the clean water surcharge of ~~0.2~~ 0.22 percent shall be transferred to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund. In fiscal year 2018 only, the Commissioner shall transfer the amount of $1,000,000.00 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the General Fund.

(3) ~~After July 1, 2027, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9602a as amended in Sec. I.10 of this act, $1,000,000.00 in total revenue generated by the clean water surcharge of 0.04 percent shall be transferred to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

(4) ~~As provided in Sec. I.11 of this act, the clean water surcharge will be repealed in its entirety on July 1, 2039.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. 6. 10 V.S.A. §§ 927 and 928 are amended to read:

§ 927. DEVELOPED LANDS IMPLEMENTATION ~~GRANT~~ PROGRAM

The Secretary shall administer a Developed Lands Implementation ~~Grant~~ Program to provide ~~grants or financing~~ financial assistance to persons who are

required to obtain a permit to implement regulatory requirements that are necessary to achieve water quality standards. ~~The grant or financing program shall only be available in basins where a clean water service provider has met its annual goals or is making sufficient progress, as determined by the Secretary, towards those goals.~~ This ~~grant~~ program shall fund or provide financing for projects related to the permitting of impervious surface of three acres or more under subdivision 1264(g)(3) of this title and for a permit renewal under subdivision 1264(h)(2) of this title for a discharge to a stormwater-impaired water that was permitted under an individual permit or a general permit that did not incorporate the requirements of the 2002 Stormwater Management Manual or any subsequently adopted Stormwater Management Manual. Not more than 15 percent of the total grant amount awarded shall be used for administrative costs.

§ 928. MUNICIPAL STORMWATER IMPLEMENTATION ~~GRANT~~ PROGRAM

The Secretary shall administer a Municipal Stormwater Implementation Grant Program to provide ~~grants~~ financial assistance to any municipality required under section 1264 of this title to obtain or seek coverage under the municipal roads general permit, the municipal separate storm sewer systems permit, a permit for impervious surface of three acres or more, or a permit required by the Secretary to reduce the adverse impacts to water quality of a discharge or stormwater runoff. ~~The grant program shall only be available in basins where a clean water service provider has met its annual goals or is making sufficient progress, as determined by the Secretary, towards those goals.~~ Not more than 15 percent of the total grant amount awarded shall be used for administrative costs. This program also shall be available to a municipality to comply with a permit for impervious surface of three acres or more for a residential subdivision when the municipality assumes or has assumed full legal responsibility for the stormwater system of the residential subdivision under subdivision 1264(c)(7) of this title.

Sec. 7. 10 V.S.A. § 1389(e) is amended to read:

(e) Priorities. In making recommendations under subsection (d) of this section regarding the appropriate allocation of funds from the Clean Water Fund, the Board shall prioritize as follows:

(1) As a first priority, make recommendations regarding funding for the following grants and programs, which shall each be given equal priority:

(A) grants to clean water service providers to fund the reasonable costs associated with the inspection, verification, operation, and maintenance of clean water projects in a basin;

(B) the Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant under section 925 of this title;

(C) the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets' agricultural water quality programs; and

(D) the Water Quality Enhancement Grants under section 926 of this title at a funding level of at least 20 percent of the annual balance of the Clean Water Fund, provided that the maximum amount recommended under this subdivision (D) in any year shall not exceed $5,000,000.00; and

(E) funding to partners for basin planning, basin water quality council participation, education, and outreach as provided in subdivision 1253(d)(3) of this title, provided funding shall be at least $500,000.00.

(2) As the next priority after reviewing funding requests for programs identified under subdivision (1) of this subsection:

(A) funding to programs or projects that address or repair riparian conditions that increase the risk of flooding or pose a threat to life or property;

(B) funding for education and outreach regarding the implementation of water quality requirements, including funding for education, outreach, demonstration, and access to tools for the implementation of the Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont, as adopted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation;

(C) funding for the Municipal Stormwater Implementation ~~Grant~~ Program as provided in section 928 of this title, including at least $1,000,000.00 annually for costs of complying with permitting requirements under subdivision 1264(c)(7) of this title;

(D) funding for innovative or alternative technologies or practices designed to improve water quality or reduce sources of pollution to surface waters, including funding for innovative nutrient removal technologies and community-based methane digesters that utilize manure, wastewater, and food residuals to produce energy; and

(E) funding to purchase agricultural land in order to take that land out of practice when the State water quality requirements cannot be remediated through agricultural Best Management Practices.

(3) As the next priority after reviewing funding requests under subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection, funding for the Developed Lands Implementation ~~Grant~~ Program as provided in section 927 of this title.

Sec. 8. RECOMMENDED APPROPRIATION; PRIORITIES

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Clean Water Board shall recommend $5,000,000.00 from the Clean Water Fund in fiscal year 2027 to the Municipal Stormwater Implementation Program in 10 V.S.A. § 928 for costs of complying with permitting requirements under 10 V.S.A. § 1264(c)(7), including for residential subdivisions when the municipality assumes full legal responsibility for the stormwater system.

(b) Before January 1, 2032, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall provide properties subject to the three-acre stormwater permit under 10 V.S.A. § 1264(c)(7) additional priority points when awarding financing under the Municipal Stormwater Implementation Program and under the Developed Lands Implementation Program when residential housing used as primary residences are located on the relevant properties.

Sec. 9. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PUBLIC RESOURCE GUIDE

(a) On or before January 1, 2027, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall publish a Public Resource Guide to Stormwater Management that informs persons subject to stormwater operating permits under 10 V.S.A. § 1264 with information and resources related to complying with and paying for stormwater permitting requirements. The Resource Guide shall be user friendly and designed to encourage the public to engage with the Agency of Natural Resources in finding solutions to stormwater permitting needs.

(b) The Resource Guide shall:

(1) summarize the statutory requirements for stormwater permits, with specific emphasis on the three-acre stormwater permit required under 10 V.S.A. § 1264(c)(7), including why the permits are required;

(2) recommend available, practical, cost-effective measures for how persons subject to stormwater permit requirements can address parcel-based issues, including:

(A) the lack of a homeowner's association to assume permitting responsibility;

(B) lack of available property to implement stormwater management, including whether and how a person subject to stormwater permits can implement an off-site offset project to comply with permitting requirements; and

(C) how to address or manage stormwater runoff from other stormwater systems entering stormwater systems subject to permitting;

(3) recommend resources where funding for compliance with stormwater permitting requirements may be accessed or applied for, including how to apply for financial assistance from the Agency of Natural Resources; and

(4) provide a contact at the Agency of Natural Resources that can assist persons subject to stormwater permitting by answering questions, providing referrals to creative or alternative solutions for achieving permit compliance, and recommending available financial resources.

(c) The Secretary of Natural Resources shall submit a copy of the Resource Guide to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committee on Environment. The Secretary shall also make the Resources available free of cost to the public from the Agency's website.

Sec. 10. 10 V.S.A. § 1389(e)(2)(C) is amended to read:

(C) funding for the Municipal Stormwater Implementation Program as provided in section 928 of this title~~, including at least $1,000,000.00 annually for costs of complying with permitting requirements under subdivision 1264(c)(7) of this title~~;

Sec. 11. 24 V.S.A. § 3616 is amended to read:

§ 3616. RENTS; RATES

(a) A municipal corporation, through its board may establish rates, rents, or charges to be paid as the board may prescribe. The board may establish annual charges separately for bond repayment, fixed operations and maintenance costs and variable operations and maintenance costs dependent on flow.

(b) The rates, rents, or charges may be based upon:

(1) the metered consumption of water on premises connected with the sewer system, however, the board may determine no user will be billed for fixed operations and maintenance costs and bond payment less than the average single-family charge;

(2) the number of equivalent units connected with or served by the sewage system based upon their estimated flows compared to the estimated flows from a single-family dwelling, however, the board may determine no user will be billed less than the minimum charge determined for the single-family dwelling charge for fixed operations and maintenance costs and bond payment;

* * *

(6) for groundwater, surface, or stormwater an equivalent residential unit based on an average or median of the area of impervious surface on residential property within the municipality; or

(7) any combination of these bases, provided the combination is equitable.

* * *

Sec. 12. STUDY COMMITTEE ON STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND CREATION OF REGIONAL STORMWATER UTILITY DISTRICTS

(a) Creation. There is created the Study Committee on the Creation of Regional Stormwater Utility Districts to review the feasibility and benefit of creating regional stormwater utility districts to facilitate implementation and compliance with the water quality laws of the State.

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

(1) the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation or designee;

(2) a representative of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3) a representative of a municipality subject to the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit, appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(4) a representative of a municipality with a population under 2,500 persons, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(5) a representative of the Green Mountain Water Environment Association, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(6) a commercial or industrial business owner subject to the three-acre stormwater permit or other stormwater requirements, appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(7) a representative of an environmental advocacy organization, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

(8) a representative of a regional planning commission, appointed by the Committee on Committees.

(c) Powers and duties. The Study Committee shall review the feasibility of establishing regional stormwater utility districts in the State. The Study Committee shall:

(1) review current statutory authority for the development of regional stormwater utility districts comprised of multiple municipalities, including identifying any potential disincentives or obstacles to utility formation;

(2) propose an approach the State could use for implementing a regional stormwater utility that would allow the utilities to assume liability and responsibility for compliance with water quality laws, including how a utility could assume responsibility for:

(A) securing the permitting of properties subject to the three-acre stormwater permit; and

(B) achieving the phosphorus reduction targets for the three-acre stormwater permitted properties within the utility district;

(3) review and recommend cost-effective and equitable approaches for regional level revenue raising and distribution of project funding for the purpose of stormwater controls to meet total maximum daily load plans (TMDLs) including:

(A) consider prior revenue-raising recommendations made in the 2017 Clean Water Report from the Office of the State Treasurer;

(B) recommend whether and how to authorize a regional stormwater utility to assess fees or charges to all landowners, residents, and businesses within the regional stormwater utility district for the purpose of stormwater controls to meet TMDLs;

(C) propose how a regional stormwater utility district could be eligible for Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund awards and access State-level financial assistance for the design, construction, and operation and maintenance of regulatory and nonregulatory stormwater systems, including from the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund;

(D) recommend whether and how a regional stormwater utility can allocate resources and cost-effectively and equitably achieve pollutant reduction measures that are not fully achieved by regulated sites, as might be articulated in a regional stormwater management plan; and

(E) recommend whether and how a regional stormwater utility could improve the management of parcel-based issues in a more cost-effective and equitable manner, such as how a regional utility could address regulation of stormwater systems lacking a homeowners' association or other accountable entity or how a regional utility could improve management of upstream properties that drain into stormwater systems subject to permitting;

(4) recommend whether stormwater permitting for municipalities or others could be streamlined to improve the application process, permit renewal, or fee requirements;

(5) propose how statute should be amended to implement any of the recommendations of the Study Committee, including stormwater management planning for purposes of overall regional phosphorus pollutant reductions; and

(6) estimate a cost to operate proposed regional stormwater utility districts.

(d) Assistance. The Study Committee shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

(e) Report. On or before January 15, 2027, the Study Committee shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Environment and on Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on Government Operations with its findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Commissioner of Environmental Conservation or designee shall call the first meeting of the Study Committee.

(2) The Commissioner of Environmental Conservation or designee shall be the Chair.

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

(4) The Study Committee shall cease to exist on March 1, 2027.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Study Committee 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 Agency of Natural Resources.

Sec. 13. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025, except that Sec. 10 (future Clean Water Fund priorities) shall take effect October 1, 2032.

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

Senator Beck, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amended as recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, with further proposal of amendment by inserting a Sec. 7a to read as follows:

Sec. 7a. 10 V.S.A. § 1389a is amended to read:

§ 1389a. CLEAN WATER INVESTMENT REPORT

(a) Beginning on January 15, 2017, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Administration shall publish the Clean Water Investment Report. The Report shall summarize all investments, including their cost-effectiveness, made by the Clean Water Board and other State agencies for clean water restoration over the prior fiscal year. The Report shall include expenditures from the Clean Water Fund, the General Fund, the Transportation Fund, and any other State expenditures for clean water restoration, regardless of funding source.

(b) The Report shall include:

* * *

(7) Beginning on January 2028 and every four years thereafter, a review of the sufficiency of the Clean Water Surcharge to the Property Transfer Tax under 32 V.S.A. § 9602a, including an assessment of whether the revenue generated by the surcharge remains necessary to fulfill the State's clean water initiatives. The review shall include an assessment of whether the Clean Water Surcharge should be continued, whether the amount of the surcharge should be adjusted, and whether the surcharge should be repealed at a specified date.

* * *

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, and the recommendation of proposal of amendment of the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy was amended as recommended by the Committee on Appropriations.

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, as amended?, Senator Harrison moved to amend the proposal of amendment of the Committee on Natural Resources as follows:

First: In Sec. 6, 10 V.S.A. §§ 927 and 928, in section 928, by inserting the following as the last sentence in the subdivision:

Municipalities may receive assistance under this program for design or engineering services necessary for the formation of a municipal stormwater utility.

Second: In Sec. 9, Stormwater Management Public Resource Guide, in subsection (b), in subdivision (3), by striking out "and" after the semicolon

and in subdivision (4), by striking out the period and after "available financial resources" by inserting "; and"

and by adding a new subdivision (5) to read as follows:

(5) provide a model bylaw or ordinance for the formation of a municipal stormwater utility.

Third: In Sec. 12, Study Committee on Stormwater Management and Creation of Regional Stormwater Utility Districts, in subsection (b), in subdivision (7), by striking out "and" after the semicolon

and in subdivision (8), by striking out the period and after "Committee on Committees" by inserting "; and"

and by adding a new subdivision (9) to read as follows:

(9) a representative of a municipality with a designated downtown area served by water and sewer infrastructure that is not subject to a MS4 permit, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

Which was agreed to.

Thereupon, the pending question, Shall the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, as amended?, was agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Watson addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator White, her remarks were entered into the Journal.

"When President Nixon created the EPA in 1970, the United States was in trouble. Dense, visible smog choked many of our cities and public health was suffering. Thanks to the EPA, we saw cleaner air, longer lives, and even economic gains. We need the environmental regulation that came through the EPA because left unto to themselves, corporations whose only moral compass is the ethic of making money don't tend to make business choices with the best interest of humanity in mind. We need corporations to follow health and safety rules that ultimately protect us all. This is true across the board from food inspection to water quality standards.

"But today, under the Trump Administration, one of the EPA websites boasts about launching what it calls the greatest *deregulatory* action in U.S. history.

"Here are just six of the thirty-one policies listed on their website that they are eager to gut:

1. The Mercury and Air Toxics Standards that regulate coal-fired power plants
2. The Mandatory Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program, because apparently if you don't measure it, it's not a problem
3. Wastewater regulations for oil and gas development
4. The Regional Haze Program
5. National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
6. Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards

"On its face, if these standards are degraded, we will see more toxic air, more polluted water, and fewer tools to track the damage. It seems obvious to me that by degrading the standards that have ensured public health over time, through the Trump administration's version of the EPA, we'll see a decrease in public health. These changes are a part of a plan to increase profits in the near-term at the cost of our children's health and the long-term well-being of others.

"My students taught me an acronym that embodies this kind of mindset, which is called "IBGYBG", which stands for "I'll be gone, you'll be gone", which is something that bad-acting financial managers reportedly said to each other during the 2008 financial crisis. To quote Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan speaking about what this acronym IBGYBG means, he says, "in other words… we're both making a lot of money and we'll be long gone before the house of cards comes crashing down."

"We cannot allow the federal government to sacrifice the well-being of the American people, for the sake of increasing corporate profits, benefiting those who may never experience the negative consequences of their poor choices. I hope that we can stand together to hold American industry to high health, safety, and environmental standards for the sake of our health, our children's health, and for the health of our planet."

Message from the House No. 57

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 504. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Rutland.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered bills originating in the Senate of the following titles:

S. 51. An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit.

S. 56. An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposals of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 25. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 9, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, May 9, 2025.

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Caryne Eskridge of Weybridge.

Message from the House No. 58

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 44. An act relating to authorization to enter into certain immigration agreements.

And has passed the same in concurrence.

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 87. An act relating to extradition procedures.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 137. An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

And has concurred therein.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 130. House concurrent resolution commemorating the bicentennial of the 1824–1825 Farewell American tour of the Marquis de Lafayette.

H.C.R. 131. House concurrent resolution congratulating Westgate Housing Inc. of Brattleboro on the nonprofit corporation's 25th anniversary.

H.C.R. 132. House concurrent resolution congratulating the West Rutland High School Golden Horde girls' basketball team on winning a fourth consecutive Division IV championship.

H.C.R. 133. House concurrent resolution congratulating West Rutland High School girls' basketball standout Peyton Guay and extending to her best wishes for every future success.

H.C.R. 134. House concurrent resolution honoring Cassandra Polhemus for her exemplary leadership of the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

H.C.R. 135. House concurrent resolution honoring esteemed Bennington Rural Firefighter Timothy Burgess.

H.C.R. 136. House concurrent resolution congratulating Mapenzi Selemani of Winooski on winning the 2025 Poetry Out Loud Vermont State championship and commemorating the 20th anniversary of Poetry Out Loud.

H.C.R. 137. House concurrent resolution celebrating the 40th anniversary of Robin's Nest Children's Center in Burlington's Old North End.

H.C.R. 138. House concurrent resolution honoring Christine J. Brock for her 52 years of dedicated public service on the staff of the Vermont Judiciary.

H.C.R. 139. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Brattleboro Area Farmers' Market on its 50th anniversary.

H.C.R. 140. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Army and honoring the U.S. Army veterans in residence at the Vermont Veterans' Home.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Rules Suspended; Bill Committed

H. 479.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Clarkson, the rules were suspended and House bill entitled:

An act relating to housing.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Thereupon, pending the reading of the report of the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, Senator Clarkson moved that Senate Rule 49 be suspended and that the bill be committed to the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy with the report of the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs *intact*,

Which was agreed to.

Bill Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, the following bill having failed to meet crossover and being released by the Committee on Rules was referred to its committee of jurisdiction:

H. 505.

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Barre.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Introduced

Senate bill of the following title was introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 154.

By Senators Gulick, Brock, Major and Vyhovsky,

An act relating to health insurance coverage for biomarker testing.

To the Committee on Finance.

Bill Referred

Pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, the following bill having failed to meet crossover and having been granted an exception by the Committee on Rules was read the first time and referred as follows:

H. 504.

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Rutland.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bills Passed in Concurrence

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

H. 339. An act relating to removing the repeal of 7 V.S.A. § 230.

H. 364. An act relating to approval of the annexation of property by the Village of Swanton.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 396.

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

An act relating to the creation of the Mollie Beattie Distinguished Service Award.

Further Proposals of Amendment; Bills Passed in Concurrence with Proposals of Amendment

H. 461.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to expanding employee access to unpaid leave.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Chittenden moved to amend the Senate proposal of amendment in Sec. 2, 21 V.S.A. § 471, by striking out the newly renumbered subdivision (5) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (5) to read as follows:

~~(2)~~(5) "Employee" means a person who, in consideration of direct or indirect gain or profit, has been continuously employed by the same employer for a period of one year for an average of at least 30 hours per week or meets the service requirement set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 825.801.

Which was agreed to.

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

H. 481.

House bill entitled:

An act relating to stormwater management.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, pending third reading of the bill, Senator Watson moved to amend the Senate proposal of amendment in Sec. 1, 10 V.S.A. § 1264, in subdivision (d)(2), after "the special assessment fee consented and the" and before "fee assessed is a fair apportionment" by striking out the word "impact"

Which was agreed to.

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

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 401.

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

An act relating to exemptions for food manufacturing establishments.

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. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

(1) Vermont enhance its food resiliency through increased supply and distribution of locally produced food products;

(2) Vermonters have more access to the local food marketplace as both producers and consumers;

(3) local food producers are able to meet the demand for Vermont-made food products from visitors to the State;

(4) small-scale food producers, new business start-ups, and sole proprietors benefit from raising the limit of the existing licensing exemption for at-home bakery products to adjust for inflationary cost changes occurring since the initial statutory enactment; and

(5) supply-chain costs and inflationary considerations be addressed to bring risk management thresholds more in line with the economic conditions at the time of initial statutory enactment.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 4301 is amended to read:

§ 4301. DEFINITIONS

(a) As used in this chapter:

* * *

(4) "Cottage food operation" means a food manufacturing establishment where a cottage food product is produced.

(5) "Cottage food operator" means any person who produces or packages cottage food products solely in the home kitchen of the person's private residential dwelling or a kitchen on the person's personal property.

(6) "Cottage food product" means food sold by a cottage food operator that does not require refrigeration or time or temperature control for safety, such as:

(A) nonpotentially hazardous baked goods;

(B) candy;

(C) jams and jellies;

(D) dry herbs;

(E) trail mix;

(F) granola;

(G) cereal;

(H) mixed nuts;

(I) flavored vinegar;

(J) popcorn;

(K) coffee beans;

(L) dry tea;

(M) home-canned pickles, vegetables, or fruits having an equilibrium pH value of 4.6 or lower or a water activity value of 0.85 or less that are made using recipes:

(i) approved by the National Center for Home Food Preservation; or

(ii) reviewed by a food processing authority for safety; and

(N) any other good defined by the Commissioner in rule or policy.

(7) "Department" means the Department of Health.

~~(5)~~(8) "Establishment" means food manufacturing establishments, food service establishments, lodging establishments, children's camps, seafood vending facilities, and shellfish reshippers and repackers.

~~(6)~~(9) "Food" means articles of food, drink, confectionery, or condiment for human consumption, whether simple, mixed, or compound, and all substances and ingredients used in the preparation thereof.

~~(7)~~(10) "Food manufacturing establishment" or "food processor" means all buildings, rooms, basements, cellars, lofts, or other premises or part thereof used, occupied, or maintained for the purpose of manufacturing, preparing, packing, canning, bottling, keeping, storing, handling, serving, or distributing food for sale. A food manufacturing establishment ~~shall include~~ includes food processors, bakeries, cottage food operations, distributers, and warehouses. A food manufacturing establishment ~~shall~~ does not include a place where only maple syrup or maple products, as defined in 6 V.S.A. § 481, are prepared for human consumption.

~~(8)~~(11) "Food service establishment" means entities that prepare, serve, and sell food to the public, including restaurants, temporary food vendors, caterers, mobile food units, and limited operations as defined in rule.

~~(9)~~(12) "Lodging establishment" means a place where overnight accommodations are regularly provided to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public, including hotels, motels, inns, and bed and breakfasts. "Lodging establishment" ~~shall~~ does not include short-term rentals.

~~(10)~~(13) "Salvage food" means any food product from which the label on the packaging has been lost or destroyed or that has been subjected to possible damage as the result of an accident, fire, flood, or other cause that prevents the product from meeting the specifications of the manufacturer or the packer but is otherwise suitable for human consumption.

~~(11)~~(14) "Salvage food facility" means any food vendor for which salvage food comprises 50 percent or more of gross sales.

~~(12)~~(15) "Seafood vending facility" means a store, motor vehicle, retail stand, or similar place from which a person sells seafood for human consumption.

~~(13)~~(16) "Shellfish reshipper and repacker" means an establishment engaging in interstate commerce of molluskan shellfish.

~~(14)~~(17) "Short-term rental" means a furnished house, condominium, or other dwelling room or self-contained dwelling unit rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days and for more than 14 days per calendar year.

* * *

Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 4303 is amended to read:

§ 4303. RULEMAKING

(a) The Commissioner shall adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to establish minimum standards for the safe and sanitary operation of food or lodging establishments or children's camps or any combination thereof and for their administration and enforcement. The rules shall require that an establishment be constructed, maintained, and operated with strict regard for the health of the employees and the public pursuant to the following general requirements:

* * *

(7) There shall be training requirements for food manufacturing establishment operators and employees to ensure cleanliness, sanitation, and healthfulness.

(8) The Commissioner may adopt any other minimum conditions deemed necessary for the operation and maintenance of a food or lodging establishment in a safe and sanitary manner.

* * *

Sec. 4. 18 V.S.A. § 4353 is amended to read:

§ 4353. FEES

(a) The Commissioner may establish by rule any requirement the Department needs to determine the applicable categories or exemptions for licenses. The following license fees shall be paid annually to the Department at the time of making the application according to the following schedules:

* * *

(3) Food manufacturing establishment — a fee for any person or persons that process food for resale to restaurants, stores, or individuals according to the following schedule:

(A) Food manufacturing establishments; nonbakeries

I — Gross receipts of $10,001.00 to $50,000.00;	$175.00
II — Gross receipts of over $50,000.00;	$275.00

III — Gross receipts of $10,000.00 or less are exempt pursuant to section 4358 of this title

(B) Food manufacturing ~~establishment~~ establishments; bakeries

I — Home bakery;	$100.00
II — Small commercial;	$200.00
III — Large commercial;	$350.00

(C) Food manufacturing establishments; cottage food operations — Gross receipts of $30,000.00 or less from the sale of cottage food products are exempt pursuant to section 4358 of this title.

* * *

Sec. 5. 18 V.S.A. § 4358 is amended to read:

§ 4358. EXEMPTIONS

* * *

(b) The ~~provisions of~~ obligation to obtain a license and the associated licensure fees in this subchapter shall not apply to ~~an individual manufacturing and selling bakery products from his or her own home kitchen whose~~ a cottage food operation or other food manufacturing establishment that is exempt due to its average gross retail sales ~~do not exceed $125.00 per week~~ being below the listed thresholds in section 4353 of this title.

(c) ~~Any~~ Annually, a food manufacturing establishment claiming a licensing exemption pursuant to this title shall ~~provide documentation~~ submit to the Department a licensing exemption filing as required by rule. The licensing exemption filing shall require the food manufacturing establishment to attest to the completion of any training required by rule pursuant to section 4303 of this title.

* * *

Sec. 6. RULEMAKING

Pending the adoption of permanent rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to implement the provisions of this act, the Commissioner of Health shall adopt emergency rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844, which shall be deemed to meet the emergency rulemaking standard in 3 V.S.A. § 844(a).

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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

Senator Gulick, for the Committee on Finance, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Health and Welfare.

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.

Senate Resolution Amended; Third Reading Ordered

S.R. 11.

Senator Weeks, for the Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, to which was referred Senate resolution entitled:

Senate resolution supporting warm and cooperative relations on the part of both the United States and the State of Vermont with Canada and urging President Trump to remove all tariffs that he has imposed against Canadian imports and to refrain from subsequently imposing any new tariffs against Canadian imports.

Reported recommending that the resolution be amended by striking out all after the title and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Whereas, the United States and Canada have been military and diplomatic allies and economic partners, even through episodes of commercial disagreement, since Canadian confederation in 1867, and

Whereas, perhaps no American state has a closer and more active two-way relationship with our northern neighbor than the State of Vermont, and

Whereas, these ties entail cultural, economic**,** familial, and personal relationships, and

Whereas, many Vermonters and Canadians have enjoyed mutually seamless travel between our countries, and

Whereas, in recent years, Vermont State officials repeatedly traveled to Montreal on trade missions and have strived to enhance Vermont-Quebec trade ties, and

Whereas, the importance of this relationship is epitomized in the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's maintenance of a trade office in Canada to work continuously with federal, provincial, and local officials and

the private sector to maximize opportunities for a vibrant two-way trading relationship between Vermont and our northern neighbor, and

Whereas, on the economic front, for 2023, the Canadian Consulate in Boston reported that Vermont exported $680 million in goods and $165 million in services to Canada, and, that same year, Vermont imported $2.6 billion in goods from Canada, and Canadian investments in the State supported over 17,000 Vermont jobs, and

Whereas, according to the Department of Public Service, Vermont sources a significant amount of its commercial and residential energy from Canada, and

Whereas, the current USMCA is broadly drafted, covering many aspects of the North American continental economic relationship, and it seeks to maximize a duty-free trading relationship between the United States and Canada, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont honors the historic, integrated, and productive relations on the part of both the United States and the State of Vermont with Canada and the Province of Quebec, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont, in order to preserve a robust and interdependent economy, urges President Trump to remove all tariffs against imports from Canada that were not in effect on January 20, 2025, including those outside the provisions of the USMCA, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Senate of the State of Vermont urges the U.S. Congress to reassert the legislative branch's role in the crafting of international trade policy, including the imposition of tariffs, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Donald J. Trump, Governor Philip B. Scott, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, Quebec Premier François Legault, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

and that after passage the title of the resolution be amended to read: "Senate resolution honoring the historic, integrated, and productive relations on the part of both the United States and the State of Vermont with Canada and the Province of Quebec; urging that Congress reassert its role in the crafting of international trade policy, including the imposition of tariffs; and urging that President Trump remove all tariffs he has imposed on Canada since January 20, 2025, including those outside the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)."

And that when so amended the resolution ought to be adopted.

Thereupon, the resolution was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the recommendation of amendment was agreed to, on a roll call, Yeas 28, Nays 1.

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

Roll Call

Those Senators who voted in the affirmative were: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Heffernan, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

The Senator who voted in the negative was: Ingalls.

The Senator absent and not voting was: Hashim.

Thereupon, third reading of the resolution was ordered.

Rules Suspended; Immediate Consideration; House Proposal of Amendment Not Concurred In; Committee of Conference Requested

S. 51.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

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. 32 V.S.A. § 5830f is amended to read:

§ 5830f. VERMONT CHILD TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who is entitled to a child tax credit under the laws of the United States or who would have been entitled to a child tax credit under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual or the individual's spouse does not have a taxpayer identification number shall be entitled to a refundable credit against the tax imposed by section 5822 of this title for the taxable year. The total credit per taxable year shall be in the amount of $1,000.00 per qualifying child, as defined under 26 U.S.C. § 152(c) but notwithstanding the taxpayer identification number requirements under 26 U.S.C. § 24(e) and (h)(7), who is ~~five~~ six years of age or younger as of the close of the calendar year in which the taxable year of the taxpayer begins. For a part-year resident individual, the

amount of the credit shall be multiplied by the percentage that the individual's income that is earned or received during the period of the individual's residency in this State bears to the individual's total income. An otherwise eligible individual shall be entitled to the credit under this section without regard for the laws of the United States pertaining to the amount of federal child tax credit that may be refunded.

* * *

Sec. 2. 32 V.S.A. § 5828b is amended to read:

§ 5828b. EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who is entitled to an earned income tax credit granted under the laws of the United States ~~or who would have been entitled to an earned income tax credit under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual, the individual's spouse, or one or more of the individual's children does not have a qualifying taxpayer identification number~~ shall be entitled to a credit against the tax imposed for each year by section 5822 of this title. The credit shall be for an individual who claims one or more qualifying children 38 percent or for an individual who does not claim one or more qualifying children 100 percent of the earned income tax credit granted to the individual under the laws of the United States ~~or that would have been granted to the individual under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual, the individual's spouse, or one or more of the individual's children does not have a qualifying taxpayer identification number~~, multiplied by the percentage that the individual's income that is earned or received during the period of the individual's residency in this State bears to the individual's total income. A resident individual or part-year resident individual who would have been entitled to or granted an earned income tax credit under the laws of the United States but for the fact that the individual, the individual's spouse, or one or more of the individual's children does not have a qualifying taxpayer identification number shall be entitled to a credit under this section.

* * *

Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 5830e is amended to read:

§ 5830e. RETIREMENT INCOME; SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME

(a) Social Security income. The portion of federally taxable Social Security benefits excluded from taxable income under subdivision 5811(21)(B)(iv) of this chapter shall be as follows:

(1) For taxpayers whose filing status is single, married filing separately, head of household, or surviving spouse:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~$50,000.00~~ $55,000.00, all federally taxable benefits received under the federal Social Security Act shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~$50,000.00~~ $55,000.00 but less than ~~$60,000.00~~ $65,000.00, the percentage of federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~$50,000.00~~ $55,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~$60,000.00~~ $65,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by $10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~$60,000.00~~ $65,000.00, no amount of the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act shall be excluded under this section.

(2) For taxpayers whose filing status is married filing jointly:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~$65,000.00~~ $70,000.00, all federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~$65,000.00~~ $70,000.00 but less than ~~$75,000.00~~ $80,000.00, the percentage of federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~$65,000.00~~ $70,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~$75,000.00~~ $80,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by $10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~$75,000.00~~ $80,000.00, no amount of the federally taxable benefits received under the Social Security Act shall be excluded under this section.

(b) Civil Service Retirement System income. The portion of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System excluded from taxable income under subdivision 5811(21)(B)(iv) of this title shall be subject to the limitations under subsection (e) of this section and shall be determined as follows:

(1) For taxpayers whose filing status is single, married filing separately, head of household, or surviving spouse:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~$50,000.00~~ $55,000.00, the first $10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~$50,000.00~~ $55,000.00 but less than ~~$60,000.00~~ $65,000.00, the percentage of the first $10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~$50,000.00~~ $55,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~$60,000.00~~ $65,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by $10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the first $10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~$60,000.00~~ $65,000.00, no amount of the income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded under this section.

(2) For taxpayers whose filing status is married filing jointly:

(A) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to ~~$65,000.00~~ $70,000.00, the first $10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded.

(B) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than ~~$65,000.00~~ $70,000.00 but less than ~~$75,000.00~~ $80,000.00, the percentage of the first $10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over ~~$65,000.00~~ $70,000.00, determined by:

(i) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from ~~$75,000.00~~ $80,000.00;

(ii) dividing the value under subdivision (i) of this subdivision (B) by $10,000.00; and

(iii) multiplying the value under subdivision (ii) of this subdivision (B) by the first $10,000.00 of income received from the Civil Service Retirement System.

(C) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than ~~$75,000.00~~ $80,000.00, no amount of the income received from the Civil Service Retirement System shall be excluded under this section.

(c) Other contributory retirement systems; earnings not covered by Social Security. Other retirement income, except U.S. military retirement income pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, received by a taxpayer of this State shall be excluded pursuant to subsection (b) of this section as though the income were received from the Civil Service Retirement System and shall be subject to the limitations under subsection (e) of this section, provided that:

* * *

(d) U.S. military retirement income and U.S. military survivor benefit income. For taxpayers of any filing status, U.S. military retirement income, and U.S. military survivor benefit income received by an eligible beneficiary, received by a taxpayer of this State shall be excluded from taxable income under subdivision 5811(21)(B)(iv) of this chapter as follows:

(1) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to $125,000.00, all federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income shall be excluded.

(2) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than $125,000.00 but less than $175,000.00, the percentage of federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income to be excluded shall be proportional to the amount of the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income over $125,000.00, determined by:

(A) subtracting the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer from $175,000.00;

(B) dividing the value under subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2) by $50,000.00; and

(C) multiplying the value under subdivision (B) of this subdivision (2) by the federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income received.

(3) ~~pursuant to subsection (b) of this section as though the income were received from the Civil Service Retirement System and shall be subject to the~~

~~limitations under subsection (e) of this section~~ If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is equal to or greater than $175,000.00, no amount of the federally taxable U.S. military retirement income and survivor benefit income received shall be excluded under this section.

(e)(1) Requirement to elect one exclusion. A taxpayer of this State who is eligible during the taxable year for more than one of the exclusions under subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section ~~the Social Security income exclusion under subsection (a) of this section and any of the exclusions under subsections (b)–(d) of this section~~ shall elect ~~either~~ only one of the exclusions for which the taxpayer is eligible ~~under subsections (b)–(d) of this section or the Social Security income exclusion under subsection (a) of this section, but not both, for the taxable year. A taxpayer of this State who is eligible during the taxable year for more than one of the exclusions under subsections (b)–(d) of this section shall elect only one of the exclusions for which the taxpayer is eligible for the taxable year~~.

(2) A taxpayer of this State who is eligible during the taxable year for the military retirement and survivor benefit exclusion under subsection (d) of this section may elect that exclusion regardless of whether the taxpayer also elects an exclusion under subsections (a)–(c) of this section.

Sec. 4. 32 V.S.A. § 5813 is amended to read:

§ 5813. STATUTORY PURPOSES

* * *

(aa) The statutory purpose of the Vermont veteran tax credit in section 5830g of this title is to provide financial support to Vermonters who served in the U.S. uniformed services.

Sec. 5. 32 V.S.A. § 5830g is added to read:

§ 5830g. VERMONT VETERAN TAX CREDIT

(a) A resident individual or part-year resident individual who served in the uniformed services shall be entitled to a refundable credit against the tax imposed by section 5822 of this title for the taxable year.

(b) A taxpayer shall be eligible for the credit under this section provided the taxpayer has a discharge record, or other record of separation from active duty, verifying service in the uniformed services.

(c)(1) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is less than or equal to $25,000.00, the amount of tax credit provided under this section shall be $250.00.

(2) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is greater than $25,000.00 but less than $30,000.00, the amount of credit shall be $250.00 less $5.00 per $100.00 of federal adjusted gross income exceeding $25,000.00 of federal adjusted gross income.

(3) If the federal adjusted gross income of the taxpayer is $30,000.00 or greater, no amount of credit shall be provided under this section.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, this act shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2025.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to Vermont income tax exclusions and tax credits"

Thereupon, pending the question, Shall the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment?, on motion of Senator Cummings, 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 Cummings
Senator Chittenden
Senator Brock

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

Appointments Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, without a report given by the Committee to which it was referred and without debate:

Dingledine, L. Brooke of Randolph - Member of the Land Use Review Board - January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025.

The following Gubernatorial appointment was confirmed by the Senate, upon a full report given by the Committee to which it was referred:

The nomination of

Valerio, Matthew of Proctor - Defender General, Office of the Defender General - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

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: Baruth, Beck, Bongartz, Brennan, Brock, Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Douglass, Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Hart, Heffernan, Ingalls, Lyons, Major, Mattos, Norris, Perchlik, Plunkett, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, Weeks, Westman, White, Williams.

Those Senators who voted in the negative were: None.

Those Senators absent and not voting were: Cummings, Hashim.

Was confirmed by the Senate on a roll call, Yeas 28, Nays 0.

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Rep. Casey,

H.C.R. 130.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the bicentennial of the 1824–1825 Farewell American tour of the Marquis de Lafayette.

Offered by Reps. Kornheiser and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 131.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Westgate Housing Inc. of Brattleboro on the nonprofit corporation's 25th anniversary.

Offered by Reps. Bosch and Burditt,

Oferred by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 132.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the West Rutland High School Golden Horde girls' basketball team on winning a fourth consecutive Division IV championship.

Offered by Reps. Burditt and Bosch,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 133.

House concurrent resolution congratulating West Rutland High School girls' basketball standout Peyton Guay and extending to her best wishes for every future success.

Offered by Reps. Marcotte and others,

H.C.R. 134.

House concurrent resolution honoring Cassandra Polhemus for her exemplary leadership of the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 135.

House concurrent resolution honoring esteemed Bennington Rural Firefighter Timothy Burgess.

Offered by Reps. Berbeco and Tomlinson,

H.C.R. 136.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Mapenzi Selemani of Winooski on winning the 2025 Poetry Out Loud Vermont State championship and commemorating the 20th anniversary of Poetry Out Loud.

Offered by Reps. Krowinski and others,

H.C.R. 137.

House concurrent resolution celebrating the 40th anniversary of Robin's Nest Children's Center in Burlington's Old North End.

Offered by Rep. Bluemle,

H.C.R. 138.

House concurrent resolution honoring Christine J. Brock for her 52 years of dedicated public service on the staff of the Vermont Judiciary.

Offered by Reps. Burke and others,

Offered by Senators Harrison and Hashim,

H.C.R. 139.

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Brattleboro Area Farmers' Market on its 50th anniversary.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 140.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Army and honoring the U.S. Army veterans in residence at the Vermont Veterans' Home.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 25.

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Message from the House No. 59

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. BetsyAnn Wrask, its Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed House bills of the following titles:

H. 230. An act relating to the management of fish and wildlife.

H. 248. An act relating to supplemental child care grants and the Child Care Financial Assistance Program.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House proposal of amendment to Senate proposal of amendment to House bill entitled:

H. 398. An act relating to the Vermont Economic Development Authority.

And has concurred therein.

Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Finance:

H. 34. An act relating to workforce leadership in Vermont.

H. 484. An act relating to miscellaneous agricultural subjects.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 26.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 26. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 16, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, May 16, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

Bills Referred

House bills of the following titles were severally read the first time and referred:

H. 230.

An act relating to the management of fish and wildlife.

To the Committee on Rules.

H. 248.

An act relating to supplemental child care grants and the Child Care Financial Assistance Program.

To the Committee on Rules.

Rules Suspended; Report of Committee of Conference Accepted and Adopted on the Part of the Senate

H. 493.

Appearing on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and the report of the Committee of Conference on House bill entitled:

An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Senator Perchlik, for the Committee of Conference, submitted the following report:

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The Committee of Conference to which were referred the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon House bill entitled:

H. 493. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government.

Respectfully reports that it has met and considered the same and recommends that the Senate recede from its proposal of amendment and that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Purpose, Definitions, Legend * * *

Sec. A.100 SHORT TITLE

(a) This bill may be referred to as the "BIG BILL – Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations Act."

Sec. A.101 PURPOSE; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) The purpose of this act is to provide appropriations for the operations of State government and for capital appropriations not funded with bond proceeds during fiscal year 2026. It is the express intent of the General Assembly that activities of the various agencies, departments, divisions, boards, offices, and commissions be limited to those that can be supported by funds appropriated in this act or other acts passed prior to June 30, 2025. Agency and department heads are directed to implement staffing and service levels at the beginning of fiscal year 2026 so as to meet this condition unless otherwise directed by specific language in this act or other acts of the General Assembly.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that any interim budget and appropriation adjustments made in accordance with 32 V.S.A. §§ 133 and 704

prioritize supporting the health, safety, and well-being of Vermonters; a robust education system; and a strong economy.

Sec. A.102 APPROPRIATIONS

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that this act serves as the primary source and reference for appropriations for the operations of State government and for capital appropriations not funded with bond proceeds in fiscal year 2026.

(b) The sums herein stated are appropriated for the purposes specified in the following sections of this act. When no time is expressly stated during which any of the operating appropriations are to continue, the appropriations are single-year appropriations and only for the purpose indicated and shall be paid from funds shown as the source of funds. Capital appropriations funded from the Capital Infrastructure Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments Special Fund shall be subject to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 1001b(e). If in this act there is an error in either addition or subtraction, the totals shall be adjusted accordingly. Apparent errors in referring to section numbers of statutory titles within this act may be disregarded by the Commissioner of Finance and Management.

(c) Unless codified or otherwise specified, all narrative portions of this act apply only to the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2026.

Sec. A.103 DEFINITIONS

(a) As used in this act:

(1) "Encumbrances" means a portion of spending authority reserved for the subsequent payment of existing travel authorizations, purchase orders, grants, or contracts. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall make final decisions on the appropriateness of encumbrances.

(2) "Grants" means subsidies, aid, or payments to local governments, to community and quasi-public agencies for providing local services, and to persons who are not wards of the State for services or supplies and means cash or other direct assistance, including pension contributions.

(3) "Operating expenses" means property management; repair and maintenance; rental expenses; insurance; postage; travel; energy and utilities; office and other supplies; equipment, including motor vehicles, highway materials, and construction; expenditures for the purchase of land and construction of new buildings and permanent improvements; and similar items.

(4) "Personal services" means wages and salaries, fringe benefits, per diems, contracted third-party services, and similar items.

(5) "Capital appropriation" means an appropriation for tangible capital investments or expenses that are eligible to be funded from general obligation debt financing and are allowed under federal laws governing the use of State bond proceeds as described in 32 V.S.A. § 309.

Sec. A.104 RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING LAWS

(a) Except as specifically provided, this act shall not be construed in any way to negate or impair the full force and effect of existing laws.

Sec. A.105 OFFSETTING APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In the absence of specific provisions to the contrary in this act, when total appropriations are offset by estimated receipts, the State appropriations shall control, notwithstanding receipts being greater or less than anticipated.

Sec. A.106 FEDERAL FUNDS

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly or the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, may accept federal funds available to the State of Vermont, including block grants in lieu of, or in addition to, funds herein designated as federal. The Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly or the Joint Fiscal Committee if the General Assembly is not in session, may allocate all or any portion of such federal funds for any purpose consistent with the purposes for which the basic appropriations in this act have been made.

(b) If, during fiscal year 2026, federal funds available to the State of Vermont and designated as federal in this and other acts of the 2025 session of the Vermont General Assembly are converted into block grants or are abolished under their current title in federal law and reestablished under a new title in federal law, the Governor may continue to accept such federal funds for any purpose consistent with the purposes for which the federal funds were appropriated. The Governor may spend such funds for such purposes for not more than 45 days prior to General Assembly or Joint Fiscal Committee approval. Notice shall be given to the Joint Fiscal Committee without delay if the Governor intends to use the authority granted by this section, and the Joint Fiscal Committee shall meet in an expedited manner to review the Governor's request for approval.

Sec. A.107 NEW POSITIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the total number of authorized State positions, both classified and exempt, excluding temporary positions as defined in 3 V.S.A. § 311(a)(11), shall not be increased during fiscal year 2026 except for new positions authorized by the General Assembly

during the 2025 session. Limited service positions approved pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5 shall not be subject to this restriction.

Sec. A.108 LEGEND

(a) The act is organized by functions of government. The sections between B.100 and B.9999 contain appropriations of funds for the upcoming budget year. The sections between E.100 and E.9999 contain language that relates to specific appropriations or government functions, or both. The function areas by section numbers are as follows:

B.100–B.199 and E.100–E.199	General Government
B.200–B.299 and E.200–E.299	Protection to Persons and Property
B.300–B.399 and E.300–E.399	Human Services
B.400–B.499 and E.400–E.499	Labor
B.500–B.599 and E.500–E.599	General Education
B.600–B.699 and E.600–E.699	Higher Education
B.700–B.799 and E.700–E.799	Natural Resources
B.800–B.899 and E.800–E.899	Commerce and Community Development
B.900–B.999 and E.900–E.999	Transportation
B.1000–B.1099 and E.1000–E.1099	Debt Service
B.1100–B.1199 and E.1100–E.1199	One-time and other appropriation actions

(b) The C sections contain amendments to the current fiscal year; the D sections contain fund allocations, transfers, reversions, and reservations for the upcoming fiscal year; the F sections also contain amendments to the current fiscal year; and the G section contains effective dates.

* * * Fiscal Year 2026 Base Appropriations * * *

Sec. B.100 Secretary of administration - secretary's office

Personal services	2,532,305
Operating expenses	255,891
Grants	755,000
Total	3,543,196
Source of funds	
General fund	1,762,509

Special funds	755,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,025,687
Total	3,543,196

Sec. B.100.1 Secretary of administration - office of racial equity

Personal services	1,687,090
Operating expenses	118,323
Total	1,805,413
Source of funds	
General fund	1,144,831
Internal service funds	534,462
Interdepartmental transfers	126,120
Total	1,805,413

Sec. B.101 Secretary of administration - finance

Personal services	1,523,066
Operating expenses	168,424
Total	1,691,490
Source of funds	
Interdepartmental transfers	1,691,490
Total	1,691,490

Sec. B.102 Secretary of administration - workers' compensation insurance

Personal services	871,453
Operating expenses	100,387
Total	971,840
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	971,840
Total	971,840

Sec. B.103 Secretary of administration - general liability insurance

Personal services	406,346
Operating expenses	65,072
Total	471,418
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	471,418
Total	471,418

Sec. B.104 Secretary of administration - all other insurance

Personal services	278,478
Operating expenses	54,925
Total	333,403

Source of funds	
Internal service funds	333,403
Total	333,403

Sec. B.104.1 Retired state employees pension plus funding

Grants	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000
Source of funds	
General fund	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000

Sec. B.105 Agency of digital services - communications and information technology

Personal services	87,034,344
Operating expenses	50,695,231
Total	137,729,575
Source of funds	
General fund	233,207
Special funds	1,014,199
Internal service funds	136,482,169
Total	137,729,575

Sec. B.106 Finance and management - budget and management

Personal services	1,843,264
Operating expenses	342,676
Total	2,185,940
Source of funds	
General fund	1,254,559
Internal service funds	688,359
Interdepartmental transfers	243,022
Total	2,185,940

Sec. B.107 Finance and management - financial operations

Personal services	3,416,478
Operating expenses	894,620
Total	4,311,098
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	3,767,171
Interdepartmental transfers	543,927
Total	4,311,098

Sec. B.108 Human resources - operations

Personal services	12,091,729
Operating expenses	1,609,092
Total	13,700,821
Source of funds	
General fund	1,931,766
Special funds	171,235
Internal service funds	10,811,922
Interdepartmental transfers	785,898
Total	13,700,821

Sec. B.108.1 Human resources - VTHR operations

Personal services	2,259,639
Operating expenses	922,339
Total	3,181,978
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	3,181,978
Total	3,181,978

Sec. B.109 Human resources - employee benefits & wellness

Personal services	1,443,574
Operating expenses	727,231
Total	2,170,805
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	2,170,805
Total	2,170,805

Sec. B.110 Libraries

Personal services	3,071,139
Operating expenses	523,300
Grants	267,993
Total	3,862,432
Source of funds	
General fund	2,371,969
Special funds	96,994
Federal funds	1,273,020
Interdepartmental transfers	120,449
Total	3,862,432

Sec. B.111 Tax - administration/collection

Personal services	30,188,806
Operating expenses	7,007,735
Total	37,196,541
Source of funds	
General fund	24,668,155
Special funds	12,413,386
Interdepartmental transfers	115,000
Total	37,196,541

Sec. B.112 Buildings and general services - administration

Personal services	1,132,286
Operating expenses	206,653
Total	1,338,939
Source of funds	
Interdepartmental transfers	1,338,939
Total	1,338,939

Sec. B.113 Buildings and general services - engineering

Personal services	47,165
Operating expenses	1,116,280
Total	1,163,445
Source of funds	
General fund	1,163,445
Total	1,163,445

Sec. B.113.1 Buildings and general services engineering - capital projects

Personal services	3,225,944
Operating expenses	500,000
Total	3,725,944
Source of funds	
General fund	3,225,944
Interdepartmental transfers	500,000
Total	3,725,944

Sec. B.114 Buildings and general services - information centers

Personal services	3,721,861
Operating expenses	1,973,457
Total	5,695,318
Source of funds	
General fund	702,146
Transportation fund	4,542,959

Special funds	450,213
Total	5,695,318

Sec. B.115 Buildings and general services - purchasing

Personal services	2,860,824
Operating expenses	272,026
Total	3,132,850
Source of funds	
General fund	1,697,210
Interdepartmental transfers	1,435,640
Total	3,132,850

Sec. B.116 Buildings and general services - postal services

Personal services	846,111
Operating expenses	188,303
Total	1,034,414
Source of funds	
General fund	93,669
Internal service funds	940,745
Total	1,034,414

Sec. B.117 Buildings and general services - copy center

Personal services	951,063
Operating expenses	223,405
Total	1,174,468
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	1,174,468
Total	1,174,468

Sec. B.118 Buildings and general services - fleet management services

Personal services	1,020,985
Operating expenses	247,895
Total	1,268,880
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	1,201,997
Interdepartmental transfers	66,883
Total	1,268,880

Sec. B.119 Buildings and general services - federal surplus property

Operating expenses	4,427
Total	4,427

Source of funds	
Enterprise funds	4,427
Total	4,427

Sec. B.120 Buildings and general services - state surplus property

Personal services	365,056
Operating expenses	175,786
Total	540,842
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	540,842
Total	540,842

Sec. B.121 Buildings and general services - property management

Personal services	1,199,933
Operating expenses	605,349
Total	1,805,282
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	1,805,282
Total	1,805,282

Sec. B.122 Buildings and general services - fee for space

Personal services	21,826,541
Operating expenses	17,638,201
Total	39,464,742
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	39,360,459
Interdepartmental transfers	104,283
Total	39,464,742

Sec. B.124 Executive office - governor's office

Personal services	1,957,078
Operating expenses	567,607
Total	2,524,685
Source of funds	
General fund	1,997,850
Interdepartmental transfers	526,835
Total	2,524,685

Sec. B.125 Legislative counsel

Personal services	4,589,480
Operating expenses	286,936
Total	4,876,416

Source of funds	
General fund	4,876,416
Total	4,876,416
Sec. B.126 Legislature	
Personal services	8,457,653
Operating expenses	5,329,448
Total	13,787,101
Source of funds	
General fund	13,787,101
Total	13,787,101
Sec. B.126.1 Legislative information technology	
Personal services	1,504,560
Operating expenses	912,661
Total	2,417,221
Source of funds	
General fund	2,417,221
Total	2,417,221
Sec. B.127 Joint fiscal committee	
Personal services	2,959,862
Operating expenses	197,907
Total	3,157,769
Source of funds	
General fund	3,157,769
Total	3,157,769
Sec. B.128 Sergeant at arms	
Personal services	1,639,780
Operating expenses	166,416
Total	1,806,196
Source of funds	
General fund	1,806,196
Total	1,806,196
Sec. B.129 Lieutenant governor	
Personal services	296,158
Operating expenses	51,993
Total	348,151
Source of funds	
General fund	348,151
Total	348,151

Sec. B.130 Auditor of accounts

Personal services	4,775,026
Operating expenses	143,505
Total	4,918,531
Source of funds	
General fund	408,398
Special funds	53,145
Internal service funds	4,456,988
Total	4,918,531

Sec. B.131 State treasurer

Personal services	7,137,154
Operating expenses	312,956
Total	7,450,110
Source of funds	
General fund	2,729,084
Special funds	4,179,251
Interdepartmental transfers	541,775
Total	7,450,110

Sec. B.132 State treasurer - unclaimed property

Personal services	801,268
Operating expenses	581,648
Total	1,382,916
Source of funds	
Private purpose trust funds	1,382,916
Total	1,382,916

Sec. B.133 Vermont state retirement system

Personal services	221,251
Operating expenses	3,118,092
Total	3,339,343
Source of funds	
Pension trust funds	3,339,343
Total	3,339,343

Sec. B.134 Municipal employees' retirement system

Personal services	228,961
Operating expenses	1,692,059
Total	1,921,020

Source of funds	
Pension trust funds	1,921,020
Total	1,921,020
Sec. B.134.1 Vermont pension investment commission	
Personal services	2,359,198
Operating expenses	303,904
Total	2,663,102
Source of funds	
Special funds	2,663,102
Pension trust funds	0
Total	2,663,102
Sec. B.135 State labor relations board	
Personal services	295,157
Operating expenses	66,136
Total	361,293
Source of funds	
General fund	351,717
Special funds	6,788
Interdepartmental transfers	2,788
Total	361,293
Sec. B.136 VOSHA review board	
Personal services	109,521
Operating expenses	25,734
Total	135,255
Source of funds	
General fund	84,251
Interdepartmental transfers	51,004
Total	135,255
Sec. B.136.1 Ethics commission	
Personal services	183,787
Operating expenses	39,775
Total	223,562
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	223,562
Total	223,562
Sec. B.137 Homeowner rebate	
Grants	19,000,000
Total	19,000,000

Source of funds	
General fund	19,000,000
Total	19,000,000

Sec. B.138 Renter rebate

Grants	9,500,000
Total	9,500,000
Source of funds	
General fund	9,500,000
Total	9,500,000

Sec. B.139 Tax department - reappraisal and listing payments

Grants	3,410,000
Total	3,410,000
Source of funds	
General fund	3,410,000
Total	3,410,000

Sec. B.140 Municipal current use

Grants	21,350,000
Total	21,350,000
Source of funds	
General fund	21,350,000
Total	21,350,000

Sec. B.142 Payments in lieu of taxes

Grants	12,200,000
Total	12,200,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	12,200,000
Total	12,200,000

Sec. B.144 Payments in lieu of taxes - correctional facilities

Grants	40,000
Total	40,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	40,000
Total	40,000

Sec. B.145 Total general government

Source of funds	
General fund	140,473,564
Transportation fund	4,542,959

Special funds	34,043,313
Federal funds	1,273,020
Internal service funds	209,117,870
Interdepartmental transfers	9,219,740
Enterprise funds	4,427
Pension trust funds	5,260,363
Private purpose trust funds	1,382,916
Total	405,318,172

Sec. B.200 Attorney general

Personal services	15,528,060
Operating expenses	1,810,445
Grants	20,000
Total	17,358,505
Source of funds	
General fund	8,115,240
Special funds	2,468,889
Tobacco fund	434,660
Federal funds	1,809,676
Interdepartmental transfers	4,530,040
Total	17,358,505

Sec. B.201 Vermont court diversion

Personal services	1,250
Grants	4,874,343
Total	4,875,593
Source of funds	
General fund	4,617,596
Special funds	257,997
Total	4,875,593

Sec. B.202 Defender general - public defense

Personal services	18,955,131
Operating expenses	1,650,926
Total	20,606,057
Source of funds	
General fund	20,016,404
Special funds	589,653
Total	20,606,057

Sec. B.203 Defender general - assigned counsel

Personal services	7,827,975
Operating expenses	64,500
Total	7,892,475
Source of funds	
General fund	7,892,475
Total	7,892,475

Sec. B.204 Judiciary

Personal services	64,512,754
Operating expenses	13,865,672
Grants	121,030
Total	78,499,456
Source of funds	
General fund	72,601,728
Special funds	1,997,094
Federal funds	1,560,412
Interdepartmental transfers	2,340,222
Total	78,499,456

Sec. B.205 State's attorneys

Personal services	19,010,284
Operating expenses	2,115,052
Total	21,125,336
Source of funds	
General fund	20,541,309
Federal funds	31,000
Interdepartmental transfers	553,027
Total	21,125,336

Sec. B.206 Special investigative unit

Personal services	126,877
Operating expenses	27,835
Grants	2,136,507
Total	2,291,219
Source of funds	
General fund	2,291,219
Total	2,291,219

Sec. B.206.1 Crime victims advocates

Personal services	3,221,461
Operating expenses	117,870
Total	3,339,331
Source of funds	
General fund	3,339,331
Total	3,339,331

Sec. B.207 Sheriffs

Personal services	6,092,392
Operating expenses	446,237
Total	6,538,629
Source of funds	
General fund	6,538,629
Total	6,538,629

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	6,289,651
Operating expenses	6,380,415
Grants	278,285
Total	12,948,351
Source of funds	
General fund	7,630,863
Special funds	4,105
Federal funds	1,089,155
Interdepartmental transfers	4,224,228
Total	12,948,351

Sec. B.209 Public safety - state police

Personal services	83,279,417
Operating expenses	16,733,452
Grants	1,813,523
Total	101,826,392
Source of funds	
General fund	87,421,532
Special funds	3,223,793
Federal funds	9,734,790
Interdepartmental transfers	1,446,277
Total	101,826,392

Sec. B.210 Public safety - criminal justice services

Personal services	5,116,729
Operating expenses	2,098,944
Total	7,215,673
Source of funds	
General fund	1,929,676
Special funds	4,483,740
Federal funds	802,257
Total	7,215,673

Sec. B.211 Public safety - emergency management

Personal services	6,811,020
Operating expenses	1,018,043
Grants	62,529,843
Total	70,358,906
Source of funds	
General fund	1,645,622
Special funds	710,000
Federal funds	67,941,304
Interdepartmental transfers	61,980
Total	70,358,906

Sec. B.212 Public safety - fire safety

Personal services	10,215,365
Operating expenses	3,872,954
Grants	127,350
Total	14,215,669
Source of funds	
General fund	2,245,530
Special funds	10,769,486
Federal funds	1,155,653
Interdepartmental transfers	45,000
Total	14,215,669

Sec. B.213 Public safety - forensic laboratory

Personal services	4,388,176
Operating expenses	1,356,042
Total	5,744,218
Source of funds	
General fund	4,162,196
Special funds	81,774

Federal funds	951,794
Interdepartmental transfers	548,454
Total	5,744,218
Sec. B.215 Military - administration	
Personal services	1,142,600
Operating expenses	810,661
Grants	1,219,834
Total	3,173,095
Source of funds	
General fund	3,173,095
Total	3,173,095
Sec. B.216 Military - air service contract	
Personal services	11,831,181
Operating expenses	1,427,093
Total	13,258,274
Source of funds	
General fund	818,486
Federal funds	12,439,788
Total	13,258,274
Sec. B.217 Military - army service contract	
Personal services	51,243,591
Operating expenses	8,227,725
Total	59,471,316
Source of funds	
Federal funds	59,471,316
Total	59,471,316
Sec. B.218 Military - building maintenance	
Personal services	906,250
Operating expenses	908,538
Total	1,814,788
Source of funds	
General fund	1,752,288
Special funds	62,500
Total	1,814,788
Sec. B.219 Military - veterans' affairs	
Personal services	1,382,555
Operating expenses	193,170
Grants	27,500
Total	1,603,225

Source of funds	
General fund	1,259,653
Special funds	222,717
Federal funds	120,855
Total	1,603,225

Sec. B.220 Center for crime victim services

Personal services	2,371,733
Operating expenses	321,928
Grants	8,573,370
Total	11,267,031
Source of funds	
General fund	1,650,091
Special funds	4,465,489
Federal funds	5,151,451
Total	11,267,031

Sec. B.221 Criminal justice council

Personal services	2,508,514
Operating expenses	2,142,603
Total	4,651,117
Source of funds	
General fund	4,260,265
Interdepartmental transfers	390,852
Total	4,651,117

Sec. B.222 Agriculture, food and markets - administration

Personal services	3,384,273
Operating expenses	353,580
Total	3,737,853
Source of funds	
General fund	1,519,601
Special funds	1,695,613
Federal funds	522,639
Total	3,737,853

Sec. B.223 Agriculture, food and markets - food safety and consumer protection

Personal services	5,680,286
Operating expenses	1,109,650
Grants	2,810,000
Total	9,599,936

Source of funds	
General fund	3,663,441
Special funds	4,048,844
Federal funds	1,875,651
Interdepartmental transfers	12,000
Total	9,599,936

Sec. B.224 Agriculture, food and markets - agricultural development

Personal services	6,358,750
Operating expenses	746,926
Grants	15,633,200
Total	22,738,876
Source of funds	
General fund	3,157,499
Special funds	646,995
Federal funds	18,934,382
Total	22,738,876

Sec. B.225 Agriculture, food and markets - agricultural resource management and environmental stewardship

Personal services	3,053,693
Operating expenses	845,696
Grants	247,000
Total	4,146,389
Source of funds	
General fund	822,914
Special funds	2,473,045
Federal funds	482,577
Interdepartmental transfers	367,853
Total	4,146,389

Sec. B.225.1 Agriculture, food and markets - Vermont agriculture and environmental lab

Personal services	2,058,524
Operating expenses	1,359,556
Total	3,418,080
Source of funds	
General fund	1,698,826
Special funds	1,647,441
Interdepartmental transfers	71,813
Total	3,418,080

Sec. B.225.2 Agriculture, food and markets - clean water

Personal services	4,120,365
Operating expenses	857,888
Grants	11,487,000
Total	16,465,253
Source of funds	
General fund	1,975,832
Special funds	10,511,241
Federal funds	2,171,588
Interdepartmental transfers	1,806,592
Total	16,465,253

Sec. B.226 Financial regulation - administration

Personal services	3,011,702
Operating expenses	103,565
Grants	100,000
Total	3,215,267
Source of funds	
Special funds	3,215,267
Total	3,215,267

Sec. B.227 Financial regulation - banking

Personal services	2,483,666
Operating expenses	482,337
Total	2,966,003
Source of funds	
Special funds	2,966,003
Total	2,966,003

Sec. B.228 Financial regulation - insurance

Personal services	5,825,682
Operating expenses	578,524
Total	6,404,206
Source of funds	
Special funds	6,404,206
Total	6,404,206

Sec. B.229 Financial regulation - captive insurance

Personal services	5,998,278
Operating expenses	591,092
Total	6,589,370

Source of funds	
Special funds	6,589,370
Total	6,589,370

Sec. B.230 Financial regulation - securities

Personal services	1,375,414
Operating expenses	242,541
Total	1,617,955
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,617,955
Total	1,617,955

Sec. B.232 Secretary of state

Personal services	21,619,186
Operating expenses	4,242,952
Grants	1,350,000
Total	27,212,138
Source of funds	
General fund	1,350,000
Special funds	19,155,734
Federal funds	6,706,404
Total	27,212,138

Sec. B.233 Public service - regulation and energy

Personal services	12,790,401
Operating expenses	2,615,047
Grants	25,000
Total	15,430,448
Source of funds	
Special funds	12,152,225
Federal funds	2,439,257
ARRA funds	6,627
Interdepartmental transfers	821,491
Enterprise funds	10,848
Total	15,430,448

Sec. B.233.1 VT Community broadband board

Personal services	1,978,960
Operating expenses	571,368
Grants	43,000,000
Total	45,550,328

Source of funds	
Special funds	1,589,990
Federal funds	43,960,338
Total	45,550,328

Sec. B.234 Public utility commission

Personal services	4,565,693
Operating expenses	578,746
Total	5,144,439
Source of funds	
Special funds	5,144,439
Total	5,144,439

Sec. B.235 Enhanced 9-1-1 board

Personal services	4,700,016
Operating expenses	697,379
Total	5,397,395
Source of funds	
Special funds	5,397,395
Total	5,397,395

Sec. B.236 Human rights commission

Personal services	1,243,420
Operating expenses	142,164
Total	1,385,584
Source of funds	
General fund	1,292,811
Federal funds	92,773
Total	1,385,584

Sec. B.236.1 Liquor and lottery commission

Personal services	10,866,788
Operating expenses	7,415,512
Total	18,282,300
Source of funds	
Special funds	125,000
Tobacco fund	250,579
Interdepartmental transfers	70,000
Enterprise funds	17,836,721
Total	18,282,300

Sec. B.240 Cannabis control board

Personal services	4,466,288
Operating expenses	2,053,382
Grants	10,000
Total	6,529,670
Source of funds	
Special funds	6,529,670
Total	6,529,670

Sec. B.241 Total protection to persons and property

Source of funds	
General fund	279,384,152
Special funds	121,247,670
Tobacco fund	685,239
Federal funds	239,445,060
ARRA funds	6,627
Interdepartmental transfers	17,289,829
Enterprise funds	17,847,569
Total	675,906,146

Sec. B.300 Human services - agency of human services - secretary's office

Personal services	17,333,398
Operating expenses	11,231,120
Grants	3,795,202
Total	32,359,720
Source of funds	
General fund	15,569,598
Special funds	135,517
Federal funds	14,023,964
Global Commitment fund	2,510,857
Interdepartmental transfers	119,784
Total	32,359,720

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	2,207,280,248
Total	2,207,280,248
Source of funds	
General fund	712,815,861
Special funds	31,339,852
Tobacco fund	21,049,373
State health care resources fund	31,074,772

Federal funds	1,406,003,180
Interdepartmental transfers	4,997,210
Total	2,207,280,248

Sec. B.303 Developmental disabilities council

Personal services	513,359
Operating expenses	96,185
Grants	191,595
Total	801,139
Source of funds	
Special funds	12,000
Federal funds	789,139
Total	801,139

Sec. B.304 Human services board

Personal services	823,371
Operating expenses	90,892
Total	914,263
Source of funds	
General fund	538,324
Federal funds	375,939
Total	914,263

Sec. B.305 AHS - administrative fund

Personal services	330,000
Operating expenses	13,170,000
Total	13,500,000
Source of funds	
Interdepartmental transfers	13,500,000
Total	13,500,000

Sec. B.306 Department of Vermont health access - administration

Personal services	142,860,018
Operating expenses	36,310,876
Grants	3,112,301
Total	182,283,195
Source of funds	
General fund	43,820,359
Special funds	4,760,237
Federal funds	126,141,154
Global Commitment fund	4,382,601
Interdepartmental transfers	3,178,844
Total	182,283,195

Sec. B.307 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program - global commitment

Grants	979,554,012
Total	979,554,012
Source of funds	
Global Commitment fund	979,554,012
Total	979,554,012

Sec. B.309 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program - state only

Grants	67,605,443
Total	67,605,443
Source of funds	
General fund	62,133,605
Global Commitment fund	5,471,838
Total	67,605,443

Sec. B.310 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid non-waiver matched

Grants	44,034,870
Total	44,034,870
Source of funds	
General fund	13,467,770
Federal funds	30,567,100
Total	44,034,870

Sec. B.311 Health - administration and support

Personal services	9,163,996
Operating expenses	8,043,463
Grants	7,985,727
Total	25,193,186
Source of funds	
General fund	4,298,710
Special funds	2,423,587
Federal funds	10,954,085
Global Commitment fund	7,361,523
Interdepartmental transfers	155,281
Total	25,193,186

Sec. B.312 Health - public health

Personal services	71,272,453
Operating expenses	10,371,654

Grants	48,496,832
Total	130,140,939
Source of funds	
General fund	15,160,817
Special funds	25,398,124
Tobacco fund	1,088,918
Federal funds	64,355,699
Global Commitment fund	18,457,507
Interdepartmental transfers	5,654,874
Permanent trust funds	25,000
Total	130,140,939

Sec. B.313 Health - substance use programs

Personal services	7,036,556
Operating expenses	381,500
Grants	61,624,360
Total	69,042,416
Source of funds	
General fund	4,795,744
Special funds	7,972,399
Tobacco fund	949,917
Federal funds	15,928,439
Global Commitment fund	39,395,917
Total	69,042,416

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	12,456,526
Operating expenses	2,420,029
Grants	279,691,678
Total	294,568,233
Source of funds	
General fund	13,127,716
Special funds	6,836
Federal funds	13,158,032
Global Commitment fund	266,967,840
Interdepartmental transfers	1,307,809
Total	294,568,233

Sec. B.315 Department of mental health - mental health facilities

Personal services	40,937,117
Operating expenses	3,393,946
Total	44,331,063

Source of funds	
General fund	18,868,124
Special funds	1,711,256
Global Commitment fund	23,751,683
Total	44,331,063

Sec. B.316 Department for children and families - administration & support services

Personal services	50,609,972
Operating expenses	17,876,453
Grants	5,914,175
Total	74,400,600
Source of funds	
General fund	43,680,871
Special funds	2,954,500
Federal funds	24,518,288
Global Commitment fund	2,780,636
Interdepartmental transfers	466,305
Total	74,400,600

Sec. B.317 Department for children and families - family services

Personal services	49,175,153
Operating expenses	5,497,038
Grants	100,541,760
Total	155,213,951
Source of funds	
General fund	63,680,993
Special funds	729,150
Federal funds	37,407,542
Global Commitment fund	53,381,266
Interdepartmental transfers	15,000
Total	155,213,951

Sec. B.318 Department for children and families - child development

Personal services	6,563,807
Operating expenses	783,604
Grants	227,780,727
Total	235,128,138
Source of funds	
General fund	61,267,870
Special funds	115,409,671
Federal funds	42,924,133

Global Commitment fund	15,526,464
Total	235,128,138

Sec. B.319 Department for children and families - office of child support

Personal services	14,186,272
Operating expenses	3,738,844
Total	17,925,116
Source of funds	
General fund	5,598,669
Special funds	454,219
Federal funds	11,484,628
Interdepartmental transfers	387,600
Total	17,925,116

Sec. B.320 Department for children and families - aid to aged, blind and disabled

Personal services	2,558,460
Grants	10,418,567
Total	12,977,027
Source of funds	
General fund	7,470,372
Global Commitment fund	5,506,655
Total	12,977,027

Sec. B.321 Department for children and families - general assistance

Personal services	15,000
Grants	10,415,779
Total	10,430,779
Source of funds	
General fund	10,189,157
Federal funds	11,098
Global Commitment fund	230,524
Total	10,430,779

Sec. B.322 Department for children and families - 3SquaresVT

Grants	51,077,812
Total	51,077,812
Source of funds	
Federal funds	51,077,812
Total	51,077,812

Sec. B.323 Department for children and families - reach up

Operating expenses	23,821
Grants	36,532,863
Total	36,556,684
Source of funds	
General fund	24,035,417
Special funds	5,970,229
Federal funds	2,806,330
Global Commitment fund	3,744,708
Total	36,556,684

Sec. B.324 Department for children and families - home heating fuel assistance/LIHEAP

Grants	16,019,953
Total	16,019,953
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,480,395
Federal funds	14,539,558
Total	16,019,953

Sec. B.325 Department for children and families - office of economic opportunity

Personal services	1,376,425
Operating expenses	159,458
Grants	39,165,356
Total	40,701,239
Source of funds	
General fund	32,312,474
Special funds	83,135
Federal funds	5,118,329
Global Commitment fund	3,187,301
Total	40,701,239

Sec. B.326 Department for children and families - OEO - weatherization assistance

Personal services	498,837
Operating expenses	275,322
Grants	15,147,885
Total	15,922,044
Source of funds	
Special funds	7,757,091

Federal funds	8,164,953
Total	15,922,044

Sec. B.327 Department for children and families - secure residential treatment

Personal services	258,100
Operating expenses	38,775
Grants	3,476,862
Total	3,773,737
Source of funds	
General fund	3,743,737
Global Commitment fund	30,000
Total	3,773,737

Sec. B.328 Department for children and families - disability determination services

Personal services	8,322,170
Operating expenses	495,934
Total	8,818,104
Source of funds	
General fund	130,556
Federal funds	8,687,548
Total	8,818,104

Sec. B.329 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - administration & support

Personal services	48,973,454
Operating expenses	6,544,338
Total	55,517,792
Source of funds	
General fund	25,692,412
Special funds	1,390,457
Federal funds	27,258,639
Global Commitment fund	110,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,066,284
Total	55,517,792

Sec. B.330 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - advocacy and independent living grants

Grants	24,909,492
Total	24,909,492
Source of funds	
General fund	8,585,909

Federal funds	7,321,114
Global Commitment fund	9,002,469
Total	24,909,492

Sec. B.331 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - blind and visually impaired

Grants	3,407,604
Total	3,407,604
Source of funds	
General fund	489,154
Special funds	223,450
Federal funds	2,390,000
Global Commitment fund	305,000
Total	3,407,604

Sec. B.332 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - vocational rehabilitation

Grants	10,179,845
Total	10,179,845
Source of funds	
General fund	371,845
Federal funds	8,558,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,250,000
Total	10,179,845

Sec. B.333 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - developmental services

Grants	349,987,467
Total	349,987,467
Source of funds	
General fund	132,732
Special funds	15,463
Federal funds	403,573
Global Commitment fund	349,385,699
Interdepartmental transfers	50,000
Total	349,987,467

Sec. B.334 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - TBI home and community based waiver

Grants	7,540,256
Total	7,540,256

Source of funds	
Global Commitment fund	7,540,256
Total	7,540,256
Sec. B.334.1 Disabilities, aging and independent living - long term care	
Grants	346,858,094
Total	346,858,094
Source of funds	
General fund	498,579
Federal funds	2,450,000
Global Commitment fund	343,909,515
Total	346,858,094
Sec. B.335 Corrections - administration	
Personal services	5,601,461
Operating expenses	269,950
Total	5,871,411
Source of funds	
General fund	5,871,411
Total	5,871,411
Sec. B.336 Corrections - parole board	
Personal services	551,497
Operating expenses	60,112
Total	611,609
Source of funds	
General fund	611,609
Total	611,609
Sec. B.337 Corrections - correctional education	
Personal services	3,900,732
Operating expenses	255,399
Total	4,156,131
Source of funds	
General fund	4,006,975
Federal funds	372
Interdepartmental transfers	148,784
Total	4,156,131
Sec. B.338 Corrections - correctional services	
Personal services	177,107,933
Operating expenses	25,571,966
Grants	801,823
Total	203,481,722

Source of funds	
General fund	198,084,766
Special funds	935,963
Federal funds	516,600
Global Commitment fund	3,548,078
Interdepartmental transfers	396,315
Total	203,481,722

Sec. B.338.1 Corrections - justice reinvestment II

Grants	11,055,849
Total	11,055,849
Source of funds	
General fund	8,478,161
Federal funds	13,147
Global Commitment fund	2,564,541
Total	11,055,849

Sec. B.339 Corrections - correctional services - out of state beds

Personal services	4,130,378
Total	4,130,378
Source of funds	
General fund	4,130,378
Total	4,130,378

Sec. B.340 Corrections - correctional facilities - recreation

Personal services	708,510
Operating expenses	457,555
Total	1,166,065
Source of funds	
Special funds	1,166,065
Total	1,166,065

Sec. B.341 Corrections - Vermont offender work program

Personal services	243,283
Operating expenses	160,570
Total	403,853
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	403,853
Total	403,853

Sec. B.342 Vermont veterans' home - care and support services

Personal services	24,048,875
Operating expenses	6,913,887
Total	30,962,762

Source of funds	
General fund	10,033,214
Special funds	12,799,530
Federal funds	8,130,018
Total	30,962,762

Sec. B.343 Commission on women

Personal services	432,073
Operating expenses	89,355
Total	521,428
Source of funds	
General fund	516,773
Special funds	4,655
Total	521,428

Sec. B.344 Retired senior volunteer program

Grants	164,960
Total	164,960
Source of funds	
General fund	164,960
Total	164,960

Sec. B.345 Green mountain care board

Personal services	9,849,952
Operating expenses	416,874
Total	10,266,826
Source of funds	
General fund	3,970,074
Special funds	6,296,752
Total	10,266,826

Sec. B.346 Office of the child, youth, and family advocate

Personal services	386,033
Operating expenses	71,330
Total	457,363
Source of funds	
General fund	457,363
Total	457,363

Sec. B.347 Total human services

Source of funds	
General fund	1,428,803,059
Special funds	231,430,533

Tobacco fund	23,088,208
State health care resources fund	31,074,772
Federal funds	1,946,078,413
Global Commitment fund	2,148,606,890
Internal service funds	403,853
Interdepartmental transfers	32,694,090
Permanent trust funds	25,000
Total	5,842,204,818

Sec. B.400 Labor - programs

Personal services	39,454,824
Operating expenses	5,462,457
Grants	5,870,493
Total	50,787,774
Source of funds	
General fund	11,313,657
Special funds	9,710,673
Federal funds	29,640,603
Interdepartmental transfers	122,841
Total	50,787,774

Sec. B.401 Total labor

Source of funds	
General fund	11,313,657
Special funds	9,710,673
Federal funds	29,640,603
Interdepartmental transfers	122,841
Total	50,787,774

Sec. B.500 Education - finance and administration

Personal services	16,203,356
Operating expenses	4,699,787
Grants	17,772,840
Total	38,675,983
Source of funds	
General fund	7,994,162
Special funds	19,793,553
Education fund	3,606,201
Federal funds	6,217,482
Global Commitment fund	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	804,585
Total	38,675,983

Sec. B.501 Education - education services

Personal services	18,418,946
Operating expenses	1,185,388
Grants	192,117,080
Total	211,721,414
Source of funds	
General fund	6,894,415
Special funds	3,266,001
Tobacco fund	750,388
Federal funds	199,239,149
Interdepartmental transfers	1,571,461
Total	211,721,414

Sec. B.502 Education - special education: formula grants

Grants	270,736,200
Total	270,736,200
Source of funds	
Education fund	270,736,200
Total	270,736,200

Sec. B.503 Education - state-placed students

Grants	17,200,000
Total	17,200,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	17,200,000
Total	17,200,000

Sec. B.504 Education - adult education and literacy

Grants	4,899,009
Total	4,899,009
Source of funds	
General fund	3,958,344
Federal funds	940,665
Total	4,899,009

Sec. B.504.1 Education - Flexible Pathways

Grants	11,481,896
Total	11,481,896
Source of funds	
General fund	921,500
Education fund	10,560,396
Total	11,481,896

Sec. B.505 Education - adjusted education payment

Grants	1,991,143,238
Total	1,991,143,238
Source of funds	
Education fund	1,991,143,238
Total	1,991,143,238

Sec. B.506 Education - transportation

Grants	26,115,792
Total	26,115,792
Source of funds	
Education fund	26,115,792
Total	26,115,792

Sec. B.507 Education - merger support grants

Grants	1,800,000
Total	1,800,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	1,800,000
Total	1,800,000

Sec. B.507.1 Education - EL categorical aid

Grants	2,250,000
Total	2,250,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	2,250,000
Total	2,250,000

Sec. B.508 Education - nutrition

Grants	18,500,000
Total	18,500,000
Source of funds	
Education fund	18,500,000
Total	18,500,000

Sec. B.509 Education - afterschool grant program

Personal services	500,000
Grants	9,140,000
Total	9,640,000
Source of funds	
Special funds	9,640,000
Total	9,640,000

Sec. B.510 Education - essential early education grant

Grants	8,977,737
Total	8,977,737
Source of funds	
Education fund	8,977,737
Total	8,977,737

Sec. B.511 Education - technical education

Grants	18,737,850
Total	18,737,850
Source of funds	
Education fund	18,737,850
Total	18,737,850

Sec. B.511.1 State board of education

Personal services	54,208
Operating expenses	16,500
Total	70,708
Source of funds	
General fund	70,708
Total	70,708

Sec. B.513 Retired teachers pension plus funding

Grants	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000
Source of funds	
General fund	15,000,000
Total	15,000,000

Sec. B.514 State teachers' retirement system

Grants	199,377,627
Total	199,377,627
Source of funds	
General fund	160,566,569
Education fund	38,811,058
Total	199,377,627

Sec. B.514.1 State teachers' retirement system administration

Personal services	345,352
Operating expenses	3,519,053
Total	3,864,405

Source of funds	
Pension trust funds	3,864,405
Total	3,864,405

Sec. B.515 Retired teachers' health care and medical benefits

Grants	71,052,589
Total	71,052,589
Source of funds	
General fund	49,091,090
Education fund	21,961,499
Total	71,052,589

Sec. B.516 Total general education

Source of funds	
General fund	244,496,788
Special funds	32,699,554
Tobacco fund	750,388
Education fund	2,430,399,971
Federal funds	206,397,296
Global Commitment fund	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	2,376,046
Pension trust funds	3,864,405
Total	2,921,244,448

Sec. B.600 University of Vermont

Grants	57,378,104
Total	57,378,104
Source of funds	
General fund	57,378,104
Total	57,378,104

Sec. B.602 Vermont state colleges

Grants	52,468,692
Total	52,468,692
Source of funds	
General fund	52,468,692
Total	52,468,692

Sec. B.603 Vermont state colleges - allied health

Grants	1,797,087
Total	1,797,087

Source of funds	
General fund	297,087
Global Commitment fund	1,500,000
Total	1,797,087

Sec. B.605 Vermont student assistance corporation

Grants	27,084,946
Total	27,084,946
Source of funds	
General fund	27,084,946
Total	27,084,946

Sec. B.605.1 VSAC - flexible pathways stipend

Grants	82,450
Total	82,450
Source of funds	
General fund	41,225
Education fund	41,225
Total	82,450

Sec. B.606 New England higher education compact

Grants	86,520
Total	86,520
Source of funds	
General fund	86,520
Total	86,520

Sec. B.607 University of Vermont - morgan horse farm

Grants	1
Total	1
Source of funds	
General fund	1
Total	1

Sec. B.608 Total higher education

Source of funds	
General fund	137,356,575
Education fund	41,225
Global Commitment fund	1,500,000
Total	138,897,800

Sec. B.700 Natural resources - agency of natural resources - administration

Personal services	6,436,257
Operating expenses	1,265,146
Total	7,701,403
Source of funds	
General fund	5,344,094
Special funds	722,828
Interdepartmental transfers	1,634,481
Total	7,701,403

Sec. B.701 Natural resources - state land local property tax assessment

Operating expenses	2,705,834
Total	2,705,834
Source of funds	
General fund	2,284,334
Interdepartmental transfers	421,500
Total	2,705,834

Sec. B.702 Fish and wildlife - support and field services

Personal services	23,876,543
Operating expenses	6,738,504
Grants	833,630
Total	31,448,677
Source of funds	
General fund	9,532,865
Special funds	364,696
Fish and wildlife fund	10,097,060
Federal funds	9,927,754
Interdepartmental transfers	1,526,302
Total	31,448,677

Sec. B.703 Forests, parks and recreation - administration

Personal services	1,564,253
Operating expenses	1,796,785
Total	3,361,038
Source of funds	
General fund	3,130,308
Special funds	143,765
Federal funds	86,965
Total	3,361,038

Sec. B.704 Forests, parks and recreation - forestry

Personal services	11,026,473
Operating expenses	1,122,371
Grants	1,408,910
Total	13,557,754
Source of funds	
General fund	6,839,753
Special funds	1,204,005
Federal funds	4,326,877
Interdepartmental transfers	1,187,119
Total	13,557,754

Sec. B.705 Forests, parks and recreation - state parks

Personal services	13,707,058
Operating expenses	4,936,482
Grants	550,000
Total	19,193,540
Source of fund	
General fund	2,061,995
Special funds	17,131,545
Total	19,193,540

Sec. B.706 Forests, parks and recreation - lands administration and recreation

Personal services	3,818,270
Operating expenses	8,667,107
Grants	6,015,019
Total	18,500,396
Source of funds	
General fund	1,324,880
Special funds	2,794,948
Federal funds	13,755,832
Interdepartmental transfers	624,736
Total	18,500,396

Sec. B.708 Forests, parks and recreation - forest and parks access roads

Personal services	130,000
Operating expenses	99,925
Total	229,925
Source of funds	
General fund	229,925
Total	229,925

Sec. B.709 Environmental conservation - management and support services

Personal services	9,655,674
Operating expenses	5,226,877
Grants	188,303
Total	15,070,854
Source of funds	
General fund	2,462,770
Special funds	1,452,358
Federal funds	2,563,636
Interdepartmental transfers	8,592,090
Total	15,070,854

Sec. B.710 Environmental conservation - air and waste management

Personal services	26,481,647
Operating expenses	9,958,684
Grants	4,343,000
Total	40,783,331
Source of funds	
General fund	305,347
Special funds	27,825,978
Federal funds	12,531,023
Interdepartmental transfers	120,983
Total	40,783,331

Sec. B.711 Environmental conservation - office of water programs

Personal services	44,324,028
Operating expenses	8,531,648
Grants	136,489,044
Total	189,344,720
Source of funds	
General fund	12,980,443
Special funds	33,801,176
Federal funds	141,693,623
Interdepartmental transfers	869,478
Total	189,344,720

Sec. B.713 Land use review board

Personal services	5,001,041
Operating expenses	537,905
Total	5,538,946
Source of funds	
General fund	4,169,020

Special funds	1,369,926
Total	5,538,946

Sec. B.714 Total natural resources

Source of funds	
General fund	50,665,734
Special funds	86,811,225
Fish and wildlife fund	10,097,060
Federal funds	184,885,710
Interdepartmental transfers	14,976,689
Total	347,436,418

Sec. B.800 Commerce and community development - agency of commerce and community development - administration

Personal services	2,515,577
Operating expenses	872,866
Grants	414,320
Total	3,802,763
Source of funds	
General fund	3,802,763
Total	3,802,763

Sec. B.801 Economic development

Personal services	4,396,254
Operating expenses	1,199,682
Grants	8,956,544
Total	14,552,480
Source of funds	
General fund	5,937,190
Special funds	3,150,350
Federal funds	5,264,940
Interdepartmental transfers	200,000
Total	14,552,480

Sec. B.802 Housing and community development

Personal services	6,519,883
Operating expenses	1,528,070
Grants	23,139,431
Total	31,187,384
Source of funds	
General fund	7,656,505
Special funds	10,144,339
Federal funds	10,957,973

Interdepartmental transfers	2,428,567
Total	31,187,384
Sec. B.806 Tourism and marketing	
Personal services	3,453,707
Operating expenses	4,569,290
Grants	1,020,000
Total	9,042,997
Source of funds	
General fund	4,960,125
Federal funds	4,007,872
Interdepartmental transfers	75,000
Total	9,042,997
Sec. B.808 Vermont council on the arts	
Grants	1,003,063
Total	1,003,063
Source of funds	
General fund	1,003,063
Total	1,003,063
Sec. B.809 Vermont symphony orchestra	
Grants	154,170
Total	154,170
Source of funds	
General fund	154,170
Total	154,170
Sec. B.810 Vermont historical society	
Grants	1,202,564
Total	1,202,564
Source of funds	
General fund	1,202,564
Total	1,202,564
Sec. B.811 Vermont housing and conservation board	
Grants	109,284,304
Total	109,284,304
Source of funds	
General fund	1,631,582
Special funds	40,490,082
Federal funds	67,162,640
Total	109,284,304

Sec. B.812 Vermont humanities council	
Grants	318,270
Total	318,270
Source of funds	
General fund	318,270
Total	318,270
Sec. B.813 Total commerce and community development	
Source of funds	
General fund	26,666,232
Special funds	53,784,771
Federal funds	87,393,425
Interdepartmental transfers	2,703,567
Total	170,547,995
Sec. B.900 Transportation - finance and administration	
Personal services	19,914,359
Operating expenses	6,581,104
Grants	50,000
Total	26,545,463
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	25,152,473
Federal funds	1,392,990
Total	26,545,463
Sec. B.901 Transportation - aviation	
Personal services	4,770,561
Operating expenses	8,456,904
Grants	190,000
Total	13,417,465
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	7,474,433
Federal funds	5,943,032
Total	13,417,465
Sec. B.902 Transportation - buildings	
Personal services	1,000,000
Operating expenses	1,500,000
Total	2,500,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	2,200,000
TIB fund	300,000
Total	2,500,000

Sec. B.903 Transportation - program development	
Personal services	83,759,860
Operating expenses	281,446,274
Grants	46,104,466
Total	411,310,600
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	62,005,434
TIB fund	15,103,017
Special funds	280,000
Federal funds	308,679,500
Interdepartmental transfers	15,722,027
Local match	9,520,622
Total	411,310,600
Sec. B.904 Transportation - rest areas construction	
Personal services	398,500
Operating expenses	791,746
Total	1,190,246
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	119,025
Federal funds	1,071,221
Total	1,190,246
Sec. B.905 Transportation - maintenance state system	
Personal services	48,113,208
Operating expenses	69,113,835
Total	117,227,043
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	110,349,507
Federal funds	932,014
Interdepartmental transfers	5,945,522
Total	117,227,043
Sec. B.906 Transportation - policy and planning	
Personal services	3,411,138
Operating expenses	1,290,442
Grants	10,346,035
Total	15,047,615
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	3,742,314
Federal funds	11,223,301
Interdepartmental transfers	82,000
Total	15,047,615

Sec. B.906.1 Transportation - environmental policy and sustainability

Personal services	8,114,291
Operating expenses	67,686
Grants	1,332,030
Total	9,514,007
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	389,377
Federal funds	8,150,226
Interdepartmental transfers	21,860
Local match	952,544
Total	9,514,007

Sec. B.907 Transportation - rail

Personal services	18,493,101
Operating expenses	43,394,247
Total	61,887,348
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	15,067,669
Federal funds	31,894,435
Interdepartmental transfers	8,228,363
Local match	6,696,881
Total	61,887,348

Sec. B.908 Transportation - public transit

Personal services	1,026,301
Operating expenses	81,224
Grants	51,587,709
Total	52,695,234
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	10,007,534
Federal funds	42,547,700
Interdepartmental transfers	140,000
Total	52,695,234

Sec. B.909 Transportation - central garage

Personal services	5,957,587
Operating expenses	19,696,966
Total	25,654,553
Source of funds	
Internal service funds	25,654,553
Total	25,654,553

Sec. B.910 Department of motor vehicles

Personal services	36,447,934
Operating expenses	13,070,367
Total	49,518,301
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	46,709,524
Federal funds	2,687,081
Interdepartmental transfers	121,696
Total	49,518,301

Sec. B.911 Transportation - town highway structures

Grants	7,200,000
Total	7,200,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	7,200,000
Total	7,200,000

Sec. B.912 Transportation - town highway local technical assistance program

Personal services	449,763
Operating expenses	31,689
Total	481,452
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	121,452
Federal funds	360,000
Total	481,452

Sec. B.913 Transportation - town highway class 2 roadway

Grants	8,600,000
Total	8,600,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	8,600,000
Total	8,600,000

Sec. B.914 Transportation - town highway bridges

Personal services	10,034,000
Operating expenses	27,759,406
Total	37,793,406
Source of funds	
TIB fund	3,596,983
Federal funds	31,716,311
Local match	2,480,112
Total	37,793,406

Sec. B.915 Transportation - town highway aid program

Grants	30,418,736
Total	30,418,736
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	30,418,736
Total	30,418,736

Sec. B.916 Transportation - town highway class 1 supplemental grants

Grants	128,750
Total	128,750
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	128,750
Total	128,750

Sec. B.917 Transportation - town highway: state aid for nonfederal disasters

Grants	1,150,000
Total	1,150,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	0
Special funds	1,150,000
Total	1,150,000

Sec. B.918 Transportation - town highway: state aid for federal disasters

Grants	4,000,000
Total	4,000,000
Source of funds	
Federal funds	4,000,000
Total	4,000,000

Sec. B.919 Transportation - municipal mitigation assistance program

Personal services	100,000
Operating expenses	325,500
Grants	6,467,500
Total	6,893,000
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	715,000
Special funds	4,750,000
Federal funds	1,428,000
Total	6,893,000

Sec. B.921 Transportation board

Personal services	181,233
Operating expenses	22,938
Total	204,171
Source of funds	
Transportation fund	204,171
Total	204,171

Sec. B.922 Total transportation

Source of funds	
Transportation fund	330,605,399
TIB fund	19,000,000
Special funds	6,180,000
Federal funds	452,025,811
Internal service funds	25,654,553
Interdepartmental transfers	30,261,468
Local match	19,650,159
Total	883,377,390

Sec. B.1000 Debt service

Operating expenses	675,000
Total	675,000
Source of funds	
General fund	675,000
Total	675,000

Sec. B.1001 Total debt service

Source of funds	
General fund	675,000
Total	675,000

* * * Fiscal Year 2026 One-Time Appropriations * * *

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2026 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,100,000 General Fund for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; and

(2) $110,000 General Fund for the Office of Racial Equity to continue the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action, Leadership Vermont program an additional year.

(b) Department of Human Resources. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,575,000 General Fund for the Classification Modernization project.

(c) Department of Taxes. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,000,000 PILOT Special Fund for the Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program as established per Sec. E.142.2 of this act. These funds shall carry forward each fiscal year until fully expended or reverted.

(d) Department of Public Safety. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $600,000 General Fund for State match for federal cybersecurity grant funds;

(2) $800,000 General Fund for the purchase of mobile and portable radio equipment; and

(3) $150,000 General Fund for the Vermont Community Radio Grant Program established in Sec. E.208.2 of this act.

(e) Agency of Human Services Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $4,448,520 General Fund and $6,351,480 federal funds for the Department of Vermont Health Access' Global Commitment appropriation for the Support and Services at Home program, the Primary Care Medical Home, and Community Health Team services under the Blueprint for Health;

(2) $6,200 General Fund for per diems and expense reimbursement for members of the Office of New Americans Study Committee; and

(3) $514,875 General Fund and $735,125 federal funds for the Department of Vermont Health Access' Global Commitment appropriation for the first year of implementation of the Maple Mountain Family Medicine Residency Program if the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approves the Agency's request for federal matching funds pursuant to Sec. E.306.5(a) of this act.

(f) Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $250,000 General Fund for the Vermont Serve, Learn, and Earn Program; and

(2) $275,000 General Fund for the purchase of a fire apparatus.

(g) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $240,000 General Fund for Polychlorinated Biphenyl testing;

(2) $40,000 General Fund for a grant to Empty Arms Vermont;

(3) Notwithstanding 18 V.S.A. § 4812, $300,000 Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for recovery residences certified by the Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences;

(4) Notwithstanding 18 V.S.A. § 4812, $800,000 Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for recovery centers;

(5) $200,000 Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund for a grant to Mentor Vermont; and

(6) $250,000 General Fund for a grant to the Vermont Parent Child Center Network for smoking cessation initiatives.

(h) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,000,000 General Fund for shelter capacity expansion;

(2) $30,500,000 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program;

(3) $1,000,000 General Fund for direct aid to the Vermont Foodbank's network partner food shelves and pantries through an equitable statewide distribution of food or subgrants or both; and

(4) $156,000 General Fund for the Child Care Apprenticeship Program.

(i) Department of Corrections. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $200,000 General Fund to retain a consultant and develop an implementation plan to transition the Northeast Correctional Complex or the Caledonia County Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility for incarcerated Vermonters.

(j) Agency of Education. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $150,000 General Fund for administrative costs relating to home-based child care meals.

(k) Vermont State Colleges. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $5,000,000 General Fund for the final transformation bridge financing payment.

(l) Department of Fish and Wildlife. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $185,000 Fish and Wildlife Nondedicated Special Fund to sustain current operations as the Department undergoes a financial restructuring. These funds shall carry forward each fiscal year until fully expended or reverted;

(2) $80,000 General Fund for the purchase of mobile and portable radio equipment; and

(3) $30,000 General Fund for the Lake Champlain International Fishing Derby.

(m) Department of Environmental Conservation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $50,000 General Fund for a Municipal Wastewater Connections database;

(2) $850,000 General Fund for the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation database project and contractor support;

(3) $9,520,000 Environmental Contingency Fund For Polychlorinated Biphenyl testing and remediation in schools. These funds shall carry forward each fiscal year until fully expended or reverted; and

(4) $14,500,000 Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments for the State match to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund, in accordance with the provisions of 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.108(b).

(n) Department of Housing and Community Development. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $7,500,000 General Fund for the Vermont Bond Bank Vermont Infrastructure Sustainability Fund;

(2) $16,100,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Finance Agency Rental Revolving Loan Fund, the Middle-Income Homeownership Development Program, and the First Generation Homebuyer Program. No less than $250,000 of these funds shall be for the First Generation Homebuyer Program;

(3) $4,000,000 General Fund for the Vermont Housing Improvement Program 2.0;

(4) $15,000 General Fund for the Residential Universal Design Study Committee; and

(5) $450,000 General Fund to fund three limited service positions at the Department.

(o) Department of Economic Development. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $200,000 General Fund for the Vermont Professionals of Color Network;

(2) $150,000 General Fund for a grant to the Vermont Small Business Development Center to assist Vermonters starting, acquiring, and growing businesses;

(3) $150,000 General Fund for the International Business Office;

(4) $1,000,000 General Fund for the brownfields remediation and redevelopment;

(5) $100,000 General Fund for a grant to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to support a site study focused on economic development, parking, housing, and flood mitigation for the 1.6-acre parcel at 87 State Street and parcels at 89 State Street and 42 Court Street; and

(6) $250,000 General Fund for a competitive grant to establish a new women's recovery residence, per the criteria of the Vermont Recovery Housing Program Action Plan, that shall be awarded on or before September 30, 2025.

(p) Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $5,000,000 General Fund to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units, including improvements to manufactured homes and communities; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness; recovery residences; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home and community-based services.

(q) Office of the State Treasurer. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $148,000 General Fund for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program; and

(2) $350,000 General Fund for financial modeling and the limited service classified position established in Sec. E.100(b)(1)(A) of this act.

(r) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $835,420 General Fund for the Payment Reform Unit;

(2) $3,119,310 General Fund for the OneCare primary care model transition;

(3) $10,800,000 Global Commitment for the Support and Services at Home program, the Primary Care Medical Home, and Community Health Team services under the Blueprint for Health; and

(4) $1,250,000 Global Commitment for the first year of implementation of the Maple Mountain Family Medicine Residency Program if the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approves the Agency of Human Services' request for federal matching funds pursuant to Sec. E.306.5(a) of this act.

(s) University of Vermont. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $750,000 General Fund for the Vermont Gallium Nitride Tech Hub.

(t) Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $450,000 General Fund for a grant to the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont for the Crop Cash, Crop Cash Plus, and Farm Share programs;

(2) $500,000 General Fund for a grant to Vermont Foodbank for the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Program;

(3) $500,000 General Fund to offer Vermont Local Food for Schools and Child Care grants within the Rozo McLaughlin Farm to School Grants Program to fund grants for the purchase and distribution of local food to schools and registered or licensed child care programs; and

(4) $250,000 General Fund to support Vermont's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts.

(u) Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $235,000 General Fund for a grant to HomeShare Vermont; and

(2) $500,000 General Fund for grants to skilled nursing facilities to increase the pipeline of employed licensed nursing assistants, including increasing the capacity of new and existing facility-based training programs, and developing or expanding collaborations with other programs, including career and technical education programs. Grants may support training program costs, paid internships, student support, and recruitment and retention bonuses.

(A) Of the funds appropriated in subdivision (u)(2) of this section, $150,000 shall be for grants of $30,000 or less.

(B) Of the funds appropriated in subdivision (u)(2) of this section, $350,000 shall be for up to three grants.

(v) Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,500,000 General Fund for Freedom and Unity grants.

(w) Military Department. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $10,000 General Fund for the USS Vermont Support Group.

(x) Vermont Council on the Arts. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $68,737 General Fund for State match for federal funds.

(y) Agency of Transportation. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $1,400,000 Transportation Fund for transfer to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for programs to increase access to level 1 and 2 Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment charging ports at workplaces or multiunit dwellings, or both; and

(2) $600,000 Transportation Fund for the purpose of providing grants to the public transit agencies to hire volunteer coordinators who shall be responsible for the identification, recruitment, and retention of volunteers to provide transportation services to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

(z) Department of Labor. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $150,000 General Fund for a grant to Advance Vermont.

(aa) Office of the Secretary of State. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $50,000 General Fund for awards to support local civic journalism; and

(2) $25,000 General Fund for staff and IT costs at the Office of Professional Regulation relating to the implementation of certifications of perinatal doulas and birthing centers.

(bb) Office of the Defender General. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $30,000 General Fund to enhance IT server capacity;

(2) $50,000 General Fund for the Orleans County staff office;

(3) $20,000 General Fund for the Addison County staff office; and

(4) $60,000 General Fund for public defender training pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 5253.

(cc) Land Use Review Board. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $100,000 General Fund for development of digital infrastructure relating to Land Use Review Board application and mapping projects.

(dd) Department of Mental Health. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $500,000 General Fund for the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Community Resource Center.

(ee) Office of the Attorney General. In fiscal year 2026, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $80,000 General Fund is added to the appropriation established per 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 17(b) to extend the limited service position established in subsection (a) of that section until June 30, 2026.

Sec. B.1101 FISCAL YEAR 2025 CLOSEOUT; FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONTINGENT TRANSACTIONS

(a) As part of the fiscal year 2025 closeout, the Department of Finance and Management shall execute the requirements of 32 V.S.A. § 308. If any balance remains after meeting these requirements, then, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 308c, the Department of Finance and Management shall designate the first $138,970,000 as unallocated carryforward for use in meeting the requirements of the fiscal year 2026 appropriations act as passed by the General Assembly. The Department of Finance and Management shall then, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 308c, calculate the maximum number of contingent transactions that can be funded, in the order provided in subsection

(b) of this section, and designate that money to remain unallocated for such purpose in fiscal year 2026. Any residual balance remaining after such designations shall be reserved in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308c.

(b) In fiscal year 2026, the following contingent transactions shall be executed in the following order from the designated unallocated balance as determined in subsection (a) of this section:

(1) $8,000,000 is transferred to the Communications and Information Technology Special Fund to cover the costs of transitioning billable services from a service level agreement model to a core enterprise services model.

(2) $50,000,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Administration to be transferred by the Emergency Board pursuant to 32 V.S.A. §133 while the General Assembly is not in session in the event of a reduction in federal funds to the State as set forth in Sec. E.127.2 of this act.

(3) $30,000,000 is reserved in the General Fund for future appropriation or transfer by the General Assembly for addressing federal funding shortfalls.

(4) $30,000,000 is reserved in the General Fund for future appropriation or transfer by the General Assembly for addressing federal funding shortfalls, Vermont Medicaid and other human services needs, property tax relief, permanent housing initiatives, or any other uses determined to be in the best interests of the public.

Sec. B.1103 CASH FUND FOR CAPITAL AND ESSENTIAL INVESTMENTS; FISCAL YEAR 2026 ONE-TIME CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2026, $13,436,099 is appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments for the following:

(1) Department of Buildings and General Services:

(A) $1,506,599 for statewide major maintenance;

(B) $250,000 for statewide planning, reuse, and contingency;

(C) $250,000 for statewide physical security enhancements;

(D) $219,500 for State House repointing;

(E) $250,000 for an uninterruptable power supply system for the Middlesex print and postal facility; and

(F) $6,900,000 for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction.

(2) Vermont Veterans' Home:

(A) $1,500,000 for the design and construction of the American Unit. Notwithstanding 29 V.S.A. § 152(a)(20), the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services is authorized to transfer any unexpended project balances between the amount appropriated in this subdivision (A) and the amounts appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15(b)(1).

(3) Agency of Commerce and Community Development:

(A) $2,500,000 for infrastructure improvements that are either municipally leased for a term of at least 30 years or municipally owned and that support the development of new or rehabilitated housing, provided that a grant agreement shall be in place between the State and the municipality prior to the release of funds.

(4) Department of Fish and Wildlife:

(A) $25,000 for the Lake Champlain Walleye Association, Inc. to upgrade and repair the walleye rearing, restoration, and stocking infrastructure.

(5) Department of Public Safety:

(A) $35,000 for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the dry hydrant program.

* * * Fiscal Year 2025 Adjustments, Appropriations, and Amendments * * *

Sec. C.100 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.209 is amended to read:

Sec. B.209 Public safety - state police

Personal services	~~74,755,468~~ 76,655,468
Operating expenses	15,992,094
Grants	1,137,841
Total	~~91,885,403~~ 93,785,403
Source of funds	
General fund	~~57,891,409~~ 59,791,409
Transportation fund	20,250,000
Special funds	3,170,328
Federal funds	8,967,252
Interdepartmental transfers	1,606,414
Total	~~91,885,403~~ 93,785,403

Sec. C.101 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.702 is amended to read:

Sec. B.702 Fish and wildlife - support and field services

Personal services	~~22,597,844~~ 22,887,844
Operating expenses	6,843,095
Grants	853,066

Total	~~30,294,005~~ 30,584,005
Source of funds	
General fund	~~8,267,967~~ 8,557,967
Special funds	365,427
Fish and wildlife fund	10,418,331
Federal funds	9,751,683
Interdepartmental transfers	1,490,597
Total	~~30,294,005~~ 30,584,005

Sec. C.102 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.101 is amended to read:

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following amounts are transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): ~~$73,212,880~~ $78,235,088.34.

* * *

(J) Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (#21555): ~~$830,000~~ $6,500,000.

(K) Education Fund (#20205): $25,000,000.

(L) Medical Insurance Fund (#55100): $18,500,000.

(M) Correctional Industries Fund (#59100): $3,135,443.

(N) Act 250 Permit Fund (#21260): $900,000.

(O) State Liability Self-Insurance Fund (#56200): $3,000,000.

(P) Emergency Personnel Survivor's Benefit Fund (#21884): $220,000.

(2) From the Transportation Fund to the:

(A) ~~Vermont Recreational Trails Fund (#21455): $370,000.~~

~~(B)~~ Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvements Fund (#21575): $523,966.

~~(C)~~(B) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $316,745.

(C) Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund (#20191): $900,000.

(D) Notwithstanding 19 V.S.A. § 13(c), the Transportation Fund transfer to the Central Garage fund in fiscal year 2025 shall be $0.

* * *

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025:

(1) The following amounts shall be transferred to the General Fund from the funds indicated:

(A) Cannabis Regulation Fund (#21998): ~~$12,000,000~~ $15,417,084.32.

(B) AHS Central Office Earned Federal Receipts (#22005): $4,641,960.

(C) Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund (#50250): ~~$7,000,000~~ $6,139,162.

(D) Liquor Control Fund (#50300): ~~$21,100,000~~ $9,543,353.

(E) ~~Tobacco Litigation Settlement Fund (#21370): $3,000,000.~~

~~(F)~~ Financial Institutions Supervision Fund (#21065): $1,100,000.

(F) Workforce Education and Training Fund (#21913): $2,598,921.75.

(G) Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund (#21994): the balance of the fund at the close of fiscal year 2025.

(2) The following estimated amounts, which may be all or a portion of unencumbered fund balances, shall be transferred from the following funds to the General Fund. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July meeting the final amounts transferred from each fund and certify that such transfers will not impair the agency, office, or department reliant upon each fund from meeting its statutory requirements.

(A) AG-Fees & Reimbursements-Court Order Fund (#21638): $2,000,000.

(B) Unclaimed Property Fund (#62100): ~~$6,500,000~~ $12,262,352.

(3) ~~$66,935,000~~ $65,060,450.50 of the net unencumbered fund balances in the Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21075), the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085), and the Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21080) shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(c)(1) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.3 of the Rules for State Matching Funds under the Federal Public Assistance Program, in fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may provide funding from the Emergency Relief and

Assistance Fund that was transferred pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(J) of this section to subgrantees prior to the completion of a project. In fiscal ~~year~~ years 2025 and 2026, up to 70 percent of the State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project for municipalities that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT may be advanced at the request of a municipality.

(2) Notwithstanding Sec. 1.4.1 of the Rules for State Matching Funds Under the Federal Public Assistance Program, the Secretary of Administration shall increase the standard State funding match on the nonfederal share of an approved project to the highest percentage possible given available funding for municipalities in counties that were impacted by ~~the August and December~~ 2023 and 2024 flooding events and are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT ~~and~~, DR-4762-VT, DR-4810-VT, DR-4816-VT, and DR-4826-VT.

* * *

Sec. C.103 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100 is amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2025 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

* * *

(d) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(8) $835,073 General Fund for the Bridges to Health Program; ~~and~~

(9) ~~$400,000~~ $550,000 General Fund for the Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey; and

(10) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity.

(e) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $16,500,000 General Fund for the General Assistance Emergency Housing program;

(2) $1,034,065 General Fund to extend 10 Economic Services Division limited service positions, including associated operating costs, in support of the General Assistance Emergency Housing program; ~~and~~

(3) $332,000 General Fund for a 2-1-1 service line contract to operate 24 hours seven days per week;

(4) $340,000 General Fund and $660,000 federal funds for the Office of Child Support mainframe transition planning. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 703, unless otherwise reverted by a future act of the General Assembly, these appropriations shall carry forward until fully expended; and

(5) $1,800,000 General Fund shall be added to the appropriation made in Sec. B.1102(b)(4) of this act for the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

* * *

(n) Agency of Human Services Secretary's Office. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$3,913,200~~ $5,586,324 General Fund and ~~$5,366,383~~ $7,713,259 federal funds to be used for Global Commitment match for the Medicaid Global Payment Program. To the extent that at a future date the Global Payment Program ceases to operate as a program or changes methodology to a retrospective payment program, any resulting one-time General Fund spending authority remaining at that time shall be reverted. If the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b has not been replenished in accordance with subdivision (b)(21) of Sec. B.1102 of this act, the remaining unallocated General Fund balance shall be reserved in the Human Services Caseload Reserve established in 32 V.S.A. § 308b up to the amount appropriated in this subdivision.

(o) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$9,279,583~~ $13,299,583 Global Commitment for the Medicaid Global Payment Program;

(2) $150,000 General Fund to conduct a technical analysis of Vermont's health insurance markets; ~~and~~

(3) $100,000 General Fund to implement the expansion of Medicare Savings Programs eligibility;

(4) $10,000,000 General Fund for Provider Stabilization Grants; and

(5) $11,000,000 General Fund for an alternative payment model reconciliation payment to Brattleboro Retreat. All or a portion of these funds may also be used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match. If funds are used as matching funds to the Agency of Human Services Global Commitment Program to provide State match, the commensurate amount of Global Commitment Fund

spending authority may be requested during the Global Commitment Transfer process pursuant to Sec. E.301.1 of this act.

* * *

(v) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) ~~$200,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities that were impacted by the August and December 2023 flooding events in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4744-VT and DR-4762-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of the August and December 2023 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on Federal Emergency Management Agency related projects~~ $1,800,000 General Fund for local economic damage grants to municipalities in counties that are eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance funds under federal disaster declarations DR-4810-VT and DR-4744-VT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that these local economic damage grants be distributed to municipalities throughout the State to address the secondary economic impacts of 2023 and 2024 flooding events. Monies from these grants shall not be expended on Federal Emergency Management Agency-related projects.

(A) The funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) for local economic damage grants shall be distributed as follows:

(i) $75,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has at least $5,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(ii) $50,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $5,000,000 and at least $2,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iii) $30,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $2,000,000 and at least $1,000,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(iv) $20,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $1,000,000 and at least $250,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(v) $10,000 to each municipality that as of June 1, 2025 has less than $250,000 and at least $100,000 in estimated reported damages to public infrastructure relating to 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

(B) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) have not been granted on or before September 30, 2025, they shall revert to the General Fund and be transferred to the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund.

(C) To the extent that the funds appropriated in this subdivision (v)(1) are insufficient to distribute grants to all eligible municipalities in their full amount, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511, utilize excess receipt authority to establish spending authority from the PILOT Special Fund for this purpose; and

(2) $3,800,000 General Fund to ensure the appropriations made in Secs. B.514 of this act and the fiscal year 2026 appropriations act are sufficient to meet 100 percent of the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System Actuarially Determined Employer Contribution. Appropriations made in Secs. B.513 of this act and the fiscal year 2026 appropriations act pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1944(c)(13) shall not be considered for the purposes of determining whether the appropriations made in Secs. B.514 of this act and the fiscal year 2026 appropriations act are sufficient to ensure that the Actuarially Determined Employer Contribution requirement is funded at 100 percent in fiscal years 2025 and 2026, respectively. Unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose.

(w) Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,800,000 General Fund to complete pilot projects identified pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 186.

(x) Judiciary. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $800,000 General Fund to upgrade the network wiring and security systems in county court houses; and

(2) $50,000 General Fund to upgrade or construct bathrooms in the Essex Meeting House that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

(y) Agency of Education. In fiscal year 2025, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $68,407 Education Fund for a grant to the Essex North Supervisory Union to eliminate a fiscal year 2025 Transportation Grant shortfall due to a data submission error; and

(2) $149,666 Education Fund for a grant to the Windham Southwest Supervisory Union to eliminate a fiscal year 2025 Transportation Grant shortfall due to a data submission error.

Sec. C.104 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 40, is further amended to read:

Sec. B.1100 MISCELLANEOUS FISCAL YEAR 2024 ONE-TIME APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Agency of Administration. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,300,000 General Fund to create, implement, and oversee a comprehensive statewide language access plan;

(2) $15,000,000 General Fund to be used to offset the cost of denied claims for ~~Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)~~ federal reimbursement related to presidentially declared disasters in fiscal year 2024 or 2025, or to fund unanticipated statewide costs related to recovery efforts from declared disasters or administering programs created by funds from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery Fund, including the costs of related limited-service positions, and contracting for programs and services;~~.~~

(3) $500,000 General Fund for community grants related to health equity. These funds shall not be released until the recommendation and report required by Sec. E.100.1 of this act, regarding the permanent administrative location for the Office of Health Equity, is provided to the committees of jurisdiction listed in Sec. E.100.1 of this act and the positions in the Office of Health Equity created by this act are filled; and

(4) $30,000,000 General Fund to be used as ~~Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) matching funds~~ nonfederal share related to disaster spending for costs incurred due to ~~the July 2023 flooding event~~ federally declared disasters in fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

* * *

(l) Agency of Human Services Central Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

* * *

(2) $8,834,000 General Fund and $11,483,302 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program. Funds shall be used to expand the substances covered by the program, include mental health and pediatric screenings, and make strategic

investments with community partners; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(m) Department of Vermont Health Access. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $366,066 General Fund and $372,048 Federal Revenue Fund #22005 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

(2) $15,583,352 Global Commitment Fund #20405 for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose; and

* * *

(n) Department of Health. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $4,595,448 Global Commitment Fund #20405 to the Division of Substance Use Programs for a ~~two-year~~ pilot to expand the Blueprint for Health Hub and Spoke program; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(o) Department for Children and Families. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $2,000,000 General Fund to implement the two-year Reach Ahead Pilot Program. Funds shall be used to increase monthly food assistance benefits to Reach Ahead participants, expand the eligibility window for those leaving Reach Up, and provide incentive payments; unexpended appropriations shall carry forward into subsequent fiscal years and remain available for this purpose;

* * *

(ee) Joint Fiscal Office. In fiscal year 2024, funds are appropriated for the following:

(1) $250,000 for ~~per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Task Force on Economic Development Incentives and for consulting services approved by the Task Force~~ consulting services related to legislative needs identified in the 2025–2026 biennium, including analysis of

legislative staff compensation and organizational structure and implementation of adjustments in accordance with policies adopted by the Joint Legislative Management Committee.

* * *

Sec. C.105 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. C.110 is amended to read:

Sec. C.110 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; REVERSION AND REALLOCATION

(a) The Secretary of Administration ~~shall revert~~ may reimburse up to ~~$5,000,000~~ $14,300,000 of prior fiscal year federal funds ~~appropriated~~ expended through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, as approved by the Joint Fiscal Committee pursuant to Grant Request #3034~~. An amount of spending authority equal to these reversions shall be provided, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511, to existing State programs that meet the eligibility criteria established by the U.S. Treasury~~ with new General Fund appropriations transferred from existing State programs that meet the eligibility criteria established by the U.S. Treasury. These programs shall receive an amount of spending authority from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program equal to the amount of General Fund appropriation transferred.

Sec. C.106 BUSINESS EMERGENCY GAP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; VERMONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY GRANT

(a) Of the $7,000,000 General Fund provided to the Department of Housing and Community Development by unanimous vote of the Emergency Board on August 8, 2024 for the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program, $2,000,000 shall be used for a grant to the Vermont Economic Development Authority to establish a disaster relief fund for use by businesses following a natural disaster.

Sec. C.107 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.103 is amended to read:

Sec. D.103 RESERVES

* * *

(b) In fiscal year 2025, $5,000,000 shall be reserved within the Child Care Contribution Special Fund. If in fiscal year 2026 the Child Care Contribution Special Fund is found to have an undesignated fund deficit, these funds shall be unreserved and used to the extent necessary to offset the deficit as determined by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. If these funds are used in fiscal year 2026, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, or the Joint

Fiscal Committee when the General Assembly is not in session, on the amount used.

* * * Fiscal Year 2026 Fund Transfers and Reserve Allocations * * *

Sec. D.100 PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX ALLOCATIONS

(a) This act contains the following amounts allocated to special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. These allocations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of $591,137 is allocated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of $591,137 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(2) Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of $36,964,250 from the property transfer tax and the surcharge established by 32 V.SA. § 9602a deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of $2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 314 shall be offset by the reduction of $1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and $1,000,000 from the surcharge established by 32 V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2026 appropriation of $36,964,250 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the $1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, the $1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall be restored.

(3) Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a)(2), amounts in excess of $10,000,705 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Municipal and Regional Planning and Resilience Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a)(3), the $10,000,705 shall be allocated as follows:

(A) $7,740,546 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) $1,260,089 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) $1,000,070 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. D.101 FUND TRANSFERS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following amounts shall be transferred from the funds indicated:

(1) From the General Fund (#10000) to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $81,155,462.

(B) Capital Infrastructure Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments (#21952): $9,647,469.

(C) Tax Computer System Modernization Fund (#21909): $4,300,000.

(D) Fish and Wildlife Fund – Nondedicated (#20305): $185,000.

(E) Education Fund (#20205): $77,200,000.

(F) Communications and Information Technology Fund (#58100): $7,000,000.

(G) Environmental Contingency Fund (#21275): $9,520,000.

(i) The transfer in subdivision (a)(1)(G) of this section shall be increased by the amount reverted in Sec. D.102(b) of this act. For the purpose of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget this amount is estimated to be no less than $2,000,000.

(H) Domestic and Sexual Violence Fund (#21926): $450,000.

(2) From the Transportation Fund (#20105) to the:

(A) General Obligation Bonds Debt Service Fund (#35100): $305,825.

(B) Downtown Transportation and Related Capital Improvements Fund (#21575): $523,966.

(3) From the Education Fund (#20205) to the:

(A) Tax Computer System Modernization Fund (#21909): $1,500,000.

(4) From the Clean Water Fund (#21932) to the:

(A) Agricultural Water Quality Special Fund (#21933): $11,000,000.

(B) Lake in Crisis Response Program Special Fund (#21938): $120,000.

(5) From the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments and Reserves Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments (#21953) to the:

(A) Transportation Fund (#20105): $12,500,000.

(B) Capital Infrastructure Subaccount in the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments Fund (#21952): $1,000,000.

(6) From the Agency of Human Services Central Office Earned Federal Receipts (#22005) to the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): $4,641,960.

(7) From the Attorney General Fees and Reimbursement Court Order Fund (#21638) to the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): $2,000,000.

(8) From the Cannabis Regulation Fund (#21998) to the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): 70 percent of the unencumbered and unexpended balance of the fund in excess of $4,035,000 following the close of fiscal year 2025. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report the amount of this transfer to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July 2025 meeting. For purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget, this amount is estimated to be $8,900,000.

(B) Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund (#21995): 30 percent of the unencumbered and unexpended balance of the fund in excess of $4,035,000 following the close of fiscal year 2025. The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall report the amount of this transfer to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July 2025 meeting. For purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget, this amount is estimated to be $3,800,000.

(b) The following transfers shall be in accordance with the citations provided. Transfer estimates are for purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget and do not supersede the actual year-end transfer amounts.

(1) To the General Fund (#10000) from the:

(A) 8 V.S.A. § 80(d). Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21075): $46,204,523.

(B) 9 V.S.A. § 5613(c). Securities Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085): $21,745,635.

(C) 27 V.S.A. § 1543. Unclaimed Property Fund (#62100): $7,389,063.

(2) To the Captive Insurance Regulatory and Supervision Fund (#21085) from the:

(A) General Fund (#10000): $1,053,073

(c) Transfers from the following enterprise funds to the General Fund (#10000) shall not exceed the actual fiscal year end profits earned by the enterprise net of any amount necessary to absolve the fund of a deficit. The following estimated transfers are for purposes of developing the fiscal year 2026 budget only.

(1) From the Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund (#50250): $7,600,000.

(2) From the Liquor Control Fund (#50300): $14,849,754.

Sec. D.102 REVERSIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2026, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

1100892208	AOA – VHFA	$2,000,000.00
1210892201	LEG – Pension Benefit Consul	$8,821.25
1220891803	VT Tax Structure Comm	$59,673.09
1220891901	Contract Services for Research	$25,000.00
1220892201	JFO – AAHC Task Force Consult	$7,155.00
1220892301	JFO – Studies and Reports	$21,125.50
1230891301	Security	$39.10
1230892301	SAA – Capitol Police	$0.99
1260892201	TRE – Bond Redemption	$6,000,000.00

(b) Any unencumbered balance remaining in the appropriation established pursuant to 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1103(h), as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 43, at the close of fiscal year 2025 shall revert in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 703 and shall be exempt from the carryforward authority provided to the Secretary of Administration in Sec. F.182(a) of this act.

Sec. D.103 RESERVES

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2026, the following reserve transactions shall be implemented for the funds provided:

(1) General Fund.

(A) The General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve shall be adjusted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308. For purposes of developing this budget, $1,685,385 is expected to be unreserved in fiscal year 2026.

(B) The General Fund Human Services Caseload Reserve shall be adjusted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308b. For purposes of developing this budget, $2,721,375 is expected to be unreserved in fiscal year 2026.

(C) The General Fund 27/53 Reserve shall be adjusted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 308e. For purposes of developing this budget, $5,700,000 is expected to be reserved in fiscal year 2026.

(2) Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments and Reserves Subaccount in the Cash for Capital and Essential Investments Fund.

(A) $12,500,000 is unreserved for transfer to the Transportation Fund for use by the Agency of Transportation in accordance with the provisions for which the funds were originally reserved in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1102(b)(17).

(B) $14,500,000 is unreserved for use by the Department of Environmental Conservation in accordance with the provisions for which the funds were originally reserved in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.108(b).

(3) Transportation Fund.

(A) For the purpose of calculating the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Fund Stabilization Reserve's requirement of five percent of prior year appropriations, fiscal year 2025 Transportation Fund reversions are deducted from the fiscal year 2025 total appropriations amount.

* * * General Government * * *

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of three permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2026 for the following:

(1) Permanent classified positions:

(A) Department of Fish and Wildlife:

(i) one Fish and Wildlife Specialist.

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

(A) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(i) one Financial and IT Specialist; and

(ii) one Transport Deputy.

(b) The establishment of three limited service classified position is authorized in fiscal year 2026:

(1) Office of the State Treasurer:

(A) one Climate Superfund Specialist.

(2) Office of the Attorney General:

(A) one Pre-Charge Administrator.

(3) Office of the Secretary of State:

(A) one Administrative Coordinator IV.

(c) The establishment of one limited service exempt position is authorized in fiscal year 2026:

(1) Office of the Attorney General:

(A) one Solicitor General.

(d) The conversion of two limited service exempt positions to permanent classified status is authorized in fiscal year 2026 as follows:

(1) Land Use Review Board:

(A) two District Coordinators.

(e) The conversion of nine limited service exempt positions to permanent exempt status is authorized in fiscal year 2026 as follows:

(1) Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs:

(A) six Deputy State's Attorneys;

(B) two Legal Assistants; and

(C) one Victim Advocate.

Sec. E.100.1 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.100, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 87, Sec. 56, is further amended to read:

Sec. E.100 EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITIONS

(a) The establishment of 75 permanent positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 for the following:

* * *

(2) Permanent exempt positions:

* * *

(F) Office of the State Treasurer:

(i) one Director – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division; and

(ii) one Communications and Outreach Manager – ~~VT Saves~~ Economic Empowerment Division;

* * *

(d) The establishment of 23 new exempt limited service positions is authorized in fiscal year 2024 as follows:

* * *

(2) ~~Agency of Administration~~ Department of Health – Health Equity Advisory Commission:

(A) one Private Secretary.

* * *

Sec. E.100.2 SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION; REPORT ON STATUS OF FEDERAL FUNDS

(a) The Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July, September, and November 2025 meetings, and at other meetings as requested, on any reductions to federal revenues to the State and the status of any appropriations impacted by such reductions.

Sec. E.100.3 AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT; CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND APPROPRIATIONS; REPORTING

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee on a quarterly basis, and upon the request of the Committee, on the status of appropriations made from the American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund.

(1) Reports shall include information on:

(A) the original amounts appropriated;

(B) outstanding obligations against appropriations; and

(C) any remaining spending authority.

(b) In fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee on a quarterly basis, and upon the request of the Committee, on the status of any spending authority established pursuant to 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106.

(1) Reports shall include information on:

(A) the original amounts appropriated;

(B) outstanding obligations against appropriations; and

(C) any remaining spending authority.

(c) Any spending authority established pursuant to 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106(a) and (c) that remains unexpended and unencumbered on December 31, 2027 shall revert to the General Fund. Any unallocated balance resulting from this reversion shall be reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve.

(d) The Secretary of Administration shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on or before January 15, 2028 on the amount reverted to the General Fund and reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

Sec. E.105 AGENCY OF DIGITAL SERVICES; COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUND TRANSFER

(a) In fiscal year 2026, the Agency of Digital Services shall utilize from the Internal Service Fund appropriation in Sec. B.105 of this act an amount of funds equal to that transferred from the General Fund to the Communications and Information Technology Fund in this act to cover the costs of transitioning billable services from a service level agreement model to a core enterprise services model. To the extent to which these funds are insufficient to complete this transition, the Agency shall, as part of its fiscal year 2026 budget adjustment presentation, request an additional appropriation or transfer of funds and shall not bill other agencies or departments to cover the costs of the transition.

Sec. E.111 32 V.S.A. § 5824 is amended to read:

§ 5824. ADOPTION OF FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS

The statutes of the United States relating to the federal income tax, as in effect on December 31, ~~2023~~ 2024, but without regard to federal income tax rates under 26 U.S.C. § 1, are hereby adopted for the purpose of computing the

tax liability under this chapter and shall continue in effect as adopted until amended, repealed, or replaced by act of the General Assembly.

Sec. E.111.1 32 V.S.A. § 7402 is amended to read:

§ 7402. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter unless the context requires otherwise:

* * *

(8) "Laws of the United States" means the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended through December 31, ~~2023~~ 2024. As used in this chapter, "Internal Revenue Code" has the same meaning as "laws of the United States" as defined in this subdivision. The date through which amendments to the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986 are adopted under this subdivision shall continue in effect until amended, repealed, or replaced by act of the General Assembly.

* * *

Sec. E.111.2 32 V.S.A. § 5861(c) is amended to read:

(c) Spouses or a surviving spouse ~~may~~ shall file a joint Vermont personal income tax return for any taxable year for which the spouses file or the surviving spouse ~~are permitted to file~~ files a joint federal income tax return under the laws of the United States, unless the Commissioner allows a different filing status.

Sec. E.111.3 TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS; TAX YEAR 2025

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, for purposes of determining the tax-exempt status of an organization, Vermont tax laws for tax year 2025 shall follow 26 U.S.C. §§ 501–506 and all other federal statutory provisions, federal regulations, and federal case law relating to the determination of an organization's tax-exempt status for purposes of federal income taxation, as in effect on April 1, 2025, regardless of any amendments or other changes affecting implementation or interpretation of those sections between April 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, whether due to an act of Congress, federal regulation, federal bulletin, federal guidance, presidential executive order, federal administrative or judicial decision, or other federal source.

Sec. E.126 FISCAL YEAR 2026 INCREASED LEGISLATURE BASE FUNDING; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.126 of this act, $1,500,000 be for expenses including meetings of the General Assembly not budgeted for in prior, current, or future

appropriations acts. It is further the intent of the General Assembly that the proposed fiscal year 2027 General Assembly budget exclude this $1,500,000 from any calculation of its base appropriation amount.

Sec. E.127 32 V.S.A. § 704 is amended to read:

§ 704. INTERIM BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION ADJUSTMENTS

(a) The General Assembly recognizes that acts of appropriations and their sources of funding reflect the priorities for expenditures of public funds enacted by the General Assembly and that major reductions or transfers, when required by reduced State revenues or other reasons, ought to be made whenever possible by an act of the General Assembly reflecting its revisions of those priorities. Nevertheless, the General Assembly also recognizes that when it is not in session, it may be necessary to reduce authorized appropriations and their sources of funding, and funds may need to be transferred, to maintain a balanced State budget. Under these limited circumstances, it is the intent of the General Assembly that appropriations may be reduced and funds transferred when the General Assembly is not in session pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(b)(1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (f) of this section, in each instance that the official State revenue estimate for the General Fund, the Transportation Fund, or federal funds has been reduced by one percent or more from the estimates determined and assumed for purposes of the current fiscal year's appropriations, the Secretary of Administration shall prepare an expenditure reduction plan for consideration and approval by the Joint Fiscal Committee pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, provided that any total reductions in appropriations and transfers of funds are not greater than the reductions in the official State revenue estimate.

(2) In each instance that the official State revenue estimate for the General Fund, the Transportation Fund, or federal funds has been reduced by less than one percent from the estimates determined and assumed for purposes of the current fiscal year's appropriations, the Secretary of Administration may prepare and implement an expenditure reduction plan without the approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee, provided that any total reductions in appropriations and transfers of funds are not greater than the reductions in the official State revenue estimate. The Secretary may implement an expenditure reduction plan under this subdivision if plan reductions to the total amount appropriated in any section or subsection do not exceed five percent, the plan is designed to minimize any negative effects on the delivery of services to the public, and the plan does not have any unduly disproportionate effect on any single function, program, service, benefit, or county. Plans not requiring the approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee shall be filed with the Joint Fiscal

Office prior to implementation. If the Secretary's plan consists of reductions greater than five percent to the total amount appropriated in any section or subsection, such plan shall only be implemented in the manner provided for in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. E.127.1 32 V.S.A. § 308c is amended to read:

§ 308c. GENERAL FUND AND TRANSPORTATION FUND BALANCE RESERVES

(a) There is hereby created within the General Fund a General Fund Balance Reserve, also known as the "Rainy Day Reserve." After satisfying the requirements of section 308 of this title, and after other reserve requirements have been met, any remaining unreserved and undesignated end of fiscal year General Fund surplus shall be reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve. The General Fund Balance Reserve shall not exceed ~~five~~ 10 percent of the appropriations from the General Fund for the prior fiscal year without legislative authorization.

(1), (2) [Repealed.]

(3) Of the funds that would otherwise be reserved in the General Fund Balance Reserve under this subsection, the following amounts shall be reserved as necessary and transferred from the General Fund as follows:

(A) 25 percent to the Vermont State Retirement Fund established by 3 V.S.A. § 473; and

(B) 25 percent to the Postretirement Adjustment Allowance Account established in 16 V.S.A. § 1949a.

(b)(1) The General Assembly may ~~specifically~~ unreserve and appropriate ~~the use of up to 50 percent of the amounts added in the prior fiscal year from~~ or transfer an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the General Fund Balance Reserve to fund unforeseen or emergency needs. It is the intent of the General Assembly that any General Fund Balance Reserve funds utilized in accordance with this section be replenished.

(2) If the official State revenue estimates of the Emergency Board for the General Fund, determined under section 305a of this title, have been reduced by two percent or more from the estimates determined and assumed for purposes of the ~~general~~ appropriations act or budget adjustment act, funds in the General Fund Balance Reserve may be unreserved and appropriated or transferred by the General Assembly to compensate for a reduction of revenues.

(c) There is hereby created within the Transportation Fund a Transportation Fund Balance Reserve. After satisfying the requirements of section 308a of this title, and after other reserve requirements have been met, any remaining unreserved and undesignated end of fiscal year Transportation Fund surplus shall be reserved in the Transportation Fund Balance Reserve. Monies from this Reserve shall be available for appropriation by the General Assembly.

(d) Determination of the amounts of the General Fund and Transportation Fund Balance Reserves shall be made by the Commissioner of Finance and Management and reported, along with the amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, to the legislative Joint Fiscal Committee at its first meeting following September 1 of each year.

Sec. E.127.2 FEDERAL FUNDING; CALCULATION OF APPROPRIATION REDUCTION; SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION; JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Unduplicated function total" means the individual function totals set forth in this act excluding Global Commitment funds, Interdepartmental Transfer funds, and Internal Service funds. For purposes of this section, the determination of an unduplicated function total shall not include Education Funds.

(2) "Governmental function unit" refers to the governmental function areas set forth in Sec. A.108 of this act.

(b) In each instance that a reduction in federal revenues to the State results in a decrease of the unduplicated function total for any governmental function unit by:

(1) Less than 0.5 percent of the unduplicated function total or $2,000,000, whichever threshold amount is greater, the Secretary of Administration shall notify the Joint Fiscal Committee and may prepare and implement a spending authority reduction plan without the approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee, provided that any total reductions in appropriations and transfers of funds are not greater than the reduction in the federal revenues. If the Secretary's plan consists of reductions greater than five percent to the total amount appropriated in any section or subsection of any appropriations act, such plan shall only be implemented in the manner provided for in 32 V.S.A. § 704(b)(2).

(2) Greater than $2,000,000 and 0.5 percent of the unduplicated function total for any governmental function unit, but less than 25 percent or $50,000,000, whichever threshold amount is lower:

(A) the Secretary of Administration shall prepare a spending authority reduction and transfer plan for consideration and approval by the Joint Fiscal Committee pursuant to the same process established in 32 V.S.A. § 704(e), notwithstanding the reference to subdivision (b)(1) of this section, provided that the total reductions to federal spending authority are not greater than the reductions in federal revenues; and

(B) to maintain a balanced State budget, to minimize the impact to Vermonters and to abide by the legislative intent set forth by the General Assembly in this act, the Joint Fiscal Committee may make a recommendation to the Emergency Board to:

(i) utilize the appropriation in Sec. B.1101(b)(2) of this act to support impacted programs at not more than the current fiscal year funding level until the General Assembly is in session;

(ii) revert any unexpended and unobligated funds; and

(iii) make such reductions or transfers in appropriations necessary to support the priorities of the General Assembly.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, for the purpose of calculating any appropriation reduction that triggers the actions set forth in this section, the baseline federal funding amounts shall be the federal funding set forth in this act. The Secretary of Administration shall monitor any changes in federal funding as the difference between the baseline federal funding amount for use in fiscal year 2026 and any updated State federal funds revenue forecast adopted by the Emergency Board and shall calculate the percent reduction of the unduplicated function totals for each governmental function unit.

Sec. E.127.3 FISCAL YEAR 2026 FEE REPORT; GENERAL GOVERNMENT

(a) Fiscal year 2026 fee information. Agencies, departments, boards, and offices that receive appropriations in Secs. B.100-199, B.400-599, and B. 800-999 of this act shall, in collaboration with the Joint Fiscal Office, prepare a comprehensive fee report for each fee that is in effect in fiscal year 2026. The fee report shall contain the following information for each fee:

(1) the statutory authorization and termination date, if any;

(2) the current rate or amount of the fee and the date the fee was last set or adjusted by the General Assembly or Joint Fiscal Committee;

(3) the Fund into which the fee revenues are deposited;

(4) the amount of the revenues derived from the fee in each of the five fiscal years preceding fiscal year 2026;

(5) the number of times that the fee was paid in each of the two fiscal years preceding fiscal year 2026;

(6) a projection of the fee revenues in fiscal years 2026 and 2027;

(7) a description of the service or product provided or the regulatory function performed by the agency, department, board or office supported by the fee;

(8) the amount of the fee if adjusted for inflation from the last time the fee amount was modified using an appropriate index chosen in consultation with the Joint Fiscal Office. The inflation adjustment shall be calculated as the percentage change between the value of the index in the July of the year the fee was last adjusted by the General Assembly and July 2025;

(9) if any portion of the fee revenue is deposited into a special fund, the percentage of the special fund's revenues that the fee represents;

(10) any available information regarding comparable fees in other jurisdictions;

(11) any polices or trends that might affect the viability of the fee amount; and

(12) any other relevant considerations for setting the fee amount.

(b) Reports.

(1) The Joint Fiscal Office shall provide guidance as necessary to the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) of this section on the methodology to be used for compiling the information requested in the fee reports. On or before October 15, 2025, the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) of this section shall submit a draft report of the information required in subdivisions (a)(1)–(12) of this section to the Joint Fiscal Office for review. Agencies, departments, boards, and offices shall work with the Joint Fiscal Office to finalize the report before submitting the final report described in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) On or before December 15, 2025, the agencies, departments, boards, and offices described in subsection (a) shall submit a jointly prepared final report to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Finance.

(3) If any of the information requested in this section cannot be provided for any reason, the agencies, departments, boards, and offices

described in subsection (a) shall include in both the draft and final reports a written explanation for why the information cannot be provided.

(c) As used in this section, as it pertains to Executive Branch agencies, departments, boards, and offices, "fee" means any source of State revenue classified by the Department of Finance and Management Accounting System as "fees," "business licenses," "nonbusiness licenses," and "fines and penalties."

(d) Executive Branch fee report moratorium. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 605, in fiscal year 2026, the Governor shall not be required to submit the consolidated Executive Branch fee annual report and request to the General Assembly.

Sec. E.131 3 V.S.A. chapter 18 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 18. ~~VT~~ VERMONT SAVES

§ 531. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(3) "Covered employer" means a person, entity, or subsidiary engaged in a business, industry, profession, trade, or other enterprise in the State, whether for profit or not for profit, that ~~has~~ does not ~~offered~~ currently offer to an employee, or is within a control group that maintains or contributes to, ~~effective in form or operation at any time within the current calendar year or two preceding calendar years,~~ a specified tax-favored retirement plan. If an employer does not maintain a specified tax-favored retirement plan for a portion of a calendar year ending on or after the effective date of this chapter but does adopt such a plan for the remainder of that calendar year, the employer is not a covered employer for the remainder of the year. A covered employer does not include:

(A) the federal government, the State or any other state, any county or municipal corporation, or any of the State's or any other state's units or instrumentalities;

(B) any employer that has ~~not~~ only been in business during ~~both~~ the current calendar year ~~and the preceding calendar year~~.

(4) "ERISA" means the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended, 29 U.S.C § 1001 et seq.

(5) "Internal Revenue Code" means the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(6) "IRA" means a traditional IRA or a Roth IRA.

(7) "Participant" means an individual who has an IRA under the Program.

(8) "Payroll deduction IRA or payroll deduction IRA arrangement" means an arrangement by which an employer allows employees to contribute to an IRA by means of payroll deduction.

(9) "Program" means the ~~VT~~ Vermont Saves Program established in accordance with this chapter.

* * *

§ 532. ~~VT~~ VERMONT SAVES PROGRAM; ESTABLISHMENT

(a) Establishment; purpose. There is established the ~~VT~~ Vermont Saves Program (Program), administered by the Office of the State Treasurer, for the purpose of increasing financial security for Vermonters by providing access to an IRA for Vermont employees of companies that do not currently offer a retirement savings program. The Program shall be designed to facilitate portability of benefits through withdrawals, rollovers, and direct transfers from an IRA and achieve economies of scale and other efficiencies to minimize costs. The Program shall:

* * *

(b) Type of IRA. The type of IRA to which contributions are made pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be a Roth IRA; provided, however, the State Treasurer is authorized to add an option for all participants to:

(1) affirmatively elect to contribute to a traditional IRA instead of a Roth IRA; or

(2) open both a Roth IRA and a traditional IRA.

(c) Contributions.

(1) Unless otherwise specified by the covered employee, a covered employee shall automatically initially contribute five percent of the covered employee's salary or wages to the Program. A covered employee may elect to opt out of the Program at any time or contribute at any higher or lower rate, expressed as a percentage of salary or wages, or, as permitted by the State Treasurer, expressed as a flat dollar amount, subject in all cases to the IRA contribution and eligibility limits applicable under the Internal Revenue Code at no additional charge.

(2) The State Treasurer shall provide for, on a uniform basis, an annual increase of each active participant's contribution rate, by not less than one percent, but not more than eight percent, of salary or wages each year. Any such increases shall apply to active participants, including participants by default with an option to opt out or participants who are initiated by affirmative participant election, provided that any increase is subject to the IRA contribution and eligibility limits applicable under the Internal Revenue Code.

* * *

Sec. E.131.1 29 V.S.A. chapter 61 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 61. MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE LOAN FUND

§ 1601. MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE LOAN FUND

(a) There is hereby created the Municipal Equipment and Vehicle Loan Fund for the purpose of providing loans on favorable terms to municipalities for the purchase of ~~construction, fire, emergency, or heavy equipment or~~ motorized highway building and maintenance equipment, heavy equipment, and authorized emergency vehicles as set forth in 23 V.S.A. § 4.

(b) The Municipal Equipment and Vehicle Loan Fund shall be administered by a committee composed of the State Treasurer and the State Traffic Committee established by 19 V.S.A. § 1(24), pursuant to policies and procedures approved by ~~the Traffic~~ this Committee ~~established by 19 V.S.A. § 1(24)~~ with administrative support from the Office of the State Treasurer. The Committee shall establish criteria for distribution of available loan funds among municipalities considering at least financial need, equitable geographic distribution, and ability to repay. The Fund shall be a revolving fund and all principal and interest earned on loans and the fund balance remaining in the Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall ~~not revert but~~ be ~~carried over in the Fund~~ available for use in the succeeding fiscal year. The Committee shall meet upon request of the State Treasurer to consider applications.

§ 1602. APPLICATION; LOANS; CONDITIONS

(a) Application forms shall be furnished by the Committee on request. Upon Committee approval of an application of a municipality or two or more municipalities applying jointly for purchases as set forth in subsection 1601(a) of this title, the State Treasurer may loan money from the Fund to ~~that municipality or municipalities for the purchase of equipment. Purchases of equipment eligible for loans~~ the applicants. Loans from the Fund shall ~~have~~ be used on equipment and vehicles with a useful life of at least five years and a purchase price of at least $20,000.00 ~~but shall not be eligible for loans in excess of $150,000.00 from this Fund~~.

(b) The State Treasurer is authorized to establish terms and conditions, including repayment schedules of up to five years for loans from the Fund to ensure repayment of loans to the Fund. The amount of any loan shall be not more than 75 percent of the purchase price or $150,000, whichever is lower. Before a municipality may receive a loan from the Fund, it shall give to the State Treasurer security for the repayment of the funds. The security shall be in such form and amount as the State Treasurer may determine and may include a lien on the equipment or emergency vehicle financed by the loan.

(c) The rates of interest shall be as established by this section to assist municipalities in purchasing equipment upon terms more favorable than in the commercial market. Such rates shall be not more than two percent per annum for a loan to a single municipality, and loans shall bear no interest charge if made to two or more municipalities purchasing equipment jointly.

(d) In any fiscal year, new loans from the ~~Municipal Equipment Loan~~ Fund shall not exceed an aggregate of $1,500,000.00. ~~The Treasurer shall put forth recommendations to the General Assembly on maximum loan amount every five years, commencing January 15, 2028, based on requests received and loans granted pursuant to this chapter.~~

(e) When a municipality suffers the destruction of more than one piece of equipment or a vehicle at or near the same time or suffers some unanticipated hardship relating to the equipment or vehicle and the Committee finds that replacement would place an undue financial hardship on the municipality, the Committee may waive one or both of the following loan limiting factors in subsection (b) of this section:

(1) the $150,000 annual limitation on each municipality; or

(2) the 75 percent of the purchase price limitation.

(f) The State Treasurer shall put forth recommendations to the General Assembly on the maximum individual loan amount from the Fund every five years, commencing on January 15, 2028, based on requests received and loans granted pursuant to this chapter in the five preceding years.

* * *

Sec. E.131.2 32 V.S.A. § 1001 is amended to read:

§ 1001. CAPITAL DEBT AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

* * *

(c) Committee estimate of a prudent amount of net State tax-supported debt; affordability considerations. On or before September 30 of each year, the Committee shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly the

Committee's estimate of net State tax-supported debt that prudently may be authorized for the next fiscal year, together with a report explaining the basis for the estimate. The Committee's estimate shall not take into consideration the balance remaining at the end of each fiscal year in the subaccounts of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments, established pursuant to section 1001b of this title. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d) (expiration of required reports) shall not apply to the report to be made under this subsection. In developing its annual estimate, and in preparing its annual report, the Committee shall consider:

* * *

(4) The criteria that recognized bond rating agencies use to judge the quality of issues of State bonds, including:

(A) existing and projected total debt service on net tax-supported debt as a percentage of combined General and Transportation Fund revenues, excluding surpluses in these revenues that may occur in an individual fiscal year; ~~and~~

(B) existing and projected total net tax-supported debt outstanding as a percentage of total State personal income;

(C) existing and projected pension and other postemployment benefit liability metrics; and

(D) other metrics at the Committee's discretion, including long-term liabilities not covered in subdivisions (A)–(C) of this subdivision (4).

(5) The principal amounts currently outstanding, and balances for the next fiscal year, and annually for the following nine fiscal years, of existing:

(A) obligations of instrumentalities of the State for which the State has a contingent or limited liability;

(B) any other long-term debt of instrumentalities of the State not secured by the full faith and credit of the State, or for which the General Assembly is permitted to replenish reserve funds; and

(C) to the maximum extent obtainable, all long-term debt of municipal governments in Vermont that is secured by general tax or user fee revenues.

(6) The impact of capital spending upon the economic conditions and outlook for the State.

(7) The cost-benefit of various levels of debt financing, types of debt, and maturity schedules.

(8) Any projections of capital needs authorized or prepared by the Agency of Transportation, the Joint Fiscal Office, or other agencies or departments.

(9) Any other factor that is relevant to:

(A) the ability of the State to meet its projected debt service requirements for the next five fiscal years; or

(B) the interest rate to be borne by the credit rating on, or other factors affecting the marketability of State bonds.

(10) The effect of authorizations of new State debt on each of the considerations of this section.

(11) The capital asset depreciation ratio reflecting unfunded capital maintenance costs.

* * *

Sec. E.133 VERMONT STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING BUDGET, SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) Of the $3,339,343 appropriated in Sec. B.133 of this act, $2,247,471 constitutes the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and $1,091,872 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System.

Sec. E.134 VERMONT MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING BUDGET; SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) Of the $1,921,020 appropriated in Sec. B.134 of this act, $1,494,924 constitutes the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System operating budget, and $426,096 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System.

Sec. E.134.1 3 V.S.A. § 525 is added to read:

§ 525. VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; MARKET FACTOR ANALYSIS FOR CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

The Department of Human Resources shall conduct and implement a market factor analysis for all classified positions within the Vermont Pension Investment Commission not later than January 15, 2026, and every three years thereafter. The market factor analysis may:

(1) follow all policies and procedures established by the Department of Human Resources for conducting market factor analyses;

(2) compare total compensation for comparable positions in relevant public labor markets, with particular attention to other public pension investment organizations of similar asset size and investment complexity;

(3) consider the specialized skills, education, certifications, and experience required for investment-related positions;

(4) evaluate recruitment and retention challenges specific to these positions;

(5) recommend appropriate market factor adjustments when warranted by the analysis; and

(6) include an assessment of the fiscal impact of any recommended market factor adjustments.

Sec. E.139 GRAND LIST LITIGATION ASSISTANCE

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.139 of this act, $9,000 shall be transferred to the Attorney General and $70,000 shall be transferred to the Department of Taxes' Division of Property Valuation and Review and used with any remaining funds from the amount previously transferred for final payment of expenses incurred by the Department or towns in defense of grand list appeals regarding the reappraisals of the hydroelectric plants and other expenses incurred to undertake utility property appraisals in Vermont.

Sec. E.142 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

(a) This appropriation is for State payments in lieu of property taxes under 32 V.S.A. chapter 123, subchapter 4, and the payments shall be calculated in addition to and without regard to the appropriations for correctional facilities elsewhere in this act. Payments in lieu of taxes under this section shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.142.1 32 V.S.A. § 3709 is amended to read:

§ 3709. PILOT SPECIAL FUND

(a) There is hereby established a PILOT Special Fund consisting of local option tax revenues paid to the State Treasurer pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138. This Fund shall be managed by the Commissioner of Taxes pursuant to chapter 7, subchapter 5 of this title. Notwithstanding subdivision 588(3) of this title, all interest earned on the Fund shall be retained in the Fund for use in meeting future obligations. The Fund shall be exclusively for payments required under chapter 123, ~~subchapter~~ subchapters 4 and 4C of this title, and for any additional State payments in lieu of taxes for correctional facilities ~~and to the~~

~~City of Montpelier~~. The Commissioner of Finance and Management may draw warrants for disbursements from this Fund in anticipation of receipts.

* * *

Sec. E.142.2 32 V.S.A. chapter 123, subchapter 4C is added to read:

Subchapter 4C. Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program

§ 3710. MUNICIPAL GRAND LIST STABILIZATION PROGRAM

(a) There is established the Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program within the Department of Taxes to reimburse municipalities for municipal property taxes assessed under chapter 133 of this title for flood-prone properties acquired by a municipality through a voluntary buyout program operated by the Division of Emergency Management.

(b) On or before September 1 of each year, the Commissioner of Public Safety shall certify to the Commissioner of Taxes the properties eligible for the Municipal Grand List Stabilization Program and shall submit any other information required by the Commissioner of Taxes. To be eligible for the Program under this subchapter, a municipality must have acquired an eligible property on or after July 1, 2023 and preserved the property as open space with a deed restriction or covenant prohibiting development of the property. The Commissioner of Public Safety shall first certify properties to the Commissioner of Taxes pursuant to this subsection on or before September 1, 2025.

(c) Upon notification by the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Commissioner of Taxes shall certify the payment amounts and make an annual payment to each municipality for each eligible property to compensate for the loss of municipal property tax. The payment shall be calculated using the grand list value of the acquired property for the year during which the property was either damaged by flooding or identified as flood-prone by the Commissioner of Public Safety, multiplied by the municipal tax rate, including any submunicipal tax rates, in effect each year. This payment shall be made on or before January 1 of each year for five years.

(d) A property shall not be eligible for reimbursement payments for more than 10 years. The Commissioner shall make an annual payment for the full amount calculated under subsection (c) of this section for five years. After a municipality has received payments for an eligible property for five consecutive years, the Commissioner shall make an annual payment to the municipality for any subsequent year of eligibility in an amount equal to one-half of the amount calculated under subsection (c) of this section.

(e) Payment under this section shall be calculated and issued from the PILOT Special Fund under section 3709 of this title only after all other grants under subchapter 4 of this chapter are calculated and issued. If the PILOT Special Fund balance is insufficient to pay the full amount of all payments authorized under this subchapter, then payments calculated under this section and due to each municipality for each property shall be reduced proportionately.

Sec. E.144 PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES; CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

(a) Payments in lieu of taxes under this section shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.200 ATTORNEY GENERAL

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud and Residential Abuse Unit, is authorized to retain, subject to appropriation, one-half of the State share of any recoveries from Medicaid fraud settlements, excluding interest, that exceed the State share of restitution to the Medicaid Program. All such designated additional recoveries retained shall be used to finance Medicaid Fraud and Residential Abuse Unit activities.

(b) Of the revenue available to the Attorney General under 9 V.S.A. § 2458(b)(4), $1,802,200 is appropriated in Sec. B.200 of this act.

Sec. E.200.1 9 V.S.A. § 2473 is amended to read:

§ 2473. NOTICE OF SOLICITATION

* * *

(f)(1) For each calendar year in which a paid fundraiser solicits in this State on behalf of a charitable organization, the paid fundraiser shall pay a registration fee of ~~$500.00~~ $675.00 to the Attorney General ~~no~~ not later than ~~ten~~ 10 days prior to its first solicitation in this State.

(2) Each notice of solicitation filed in accordance with this section shall be accompanied by a fee of ~~$200.00~~ $270.00. In the case of a campaign lasting more than 12 months, an additional ~~$200.00~~ $270.00 fee shall be paid annually on or before the date of the anniversary of the commencement of the campaign.

(3) Fees paid under this subsection shall be deposited in a special fund managed pursuant to 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5~~,~~ and shall be available to the Attorney General for the costs of administering sections 2471–2479 of this title.

Sec. E.200.2 18 V.S.A. § 4632 is amended to read:

§ 4632. DISCLOSURE OF ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES AND GIFTS BY MANUFACTURERS OF PRESCRIBED PRODUCTS

* * *

(b)(1) Annually on or before April 1, the Office of the Attorney General shall collect a ~~$500.00~~ $765.00 fee from each manufacturer of prescribed products filing annual disclosures of expenditures greater than zero described in subsection (a) of this section.

(2) Fees collected under this section shall fund collection and analysis of information on activities related to the marketing of prescribed products under section 4631a of this title and under this section. The fees shall be collected in a special fund assigned to the Office.

* * *

Sec. E.208 PUBLIC SAFETY; ADMINISTRATION

(a) The Commissioner of Public Safety is authorized to enter into a performance-based contract with the Essex County Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement service activities agreed upon by both the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Sheriff.

Sec. E.208.1 PUBLIC SAFETY; CAPITAL PLAN

(a) As part of its fiscal year 2027 budget presentation, the Department of Public Safety shall submit a capital plan for the replacement of firearms and mobile and portable radio equipment to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations.

Sec. E.208.2 VERMONT COMMUNITY RADIO GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Findings. The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Vermont's seven active community radio stations currently serve over 200,000 Vermonters, many in rural and underserved areas.

(2) Community radio stations have consistently provided critical information during emergencies, including Tropical Storm Irene, recent severe flooding, and other natural disasters.

(3) These stations operate with small budgets, primarily relying on volunteer staff and listener donations, and are ineligible for federal funding through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting due to their size.

(4) Upcoming FCC-approved stations in Bristol, Richmond-Underhill-Jericho, and Ludlow will expand coverage to nearly all Vermont counties, increasing statewide accessibility to vital community radio services.

(5) Investment in these stations strengthens Vermont's public safety network and promotes civic engagement by providing local, hyper-focused content that commercial and statewide media cannot replicate.

(b) Intent. The intent of this section is to ensure Vermont's community radio stations remain resilient and prepared to serve as lifelines during emergencies while fostering local engagement and preserving Vermont's unique community fabric.

(c) Grant program.

(1) The Vermont Community Radio Grant Program is established to provide one-time funding to community radio stations for the purpose of:

(A) upgrading equipment and infrastructure necessary for reliable emergency broadcasting;

(B) procuring and installing backup generators; and

(C) enhancing operational sustainability through software improvements and technical training.

(2) The Program shall be administered by the Commissioner of Public Safety or designee in collaboration with the Vermont Association of Broadcasters.

(3) Grants shall be allocated as follows:

(A) up to $25,000 per station for seven active community radio stations; and

(B) up to $10,000 per station for three upcoming stations currently under construction.

(4) To be eligible for a grant under the Program, an applicant shall:

(A) be a nonprofit, noncommercial community radio station licensed in Vermont;

(B) demonstrate a history of providing emergency broadcasting services or show the capacity to provide those services upon funding; and

(C) submit a detailed implementation plan for the proposed use of grant funding.

(d) Report. On or before June 30, 2026, a community radio station that receives a grant under the Program shall provide to the Commissioner of Public Safety a report detailing the:

(1) use of grant funds, including itemized expenses;

(2) improvements achieved in emergency readiness and operational capacity; and

(3) impact on community service and engagement.

Sec. E.209 PUBLIC SAFETY; STATE POLICE

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209, $35,000 shall be available to the Southern Vermont Wilderness Search and Rescue Team, which is composed of the State Police, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, county sheriffs, and local law enforcement personnel in Bennington, Windham, and Windsor Counties, for snowmobile enforcement.

(b) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209 of this act, $405,000 is allocated for grants in support of the Drug Task Force. Of this amount, $190,000 shall be used by the Vermont Drug Task Force to fund three town task force officers. These town task force officers shall be dedicated to enforcement efforts with respect to both regulated drugs as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4201(29) and the diversion of legal prescription drugs. Any unobligated funds may be allocated by the Commissioner to fund the work of the Drug Task Force or be carried forward.

(c) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.209 of this act, $2,100,000 is allocated exclusively for the purchase, outfitting, assignment, and disposal of State Police vehicles.

Sec. E.212 PUBLIC SAFETY; FIRE SAFETY

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.212 of this act, $55,000 shall be granted to the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the purpose of designing dry hydrants.

Sec. E.215 MILITARY; ADMINISTRATION

(a) The amount of $1,219,834 shall be disbursed to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for the National Guard Tuition Benefit Program established in 16 V.S.A. § 2857.

Sec. E.219 MILITARY; VETERANS' AFFAIRS

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.219 of this act, $1,000 shall be used for continuation of the Vermont Medal Program; $2,000 shall be used for the expenses of the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council; $7,500 shall be used for the Veterans' Day parade; and $10,000 shall be granted to the American Legion for the Boys' State and Girls' State programs.

Sec. E.221 CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL; POOL POSITION

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.221 of this act, $115,000 is to fund one permanent classified position taken from the position pool. The position shall be used to establish a Canine Head Trainer at the Criminal Justice Council.

Sec. E.232 SECRETARY OF STATE; VERMONT ACCESS NETWORK BUDGET

(a) The Secretary of State shall grant the $1,350,000 General Fund appropriation, provided in Section B.232 of this act, to the Vermont Access Network to maintain current operations and programming.

Sec. E.232.1 SECRETARY OF STATE; LOCAL CIVIC JOURNALISM AWARDS

(a) As part of its civic engagement and education activities, the Office of the Secretary of State shall, in collaboration with the University of Vermont Center for Community News, make cash awards to local civic journalism organizations or businesses with funds appropriated to it in Sec. B.1100(aa)(1) of this act. The Office of the Secretary of State shall, in collaboration with the University of Vermont Center for Community News, establish award criteria and assemble a panel of three to five journalists, academics, and industry veterans who neither work for eligible organizations nor are eligible to receive awards themselves to determine award recipients. Awards shall be made in amounts between $1,000 and $10,000.

Sec. E.236 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION; POOL POSITION

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.236 of this act, $250,000 is to fund two permanent exempt positions taken from the position pool. The positions shall be used to establish an Intake Specialist and a Staff Attorney Investigator at the Human Rights Commission.

Sec. E.236.1 LIQUOR AND LOTTERY; APPROPRIATION; BUSINESS -TO-BUSINESS WEBSITE

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.236.1 of this act, $1,820,000 Enterprise Fund shall be used for the business-to-business website design and implementation to improve the ordering and payment for on-premise licensees.

Sec. E.300 FUNDING FOR THE OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE, VERMONT LEGAL AID

(a) Of the funds appropriated in Sec. B.300 of this act:

(1) $2,000,406 shall be used for the contract with the Office of the Health Care Advocate;

(2) $1,717,994 for Vermont Legal Aid services, including the Poverty Law Project and mental health services; and

(3) $650,000 is for the purposes of maintaining current Vermont Legal Aid program capacity and addressing increased requests for services, including eviction prevention and protection from foreclosure and consumer debt.

Sec. E.300.1 REPORT; RESIDENTIAL BEDS FOR YOUTH

(a) As part of their fiscal year 2027 budget presentations to the General Assembly, the Agency of Human Services and departments within the Agency of Human Services shall provide coordinated information regarding:

(1) the basis for the projected number of beds per facility to create 41 new beds for youth in high-end facilities under the Departments for Children and Families, of Mental Health, and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living for inpatient, psychiatric residential, stabilization, and treatment services, including projected reductions in out-of-state placements;

(2) the status of capacity at lower level residential and crisis facilities and their capabilities in preventing higher level needs if investments would enable full capacity use; and

(3) a projected five-year operating budget across the Agency and departments for full utilization of the new high-end system components as currently planned, including:

(A) costs to the Department of Vermont Health Access' budget; and

(B) how these costs will impact the overall budgets for lower-level, community-based, prevention, and other services needed to prevent escalation to higher levels of care.

Sec. E.300.2 SETTLEMENT FUNDS; PRIMARY CARE; LEGISLATIVE INTENT; REPORT

(a) The Green Mountain Care Board shall report to the House Committee on Health Care; the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare; and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 30 days of the determination on the distribution of the $11,000,000 from the University of Vermont Medical Center to non-hospital primary care providers pursuant to the Settlement Agreement entered into by the University of Vermont Medical Center, Inc., University of Vermont Health Network, Inc., and the Green Mountain Care Board in April 2025.

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE; GLOBAL COMMITMENT

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall use the funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act for payment required under the intergovernmental agreement

between the Agency of Human Services and the managed care entity, the Department of Vermont Health Access, as provided for in the Global Commitment for Health Waiver approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of $27,887,533 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds as follows:

(1) $24,714,000 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with $35,286,000 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of $60,000,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund established by 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) $3,173,533 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to $4,997,210 is transferred from the Agency of Human Services Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act.

Sec. E.301.1 GLOBAL COMMITMENT APPROPRIATIONS; TRANSFER; REPORT

(a) To facilitate fiscal year 2026 closeout, the Secretary of Human Services, with the approval of the Secretary of Administration, may make transfers among the appropriations authorized for Medicaid and Medicaid waiver program expenses, including Global Commitment appropriations outside the Agency of Human Services. At least three business days prior to any transfer, the Agency of Human Services shall submit to the Joint Fiscal Office a proposal of transfers to be made pursuant to this section. A final report on all transfers made under this section shall be made to the Joint Fiscal Committee for review at the Committee's September 2026 meeting. The purpose of this section is to provide the Agency with limited authority to modify the appropriations to comply with the terms and conditions of the Global Commitment section 1115 demonstration approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

Sec. E.301.2 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 72a, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.105, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.301.2, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.300.2, is further amended to read:

Sec. 72a. MEDICAID HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES (HCBS) PLAN

* * *

(f) The Global Commitment Fund appropriated in subsection (e) of this section obligated in fiscal years 2023, 2024, ~~and~~ 2025, and 2026 for the purposes of bringing HCBS plan spending authority forward into fiscal ~~year~~ years 2024, ~~and fiscal year~~ 2025, and 2026, respectively. The funds appropriated in subsections (b), (c), and (e) of this section may be transferred on a net-neutral basis in fiscal years 2023, 2024, ~~and~~ 2025, and 2026 in the same manner as the Global Commitment appropriations in 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.301. The Agency shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee in September 2023, September 2024, ~~and~~ September 2025, and September 2026, respectively, on transfers of appropriations made and final amounts expended by each department in fiscal years 2023, 2024, ~~and~~ 2025, and 2026, respectively, and any obligated funds carried forward to be expended in fiscal ~~year~~ years 2024, ~~and fiscal year~~ 2025, and 2026, respectively.

Sec. E.301.3 GLOBAL COMMITMENT FUND; HOSPITAL DIRECTED PAYMENT PROGRAM

(a) The Agency of Human Services may seek a State Directed Payment model with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This payment model will be for a Hospital Directed Payment program. Upon approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Agency of Human Services' Department of Vermont Health Access, the University of Vermont, and the University of Vermont Medical Center may enter into a mutual agreement on the implementation of the Hospital Directed Payment program.

(b) If the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approves a Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program within the State's Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver in fiscal year 2026 while the General Assembly is not in session, then, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511 and notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may approve the Agency of Human Services' allocation and expenditure of excess receipts for Global Commitment Fund spending up to the amount approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program.

(c) In fiscal year 2026, the Agency of Human Services may, to the extent permitted under federal law, reasonably manage the timing of federal fiscal year 2026 Disproportionate Share Hospital payments to hospitals due to the impact the Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program payments received in fiscal year 2026 may have on hospitals' eligibility for Disproportionate Share Hospital payments.

(d) The Agency of Human Services shall report on the status of the Vermont Hospital Directed Payment program, the expenditure of excess receipts, and the status of the program's potential impacts on Disproportionate Share Hospital payments at the September and November 2025 meetings of the Joint Fiscal Committee.

Sec. E.306 NURSING HOMES; SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES; EXTRAORDINARY FINANCIAL RELIEF

(a) On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access' Division of Rate Setting shall submit a report to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare containing proactive measures and targeted interventions that may be used to reduce the use and amount of future extraordinary financial relief for nursing homes.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Departments of Vermont Health Access and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living shall present to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare on the following:

(1) the number and name of all nursing homes in the State, including:

(A) whether a nursing home is a for-profit or nonprofit organization and the owner's contact information;

(B) the payer mix of each nursing home;

(C) the ratio of employees versus contracted traveler positions at each nursing home and the specific job titles of the contracted traveler positions; and

(D) the average length of patient stay at each nursing home;

(2) the number of skilled nursing facilities seeking extraordinary financial relief in fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025; and

(3) the number of skilled nursing facilities receiving extraordinary financial relief in fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025, including:

(A) the name of each skilled nursing facility;

(B) whether a skilled nursing facility receiving extraordinary financial relief is a for-profit or nonprofit organization;

(C) the amount of extraordinary financial relief received by each skilled nursing facility;

(D) the reason extraordinary financial relief was sought by each skilled nursing facility; and

(E) the reason extraordinary financial relief was awarded to each skilled nursing facility.

Sec. E.306.1 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.306.4 is amended to read:

Sec. E.306.4 MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAMS; INCOME ELIGIBILITY

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall make the following changes to the Medicare Savings Programs:

(1) increase the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program income threshold to ~~145~~ 150 percent of the federal poverty level; and

(2) increase the Qualifying Individual Program income threshold to the maximum percent of the federal poverty level allowed under federal law based on the increase to the income threshold for the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

Sec. E.306.2 OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR THE VERMONT HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGE

(a) The Department of Vermont Health Access shall maintain open enrollment for the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange from November 1, 2025 through January 15, 2026. The Department of Vermont Health Access and registered carriers shall allow a period of one calendar month beyond the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' deadline of December 15, 2025 for 2026 plan selection in order to encourage enrollment and to allow enrollees to make plan selection changes.

Sec. E.306.3 33 V.S.A. § 1811 is amended to read:

§ 1811. HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL EMPLOYERS

* * *

(l)(1) A registered carrier shall allow for the enrollment of a pregnant individual, and of any individual who is eligible for coverage under the terms of the health benefit plan because of a relationship to the pregnant individual,

at any time after the commencement of the pregnancy. Coverage shall be effective as of the first of the month following the individual's selection of a health benefit plan.

(2) A registered carrier shall allow an individual who is eligible for advance payments of federal premium tax credits under 26 U.S.C. § 36B and whose household income for the year is expected to be not greater than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and any individual who is eligible for coverage because of a relationship to that individual, to enroll in a health benefit plan through the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange at any time during the plan year.

Sec. E.306.4 SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES GRANTS; REPORT

(a) As part of its fiscal year 2027 budget presentation, the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on the grants to skilled nursing facilities funded through the appropriation made in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1102(b)(11). The Department shall include in its report information on the following:

(1) facilities to which grants were distributed;

(2) amounts of each grant distributed; and

(3) any available information on direct impacts of grants, including reduction of reliance on travel nurses and workforce retention and expansion.

(b) As part of its fiscal year 2027 budget presentation, the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living shall, to the extent the information in subdivisions (1)–(3) of this subsection is available, report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on the grants to skilled nursing facilities funded through the appropriation made in Sec. B.1100(u)(2) of this act. The Department shall include in its report information on the following:

(1) facilities to which grants were distributed;

(2) amounts of each grant distributed; and

(3) any available information on direct impacts of grants, including reduction of reliance on travel nurses and workforce retention and expansion.

Sec. E.306.5 TEACHING HEALTH CENTER GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM; IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING; LEGISLATIVE INTENT; REPORT

(a) The Agency of Human Services shall seek approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to obtain federal matching funds for the first year of implementation of the Maple Mountain Family Medicine

Residency Program, a new Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program that will increase the number of family medicine residents practicing in rural regions of Vermont. It is the intent of the General Assembly to appropriate funds in future fiscal years, with additional federal matching funds if available, to allow for full implementation of the Program.

(b) If the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services does not approve the Agency's request for federal matching funds pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the Agency shall evaluate potential opportunities to obtain federal matching funds in future fiscal years to provide greater support to the Maple Mountain Family Medicine Residency Program during its implementation stage, including matching State dollars as a Global Commitment investment, as a graduate medical education expenditure, or through another mechanism.

(c) The Agency shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee at its July 2025 meeting on whether the Agency was successful in receiving approval for federal matching funds pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and, if not, its findings and recommendations regarding future federal matching fund opportunities pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

Sec. E.307 33 V.S.A. § 1902 is amended to read:

§ 1902. QUALIFICATION FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

* * *

(b) Workers with disabilities whose income is less than 250 percent of the federal poverty level shall be eligible for Medicaid. The income also must not exceed the Medicaid protected income level for one or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payment level for two, whichever is higher, after disregarding the earnings of the working individual with disabilities; Social Security disability insurance benefits, including Social Security retirement benefits converted automatically from Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), if applicable; any veteran's disability benefits; and, if the working individual with disabilities is married, all income of the spouse. ~~Earnings of the working individual with disabilities shall be documented by evidence of Federal Insurance Contributions Act tax payments, Self-Employment Contributions Act tax payments, or a written business plan approved and supported by a third-party investor or funding source.~~ The Agency of Human Services shall adopt rules governing documentation of earnings of working individuals with disabilities. The resource limit for this program shall be $10,000.00 for an individual and $15,000.00 for a couple at the time of enrollment in the program. Assets attributable to earnings made after enrollment in the program shall be disregarded.

Sec. E.307.1 MEDICAID AND EXCHANGE; EMERGENCY RULEMAKING

(a) The Agency of Human Services may adopt or amend rules regarding Vermont's Medicaid program and the operation of the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange in accordance with 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 as needed to respond to changes in State and federal law. The Agency may use the emergency rules process pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844, but only in the event that the new State or federal law requires Vermont to amend or adopt its rules in a time frame that cannot be accomplished under the traditional rulemaking process. An emergency rule adopted under these exigent circumstances shall be deemed to meet the standard for the adoption of emergency rules required pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 844(a).

Sec. E.311 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 109, Sec. 4 is amended to read:

Sec. 4. ~~SUNSET OF STATE YOUTH COUNCIL~~

~~3 V.S.A. § 3097 (State Youth Council) is repealed on February 1, 2026.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. E.312 HEALTH; PUBLIC HEALTH

(a) HIV/AIDS funding:

(1) In fiscal year 2026 and as provided in this section, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of $475,000 in AIDS Medication Rebates special funds to the Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations for client-based support services. The Department of Health AIDS Program shall meet at least quarterly with the Community Advisory Group with current information and data relating to service initiatives. The funds shall be allocated according to a Request for Proposal process.

(2) In fiscal year 2026, and as provided by this section, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of $295,000 from the General Fund for HIV and Harm Reduction Services to the following organizations:

(A) Vermont CARES: $140,000;

(B) AIDS Project of Southern Vermont: $100,000; and

(C) HIV/HCV Resource Center: $55,000.

(3) Ryan White Title II funds for AIDS services and the Vermont Medication Assistance Program shall be distributed in accordance with federal guidelines. The federal guidelines shall not apply to programs or services funded solely by State General Fund.

(A) The Secretary of Human Services shall immediately notify the Joint Fiscal Committee if at any time there are insufficient funds in Vermont Medication Assistance Program to assist all eligible individuals. The Secretary shall work in collaboration with persons living with HIV/AIDS to develop a plan to continue access to Vermont Medication Assistance Program medications until such time as the General Assembly can take action.

(B) As provided in this section, the Secretary of Human Services shall work in collaboration with the Vermont Medication Assistance Program Advisory Committee, which shall be composed of not less than 50 percent of members who are living with HIV/AIDS. If a modification to the program's eligibility requirements or benefit coverage is considered, the Committee shall make recommendations regarding the program's formulary of approved medication, related laboratory testing, nutritional supplements, and eligibility for the program.

(4) In fiscal year 2026, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of $400,000 General Fund for HIV and Harm Reduction Services not later than September 1, 2025. The method by which these prevention funds are distributed shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Department of Health and the Vermont AIDS service organizations and other Vermont HIV/AIDS prevention providers.

(5) In fiscal year 2026, the Department of Health shall not reduce any grants to the Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations or syringe service programs from funds appropriated for HIV/AIDS services to levels below those in fiscal year 2025 without receiving prior approval from the Joint Fiscal Committee.

Sec. E.312.1 3 V.S.A. § 5003 is amended to read:

§ 5003. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RACIAL EQUITY

(a) The Executive Director of Racial Equity (Director) shall work with the agencies and departments to implement a program of continuing coordination and improvement of activities in State government in order to combat systemic racial disparities and measure progress toward fair and impartial governance, including:

(1) overseeing a comprehensive organizational review to identify systemic racism in each of the three branches of State government and inventory systems in place that engender racial disparities;

(2) managing and overseeing the statewide collection of race-based data to determine the nature and scope of racial discrimination within all systems of State government; and

(3) developing a model fairness and diversity policy and reviewing and making recommendations regarding the fairness and diversity policies held by all State government systems~~; and~~

~~(4) temporarily overseeing the establishment of the Health Equity Advisory Commission established pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 252 until the Office of Health Equity is established~~.

* * *

Sec. E.312.2 18 V.S.A. § 252 is amended to read:

§ 252. HEALTH EQUITY ADVISORY COMMISSION

* * *

(c) Powers and duties. The Advisory Commission shall:

(1) provide ~~guidance~~ advice to the Department of Health and the General Assembly on the continued development of the Office of Health Equity~~, which shall be established based on the Advisory Commission's recommendations not later than January 1, 2023~~, including on:

(A) the structure, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of the Office;

(B) ~~whether the Office shall be independent and, if not, in which State agency or department it shall be situated;~~

~~(C)~~ how the Office shall be staffed;

~~(D)~~(C) the populations served and specific issues addressed by the Office; and

~~(E)~~(D) the duties of the Office, including how grant funds shall be managed and distributed; ~~and~~

~~(F) the time frame and necessary steps to establish the Office;~~

(2) provide advice and make recommendations to the Office of Health Equity, Department of Health, and General Assembly once established, including input on:

(A) any rules or policies proposed by the Office of Health Equity or Department of Health;

(B) the awarding of grants and the development of programs and services;

(C) the needs, priorities, programs, and policies relating to the health of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities; and

(D) any other issue on which the Office of Health Equity, Department of Health, or General Assembly requests assistance from the Advisory Commission;

(3) review, monitor, and advise all State agencies regarding the impact of current and emerging State policies, procedures, practices, laws, and rules on the health of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities;

(4) identify and examine the limitations and problems associated with existing laws, rules, programs, and services related to the health status of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities;

(5) advise the Department of Health and the General Assembly on any funding decisions relating to eliminating health disparities and promoting health equity, including the distribution of federal monies related to COVID-19;

(6) to the extent funds are available for the purpose, distribute grants that stimulate the development of community-based and neighborhood-based projects that will improve the health outcomes of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities; and

(7) advise the General Assembly on efforts to improve cultural competency, cultural humility, and antiracism in the health care system through training and continuing education requirements for health care providers and other clinical professionals.

(d) Assistance. The Advisory Commission shall have the administrative, legal, and technical assistance of the ~~Agency of Administration at the request of the Executive Director of Racial Equity~~ Department of Health.

* * *

(f) Meetings.

(1) ~~The Executive Director of Racial Equity or designee shall call the first meeting of the Advisory Commission to occur on or before September 1, 2021.~~

~~(2)~~ The Advisory Commission shall select a chair and vice chair at its first meeting and annually thereafter.

~~(3)~~(2) The Advisory Commission shall adopt procedures to govern its proceedings, including voting procedures and how the staggered terms shall be apportioned among members.

~~(4)~~(3) All meetings of the Advisory Commission and any subcommittees of the Advisory Commission shall be open to the public with opportunities for public comment provided on a regular basis.

* * *

(h) Compensation and reimbursement. Appointed members of the Advisory Commission shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for meetings ~~as deemed appropriate by the Advisory Commission within the appropriation provided~~. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the ~~Agency of Administration~~ Department of Health.

Sec. E.312.3 18 V.S.A. § 254 is added to read:

§ 254. OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

(a) There is established the Office of Health Equity within the Department of Health for the purpose of eliminating avoidable and unjust disparities in health among Vermonters. The Office shall use a systemic and comprehensive approach that addresses those social, economic, and environmental factors that influence health outcomes.

(b) The Office of Health Equity shall be managed by an Executive Director, an individual who shall be qualified by reason of education, expertise, and experience and who may have a professional degree in public health, social or environmental justice, or a related field. The Executive Director shall report to the Commissioner of Health, serve on a full-time basis, and be exempt from classified service.

Sec. E.312.4 SMOKING CESSATION GRANT REQUIREMENTS; REPORT

(a) Prior to providing the grant to the Vermont Parent Child Center Network from the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.1100(g)(6) of this act, the Department of Health shall require that information on the use of the funds be provided by grantees in an agreed-upon time frame, including the specific activities supported by the funds, a description of the number of individuals served, and information on the anticipated outcomes of this investment. On or before January 15, 2026, the Department shall provide the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services, and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare with this information and information on the outcomes achieved by previous investments, including the number of pregnant smokers who quit smoking as a result of cessation initiatives and the number of families who reported reducing tobacco usage and secondhand smoke around infants and children. Previous investments made for cessation initiatives include those made in 2022

Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.110(a)(1) and 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. B.1100(n)(4).

Sec. E.313 18 V.S.A. § 4812 is added to read:

§ 4812. SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION SPECIAL FUND

(a) The Substance Misuse Prevention Special Fund is established and managed by the Vermont Department of Health in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5.

(b) Thirty percent of the revenues raised by the cannabis excise tax imposed pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 7902, not to exceed $10,000,000 per fiscal year, shall be deposited into this fund for substance misuse prevention costs.

(c) Any unencumbered and unexpended spending authority reverted in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 703 may be immediately re-established the following fiscal year in accordance with 32 V.S.A. § 511.

(d) Notwithstanding any provisions of 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5 to the contrary, all interest earned by this fund shall be retained by this fund.

Sec. E.313.1 SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION FUNDING; REPEAL

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 7909 (substance misuse prevention funding) is repealed.

Sec. E.313.2 PREVENTION EXPENDITURES; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2026, the Department of Health shall, in consultation with other departments of the Agency of Human Services, provide a report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare with information on total or estimated expenditures made by the State on substance use prevention efforts in fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026.

(1) The report shall include information on the following:

(A) all State and federal funds, including special funds, and monies that have been appropriated or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts;

(B) the total amounts appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts;

(C) the recipients of appropriations made from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts or the beneficiaries of grants or subgrants and how these monies have been used by expenditure category;

(D) the amount of monies appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts that have been obligated;

(E) the amount of monies appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts that remain unencumbered or unexpended; and

(F) the extent to which monies appropriated from the funds specified in subdivision (1)(A) of this section or otherwise designated for substance use prevention efforts are subject to reversion or any federal obligation deadlines.

Sec. E.313.3 REPEAL

(a) 2022 Acts and Resolves No.185, Sec. E.240.6 is repealed.

Sec. E.316 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. E.316 is amended to read:

Sec. E.316 STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP; FACILITY PLANNING FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH

(a) The Department for Children and Families, in consultation with the Department of Buildings and General Services, shall assemble a stakeholder working group to provide regular input on the planning, design, development, and implementation of the temporary stabilization facility for youth and on the development of a long-term plan for the high-end system of care.

* * *

(f) The stakeholder working group shall cease to exist on June 30, ~~2025~~ 2027.

Sec. E.316.1 33 V.S.A. § 125 is added to read:

§ 125. BUDGETARY INFLATION; DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Annually, as part of its budget presentation, the Department shall inform the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare the cost of adding a one percent increase over the previous fiscal year's funding for community-contracted direct service providers.

Sec. E.316.2 SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAMS; REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2026, the Commissioner for Children and Families and the Chief Superior Judge shall jointly submit a report to the House Committees on Human Services and on Judiciary and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Judiciary containing a proposal for funding supervised visitation programs. The proposal shall address and recommend sustainable funding for statewide coordination, equitable funding

among supervised visitation locations, and access for residents of counties that do not currently provide supervised visitation services. The Commissioner and Chief Superior Judge shall consult the Center for Crime Victim Services, the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and supervised visitation providers in the preparation of the report.

Sec. E.317 33 V.S.A. § 4922 is amended to read:

§ 4922. RULEMAKING

(a) On or before ~~September 1, 2025~~ April 1, 2026, the Commissioner shall file proposed rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 implementing the provisions of this subchapter to become effective on ~~April~~ September 1, 2026. These shall include:

(1) rules setting forth criteria for determining whether to conduct an assessment or an investigation;

(2) rules setting out procedures for assessment and service delivery;

(3) rules outlining procedures for investigations;

(4) rules for conducting the administrative review conference;

(5) rules regarding access to and maintenance of Department records of investigations, assessments, reviews, and responses;

(6) rules regarding the tiered Registry as required by section 4916 of this title;

(7) rules requiring notice and appeal procedures for alternatives to substantiation; and

(8) rules implementing subsections 4916(c) and (e) of this title.

(b) The rules shall strike an appropriate balance between protecting children and respecting the rights of a parent or guardian, including a parent or guardian with disabilities, and shall recognize that persons with a disability can be successful parents. The rules shall include the possible use of adaptive equipment and supports.

~~(c) These rules shall be adopted no later than July 1, 2009.~~

Sec. E.318 33 V.S.A. § 3505 is amended to read:

§ 3505. SUPPLEMENTAL CHILD CARE GRANTS

(a)(1)(A) The Commissioner for Children and Families may ~~reserve~~ utilize up to one-half of one percent of ~~the child care family assistance program~~ funds appropriated for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program in a fiscal year for extraordinary financial relief to assist child care programs that are at risk of

closing or not opening due to experiencing financial hardship. The Commissioner may provide extraordinary financial relief under this subdivision (A) to both licensed and registered child care programs and to child care programs that are in the process of becoming licensed or registered. The Commissioner shall develop guidelines for providing assistance and shall prioritize extraordinary financial relief to child care programs in areas of the State with high poverty and low access to high quality child care.

(B) ~~If the Commissioner determines a child care program is at risk of closure because its operations are not fiscally sustainable, he or she may provide assistance to~~ In order to transition children who are currently served by ~~the~~ a child care ~~operator~~ program that is closing to a new child care program in an orderly fashion ~~and to help secure other child care opportunities for children served by the program in an effort to minimize the disruption of services~~, the Commissioner may provide assistance to the existing or new program to minimize the disruption of services to the affected children.

(C) ~~The~~ As needed to implement this subdivision (1), the Commissioner has the authority to request tax returns and other financial documents to verify ~~the~~ a child care program's financial hardship and its ability to sustain or increase operations.

* * *

Sec. E.318.1 CHILD CARE FUNDING; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the fiscal year 2026 reduction of the General Fund appropriation to the Department for Children and Families for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program in Sec. B.318 of this act shall not occur in future fiscal years and that, in future fiscal years, the appropriation from the General Fund to the Department for Children and Families for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program shall be not less than the appropriation from the General Fund to the Department for Children and Families for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113 as passed by the General Assembly.

Sec. E.321 GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY HOUSING

(a) To the extent emergency housing is available and within the funds appropriated, the Commissioner for Children and Families shall ensure that General Assistance Emergency Housing is provided in fiscal year 2026 to households that attest to lack of a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and have a member who:

(1) is 65 years of age or older;

(2) has a disability that can be documented by:

(A) receipt of Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance; or

(B) a form developed by the Department as a means of documenting a qualifying disability or health condition that requires:

(i) the applicant's name, date of birth, and the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number or other identifying number;

(ii) a description of the applicant's disability or health condition;

(iii) a description of the risk posed to the applicant's health, safety, or welfare if temporary emergency housing is not authorized pursuant to this section; and

(iv) a certification of a health care provider, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9481, that includes the provider's credentials, credential number, address, and phone number;

(3) is a child 19 years of age or under;

(4) is pregnant;

(5) has experienced the death of a spouse, domestic partner, or minor child that caused the household to lose its housing;

(6) has experienced a natural disaster, such as a flood, fire, or hurricane;

(7) is under a court-ordered eviction or constructive eviction due to circumstances over which the household has no control; or

(8) is experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, hate violence, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a household member that caused the household to lose its housing.

(b)(1) General Assistance Emergency Housing shall be provided in a community-based shelter whenever possible. If there is inadequate community-based shelter space available within the Agency of Human Services district in which the household presents itself, the household shall be provided emergency housing in a hotel or motel within the district, if available, until adequate community-based shelter space becomes available in the district. The utilization of hotel and motel rooms pursuant to this subdivision shall be capped at 1,100 rooms per night between July 1, 2025 through November 30, 2025 and between April 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026.

(2) The maximum number of days that an eligible household receives emergency housing in a hotel or motel under this section, per 12-month period, shall not exceed 80 days.

(3) The Department shall provide emergency winter housing to households meeting the eligibility criteria in subsection (a) of this section between December 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026. Emergency housing in a hotel or motel provided pursuant to this subdivision shall not count toward the maximum days of eligibility per 12-month period provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(4)(A) Notwithstanding any rule or law to the contrary, the Department shall require all households applying for or receiving General Assistance Emergency Housing to engage in their own search for and accept any available alternative housing placements. All applicants and eligible households shall regularly provide information to the Department, not less frequently than monthly, about their efforts to secure an alternative housing placement. If the Department determines that a household, at the time of application or during the term of the household's authorization, has not made efforts to secure an alternative housing placement, or has access to an alternative housing placement, the Department shall deny the application or terminate the authorization at the end of the current authorization period.

(B) For purposes of this subdivision (4), "alternative housing placements" may include shelter beds and pods; placements with family or friends; permanent housing solutions, including tiny homes, manufactured homes, and apartments; residential treatment beds for physical health, long-term care, substance use, or mental health; nursing home beds; and recovery homes.

(c) Emergency housing provided pursuant to this section shall replace the catastrophic and noncatastrophic categories previously adopted by the Department in rule.

(d) Emergency housing required pursuant to this section may be provided through approved community-based shelters, new unit generation, open units, licensed hotels or motels, or other appropriate shelter space. The Department shall, when available, prioritize emergency housing at housing or shelter placements other than hotels or motels.

(e) Case management services provided by case managers employed by or under contract with the Agency of Human Services or reimbursed through an Agency-funded grant shall include assisting clients with finding appropriate housing.

(f) The Commissioner for Children and Families shall apply the General Assistance Emergency Housing rules approved by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules on March 13, 2025 for the administration of this section.

(g) On or before the last day of each month from July 2025 through June 2026, the Department for Children and Families, or other relevant agency or department, shall continue submitting a similar report to that due pursuant to 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 81, Sec. 6(b) to the Joint Fiscal Committee, House Committee on Human Services, and Senate Committee on Health and Welfare. Additionally, this report shall include the Department's monthly expenditure on General Assistance Emergency Housing.

(h) For emergency housing provided in a hotel or motel beginning on July 1, 2024 and thereafter, the Department for Children and Families shall not pay a hotel or motel establishment more than the hotel's lowest advertised room rate and not more than $80 a day per room to shelter a household experiencing homelessness. The Department for Children and Families may shelter a household in more than one hotel or motel room depending on the household's size and composition.

(i) The Department for Children and Families shall apply the following rules to participating hotels and motels:

(1) Section 2650.1 of the Department for Children and Families' General Assistance (CVR 13-170-260);

(2) Department of Health, Licensed Lodging Establishment Rule (CVR 13-140-023); and

(3) Department of Public Safety, Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code (CVR 28-070-001).

(j)(1) The Department for Children and Families may work with either a shelter provider or a community housing agency to enter into a full or partial facility lease or sales agreement with a hotel or motel provider. Any facility conversion under this section shall comply with the Office of Economic Opportunity's shelter standards.

(2) If the Department for Children and Families determines that a contractual agreement with a licensed hotel or motel operator to secure temporary emergency housing capacity is beneficial to improve the quality, cleanliness, or access to services for those households temporarily housed in the facility, the Department shall be authorized to enter into such an agreement in accordance with the per-room rate identified in subsection (h) of this section; provided, however, that in no event shall such an agreement cause a household to become unhoused. The Department for Children and Families

may include provisions to address access to services or related needs within the contractual agreement.

(k) Of the amount appropriated to implement this section, not more than $500,000 shall be used for security costs.

(l) As used in this section:

(1) "Community-based shelter" means a shelter that meets the Vermont Housing Opportunity Grant Program's Standards of Provision of Assistance.

(2) "Household" means an individual and any dependents for whom the individual is legally responsible and who live in Vermont. "Household" includes individuals who reside together as one economic unit, including those who are married, parties to a civil union, or unmarried.

Sec. E.321.1 CONTRACTING FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

(a) In contracting with emergency shelter organizations for operations and services, the Department for Children and Families shall prioritize contracts with organizations that are in close proximity to the community served to ensure that an organization familiar with the specific needs of a community serve its population of unhoused residents.

Sec. E.324 EXPEDITED CRISIS FUEL ASSISTANCE

(a) The Commissioner for Children and Families or designee may authorize crisis fuel assistance to those income-eligible households that have applied for an expedited seasonal fuel benefit but have not yet received it if the benefit cannot be executed in time to prevent them from running out of fuel. The crisis fuel grants authorized pursuant to this section count toward the crisis fuel grants allowed per household for the winter heating season pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 2609(b).

Sec. E.325 DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES; OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

(a) Of the General Fund appropriation in Sec. B.325 of this act, $29,343,655 shall be used by the Department for Children and Families' Office of Economic Opportunity to issue grants to community agencies to assist individuals experiencing homelessness by preserving existing services, increasing services, or increasing resources available statewide. These funds may be granted alone or in conjunction with federal Emergency Solutions Grants funds. Grant decisions and the administration of funds shall be done in consultation with the two U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-recognized continuum of care programs.

Sec. E.326 DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES; OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY; WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE

(a) Of the special fund appropriation in Sec. B.326 of this act, $750,000 is for the replacement and repair of home heating equipment.

Sec. E.329 33 V.S.A. § 506 is added to read:

§ 506. BUDGETARY INFLATION; DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Annually, as part of its budget presentation, the Department shall inform the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare the cost of adding a one percent increase over the previous fiscal year's funding for community-contracted direct service providers.

Sec. E.333 DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES, AGING, AND INDEPENDENT LIVING; DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES PAYMENT REFORM

(a)(1) The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living shall submit a written progress report to the Joint Fiscal Committee in advance of the Committee's July 2025 meeting regarding the Department's design of a developmental services payment reform model for potential implementation on October 1, 2025, with a final written report to the Joint Fiscal Committee in advance of the Committee's September 2025 meeting. The final report shall explain the methodology and identify how the model:

(A) meets all federal conflict-free case management requirements and aligns funding mechanisms with assessed needs; and

(B) ensures that the standardized rates providers that are reasonable and adequate and reflect the cost of service delivery to achieve the required outcomes for the populations served.

(2) The final report required pursuant to this subsection shall include a summary of stakeholder input, including perspectives from providers and individuals served, the identification of any unresolved issues, including the impact on designated agency and specialized service agency staff and the financial status of the providers, and a plan for addressing those unresolved issues in the final payment model.

(b) On or before February 15, 2026, the Department shall provide a presentation update to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare regarding its progress implementing the developmental services payment reform model.

Sec. E.338 CORRECTIONS; CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

(a) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 3709(a), the special fund appropriation of $152,000 for the supplemental facility payments to Newport and Springfield shall be paid from the PILOT Special Fund under 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

Sec. E.338.1 JUSTICE REINVESTMENT II; ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.338.1 of this act, $390,000 shall be for a grant to Lund for the Kids-A-Part Program and $100,000 shall be for a grant to Pathways Vermont for the Forensic Assertive Community Treatment Team.

Sec. E.338.2 CORRECTIONS; TREATMENT-FOCUSED FACILITY

(a) The $200,000 General Fund appropriated to the Department of Corrections in Sec. B.1100(i)(1) of this act shall be used to retain a consultant and develop an implementation plan to transition the Northeast Correctional Complex or the Caledonia County Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility for incarcerated Vermonters.

(b) On or before December 1, 2025, the Department of Corrections shall submit a written report to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee concerning the consultant's findings and recommendations related to transitioning either the Northeast Correctional Complex or the Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility. The report shall contain the following:

(1) a detailed transition plan;

(2) expected outcomes and measures of success;

(3) an assessment of how transitioning either the Northeast Correctional Complex or Caledonia County Work Camp, or parts of either or of both, to a treatment-focused facility aligns with best practices for residential treatment programs; and

(4) input from the Department's current medical providers, including an analysis of how the program developed would impact any contract with the Department's third-party medical provider.

Sec. E.345 18 V.S.A. § 9374(h) is amended to read:

(h)(1)(A) Except as otherwise provided in subdivisions (1)(C) and (2) of this subsection (h), the expenses of the Board shall be borne as follows:

(i) 40.0 percent by the State from State monies;

(ii) ~~28.8~~ 36.0 percent by the hospitals;

(iii) ~~23.2~~ 24.0 percent by nonprofit hospital and medical service corporations licensed under 8 V.S.A. chapter 123 or 125, health insurance

companies licensed under 8 V.S.A. chapter 101, and health maintenance organizations licensed under 8 V.S.A. chapter 139~~; and~~

~~(iv) 8.0 percent by accountable care organizations~~.

(B) Expenses under subdivision (A)(iii) of this subdivision (1) shall be allocated to persons licensed under Title 8 based on premiums paid for health care coverage, which for the purposes of this subdivision (1) shall include major medical, comprehensive medical, hospital or surgical coverage, and comprehensive health care services plans, but shall not include long-term care, limited benefits, disability, credit or stop loss, or excess loss insurance coverage.

(C) ~~Expenses~~ Amounts assessed pursuant to the provisions of ~~section~~ sections 9441 and 9382 of this title shall not be assessed in accordance with the formula set forth in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (1).

(2) The Board may determine the scope of the incurred expenses to be allocated pursuant to the formula set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection if, in the Board's discretion, the expenses to be allocated are in the best interests of the regulated entities and of the State.

(3) If the amount of the proportional assessment to any entity calculated in accordance with the formula set forth in subdivision (1)(A) of this subsection would be less than $150.00, the Board shall assess the entity a minimum fee of $150.00. The Board shall apply the amounts collected based on the difference between each applicable entity's proportional assessment amount and $150.00 to reduce the total amount assessed to the regulated entities pursuant to subdivisions (1)(A)(ii)~~–(iv)~~(iii) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. E.500 EDUCATION; FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

(a) The Global Commitment appropriation in Sec. B.500 of this act shall be used for physician claims for determining medical necessity of Individualized Education Programs. These services are intended to increase access to quality health care for uninsured persons, underinsured persons, and Medicaid beneficiaries.

Sec. E.502 EDUCATION; SPECIAL EDUCATION: FORMULA GRANTS

(a) Of the appropriation authorized in Sec. B.502 of this act, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an amount not to exceed $5,236,200 shall be used by the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 as funding for 16 V.S.A. § 2967(b)(2)-(6). In distributing such funds, the Secretary shall not be limited by the restrictions contained within 16 V.S.A. § 2969(c) and (d).

(b) Of the appropriation authorized in Sec. B.502 of this act, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an amount not to exceed $2,000,000 shall be used by the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 as funding for 16 V.S.A. § 2975. In distributing such funds, the Secretary shall not be limited by the restrictions contained within 16 V.S.A. § 2969(c) and (d).

Sec. E.503 EDUCATION; STATE-PLACED STUDENTS

(a) The Independence Place Program of ANEW Place shall be considered a 24-hour residential program for the purposes of reimbursement of education costs.

Sec. E.504 ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

(a) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.504 of this act, $3,958,344 General Fund shall be granted to adult education and literacy providers, pursuant to the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program established in 16 V.S.A. § 945.

Sec. E.504.1 EDUCATION; FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, of the Education Fund appropriation in Sec. B.504.1 of this act, the amount of:

(1) $921,500 is available for dual enrollment programs notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 944(f)(2);

(2) $2,400,000 is available to support the Vermont Virtual High School;

(3) $400,000 is available for secondary school reform grants;

(4) $4,200,000 is available for Early College pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 947(b); and

(5) $2,638,896 is available for the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program.

(b) Of the appropriation in Sec. B.504 of this act, $921,500 from the General Fund is available for dual enrollment programs.

Sec. E.504.2 16 V.S.A. § 4011(f) is amended to read:

(f) Annually, the Secretary shall pay to a local adult education and literacy provider, as defined in section 942 of this title, that provides an adult education and secondary credential program an amount equal to 26 percent of the base education amount for each student who completes the diagnostic portions of the adult education and secondary credential program, based on an average of the previous two completed fiscal years~~; 40~~. Forty percent of the payment required under this subsection shall be from State funds appropriated from the Education Fund and 60 percent of the payment required under this subsection shall be from State funds appropriated from the General Fund.

Sec. E.504.3 ADULT EDUCATION; FUNDING; REPORT

(a) On or before December 1, 2025, the Agency of Administration, the Agency of Education, and local adult education and literacy providers shall jointly submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development; the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs; and the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations with recommendations to modernize adult education funding to ensure funds are equitably distributed across all regions of the State, including recommendations for updates to the statutes and rules that govern the adult education funding formula. The Agency of Administration shall call and facilitate not fewer than five meetings with the Agency of Education and local adult education and literacy providers to develop the recommendations in the report.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Secretary of Administration shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development; the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs; and the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations with recommendations for any administrative changes to adult education, including which agency or department outside the Agency of Education is best suited to manage adult education grants. The report shall also include any additional recommendations from the Secretary of Administration regarding updates to the adult education funding formula should the Secretary have recommendations that differ from the recommendations contained in the report submitted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

(c) For fiscal year 2026, notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4011(f), the Agency of Education shall award the funds appropriated for the Adult Education and Secondary Credential Program in Secs. B.504 and B.504.1 of this act as follows:

(1) $3,984,607 to Vermont Adult Learning;

(2) $1,320,874 to Central Vermont Adult Education;

(3) $400,919 to The Tutorial Center; and

(4) $890,840 to Northeast Kingdom Learning Services.

Sec. E.507.1 ENGLISH LEARNER; CATEGORICAL AID

(a) The funds appropriated in Sec. B.507.1 of this act shall be used to provide categorical aid to school districts for English Learner services, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 4013.

Sec. E.511 EDUCATION; TECHNICAL EDUCATION

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. 1561(c) and (d) or any other provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2026 career technical center supplemental assistance grants shall be calculated using the fiscal year 2025 base education amount.

Sec. E.514 STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

(a) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(g)(2), the annual contribution to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System shall be $212,752,627, of which $199,377,627 shall be the State's contribution and $13,375,000 shall be contributed from local school systems or educational entities pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1944c.

(b) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944(c)(2), of the annual contribution, $41,414,649 is the "normal contribution" and $171,337,978 is the "accrued liability contribution."

Sec. E.514.1 VERMONT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND VERMONT PENSION INVESTMENT COMMISSION; OPERATING BUDGET; SOURCE OF FUNDS

(a) Of the $3,864,405 appropriated in Sec. B.514.1 of this act, $2,719,271 constitutes the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System operating budget, and $1,145,134 constitutes the portion of the Vermont Pension Investment Commission's budget attributable to the Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System.

Sec. E.515 RETIRED TEACHERS' HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL BENEFITS

(a) In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1944b(b)(2) and 16 V.S.A. § 1944b(h)(1), the annual contribution to the Retired Teachers' Health and Medical Benefits plan shall be $79,952,589, of which $71,052,589 shall be the State's contribution and $8,900,000 shall be from the annual charge for teacher health care contributed by employers pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §1944d. Of the annual contribution, $24,712,382 is the "normal contribution" and $55,240,207 is the "accrued liability contribution."

Sec. E.600 UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

(a) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue warrants to pay 1/12 of the appropriation in Sec. B.600 of this act to the University of Vermont on or about the 15th day of each calendar month of the year.

(b) Of this appropriation, $380,362 shall be transferred to the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research to comply with State matching

fund requirements necessary for the receipt of available federal or private funds, or both.

Sec. E.602 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

(a) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall issue warrants to pay 1/12 of the appropriation in Sec. B.602 of this act to the Vermont State Colleges on or about the 15th day of each calendar month of the year.

(b) Of this appropriation, $427,898 shall be transferred to the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center to comply with State matching fund requirements necessary for the receipt of available federal or private funds, or both.

Sec. E.602.1 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.602.2, as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 83, Sec. 67, 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. C.101, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113 Sec. E.602.1, is further amended to read:

Sec. E.602.2 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

(a) The Vermont State College (VSC) system shall transform itself into a fully integrated system that achieves financial stability in a responsible and sustainable way in order to meet each of these strategic priorities:

* * *

(b) VSC shall meet the following requirements during the transformation of its system required under subsection (a) of this section and shall accommodate the oversight of the General Assembly in so doing.

(1) VSC shall reduce its structural deficit by $5,000,000.00 per year for three years and by $3,500,000.00 ~~per year for~~ the following ~~two years~~ year through a combination of annual operating expense reductions and increased enrollment revenues, for a total ~~$22,000,000.00~~ $18,500,000.00 by the end of fiscal year 2026. These reductions shall be structural in nature and shall not be met by use of one-time funds. The VSC Board of Trustees, through the Chancellor or designee, shall report the results of these structural reductions to the House and Senate Committees on Education and on Appropriations annually during the Chancellor's budget presentation.

* * *

Sec. E.603 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES; ALLIED HEALTH

(a) If Global Commitment Fund monies are unavailable, the total grant funding for the Vermont State Colleges shall be maintained through the General Fund or other State funding sources.

(b) The Vermont State Colleges shall use the Global Commitment appropriation in Sec. B.603 of this act to support the dental hygiene, respiratory therapy, and nursing programs that graduate approximately 315 health care providers annually. These graduates deliver direct, high-quality health care services to Medicaid beneficiaries or uninsured or underinsured persons.

Sec. E.605 VERMONT STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

(a) Of the funds appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605 of this act:

(1) $25,000 shall be deposited into the Trust Fund established in 16 V.S.A. § 2845;

(2) not more than $300,000 may be used by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for a student aspirational initiative to serve one or more high schools; and

(3) not less than $1,000,000 shall be used to continue the Vermont Trades Scholarship Program established in 2022 Act and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 14.

(b) Of the funds appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605 of this act that remain after accounting for the expenditures set forth in subsection (a) of this section, not less than 93 percent shall be used for direct student aid.

(c) After accounting for the expenditures set forth in subsection (a) of this section, up to seven percent of the funds appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605 of this act or otherwise currently or previously appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation or provided to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation by an agency or department of the State for the administration of a program or initiative may be used by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation for its costs of administration. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation may recoup its reasonable costs of collecting the forgivable loans in repayment. Funds shall not be used for indirect costs. To the extent that any of these funds are federal funds, allocation for expenses associated with administering the funds shall be consistent with federal grant requirements.

Sec. E.605.1 NEED-BASED STIPEND FOR DUAL ENROLLMENT AND EARLY COLLEGE STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4025, the $41,225 Education Fund and $41,225 General Fund appropriated to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation in Sec. B.605.1 of this act is for dual enrollment and need-based

stipend purposes to fund a flat-rate, need-based stipend or voucher program for financially disadvantaged students enrolled in a dual enrollment course pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 944 or in early college pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 946 to be used for the purchase of books, cost of transportation, and payment of fees. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall establish the criteria for program eligibility. Funds shall be granted to eligible students on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are depleted.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation shall report on the program to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Commerce and Economic Development and to the Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

Sec. E.715 REPEALS; SUNSET OF PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX CLEAN WATER SURCHARGE

(a) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.10 (sunset of clean water surcharge), as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, is repealed.

(b) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.11(a)(5) (effective date of sunset of clean water surcharge) is repealed.

Sec. E.715.1 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.1(b) is amended to read:

(b) Purpose and intent.

(1) The purpose of Secs. I.1–I.12 of this act is to promote the development and improvement of housing for Vermonters.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly:

(A) to extend the clean water surcharge to provide ~~an interim~~ a source of revenue for addressing water quality issues throughout the State; and

(B) to continue its work on identifying a long-term funding source or sources that are sufficient in scope and targeted in design to address these water quality issues~~; and~~

~~(C) once one or more long-term funding sources are identified and enacted, but not later than July 1, 2027, to reduce the amount of the clean water surcharge to 0.04 percent~~.

Sec. E.715.2 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.12 is amended to read:

Sec. I.12. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Secs. I.1–I.12 shall take effect on July 1, 2017~~, except that Sec. I.10 (allocating clean water surcharge revenue to Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund) shall take effect on July 1, 2027~~.

Sec. E.715.3 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, Sec. I.7(d) is amended to read:

(d) To compensate for this reduction of available property transfer tax revenue, it is the intent of the General Assembly through this act to provide for the transfer of $2,500,000.00 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund, as follows:

(1) Sec. D.100 of this act appropriates $11,304,840.00 in fiscal year 2018 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Upon the effective date of this act, $1,500,000.00 shall revert to the Fund, resulting in a fiscal year 2018 total appropriation to the Board of $9,804,840.00. In fiscal year 2018 only, the amount of $1,500,000.00 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

(2) As provided in Sec. I.9 of this act, ~~from July 1, 2017 until July 1, 2027,~~ pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9602a, the first $1,000,000.00 in revenue generated by the clean water surcharge of ~~0.2~~ 0.22 percent shall be transferred to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund. In fiscal year 2018 only, the Commissioner shall transfer the amount of $1,000,000.00 from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund to the General Fund.

(3) ~~After July 1, 2027, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9602a as amended in Sec. I.10 of this act, $1,000,000.00 in total revenue generated by the clean water surcharge of 0.04 percent shall be transferred to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

(4) ~~As provided in Sec. I.11 of this act, the clean water surcharge will be repealed in its entirety on July 1, 2039.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. E.900 19 V.S.A. § 11a is amended to read:

§ 11a. TRANSPORTATION ~~FUNDS APPROPRIATED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY~~ FUND APPROPRIATIONS

~~(a)~~ No transportation funds shall be appropriated for the support of government other than for the Agency, the Board, Transportation Pay Act Funds, construction of transportation capital facilities, transportation debt service, and the operation of information centers by the Department of Buildings and General Services~~, and the Department of Public Safety~~. ~~The amount of transportation funds appropriated to the Department of Public Safety shall not exceed:~~

~~(1) $25,250,000.00 in fiscal year 2014;~~

~~(2) $22,750,000.00 in fiscal years 2015 and 2016;~~

~~(3) $21,150,000.00 in fiscal year 2017; and~~

~~(4) $20,250,000.00 in fiscal year 2018 and in succeeding fiscal years.~~

~~(b) In fiscal year 2018 and in succeeding fiscal years, of the funds appropriated to the Department of Public Safety pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the amount of $2,100,000.00 is allocated exclusively for the purchase, outfitting, assignment, and disposal of State Police vehicles. Any unexpended and unencumbered funds remaining in this allocation at the close of a fiscal year shall revert to the Transportation Fund. The Department of Public Safety may periodically recommend to the General Assembly that this allocation be adjusted to reflect market conditions for the vehicles and equipment.~~

Sec. E.917 TOWN HIGHWAY NON-FEDERAL DISASTERS; PILOT FUND

(a) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 3709(a), the amount of $1,150,000 is appropriated in fiscal year 2026 from the PILOT Special Fund established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3709 to the Agency of Transportation for the Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters Program.

(b) The amounts appropriated pursuant to this section shall only be spent for the purpose of providing grants in relation to non-federal disasters pursuant to the provisions of 19 V.S.A. § 306(d). Any amounts appropriated pursuant to this section that remain unused at the close of fiscal year 2026 shall revert to the PILOT Special Fund established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3709.

* * * Fiscal Year 2025 Adjustments, Appropriations, and Amendments * * *

Sec. F.100 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.105 is amended to read:

Sec. B.105 Agency of digital services - communications and information technology

Personal services	82,994,362	82,994,362
Operating expenses	~~62,547,212~~	61,761,212
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574
Source of funds		
General fund	209,808	209,808
Special funds	511,723	511,723
Internal service funds	~~144,820,043~~	144,034,043
Total	~~145,541,574~~	144,755,574

Sec. F.101 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.145 is amended to read:

Sec. B.145 Total general government

Source of funds		
General fund	117,405,610	117,405,610

Transportation fund	4,292,149	4,292,149
Special funds	31,882,209	31,882,209
Federal funds	1,467,374	1,467,374
Internal service funds	~~214,635,950~~	213,849,950
Interdepartmental transfers	7,053,789	7,053,789
Enterprise funds	4,298	4,298
Pension trust funds	4,800,305	4,800,305
Private purpose trust funds	1,329,205	1,329,205
Total	~~382,870,889~~	382,084,889

Sec. F.102 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.204 is amended to read:

Sec. B.204 Judiciary

Personal services	~~58,439,095~~	58,827,799
Operating expenses	~~12,479,384~~	14,640,960
Grants	121,030	121,030
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789
Source of funds		
General fund	~~63,414,698~~	65,964,978
Special funds	4,503,401	4,503,401
Federal funds	953,928	953,928
Interdepartmental transfers	2,167,482	2,167,482
Total	~~71,039,509~~	73,589,789

Sec. F.103 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.205 is amended to read:

Sec. B.205 State's attorneys

Personal services	~~17,309,679~~	17,548,979
Operating expenses	~~2,034,016~~	2,202,516
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495
Source of funds		
General fund	~~18,734,634~~	19,142,434
Federal funds	31,000	31,000
Interdepartmental transfers	578,061	578,061
Total	~~19,343,695~~	19,751,495

Sec. F.104 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.206.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.206.1 Crime Victims Advocates

Personal services	3,016,156	3,016,156
Operating expenses	~~104,396~~	142,396
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552

Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552
Total	~~3,120,552~~	3,158,552

Sec. F.105 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.208 is amended to read:

Sec. B.208 Public safety - administration

Personal services	~~4,620,756~~	5,397,783
Operating expenses	6,022,923	6,022,923
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,179,193~~	8,092,770
Special funds	4,105	4,105
Federal funds	396,362	396,362
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,064,019~~	2,927,469
Total	~~10,643,679~~	11,420,706

Sec. F.106 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.210 is amended to read:

Sec. B.210 Public safety - criminal justice services

Personal services	~~5,387,100~~	4,705,897
Operating expenses	2,152,467	2,152,467
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364
Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,829,099~~	2,172,295
Special funds	~~4,975,847~~	3,951,448
Federal funds	734,621	734,621
Total	~~7,539,567~~	6,858,364

Sec. F.107 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.236 is amended to read:

Sec. B.236 Human rights commission

Personal services	~~927,697~~	952,559
Operating expenses	~~115,103~~	125,378
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,077,937
Source of funds		
General fund	~~953,800~~	988,937
Federal funds	89,000	89,000
Total	~~1,042,800~~	1,077,937

Sec. F.108 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.241 is amended to read:

Sec. B.241 Total protection to persons and property

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,238,448~~	233,526,438

Transportation fund	20,250,000	20,250,000
Special funds	~~119,824,272~~	118,799,873
Tobacco fund	672,579	672,579
Federal funds	162,959,452	162,959,452
Interdepartmental transfers	~~16,031,869~~	14,895,319
Enterprise funds	15,070,107	15,070,107
Total	~~563,046,727~~	566,173,768

Sec. F.109 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.300 is amended to read:

Sec. B.300 Human services - agency of human services - secretary's office

Personal services	~~16,219,746~~	18,219,746
Operating expenses	~~7,220,486~~	6,062,286
Grants	3,795,202	3,795,202
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,913,202~~	11,923,905
Special funds	135,517	135,517
Federal funds	~~13,565,080~~	11,606,177
Global Commitment fund	~~0~~	4,300,000
Interdepartmental transfers	~~621,635~~	111,635
Total	~~27,235,434~~	28,077,234

Sec. F.110 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.301 is amended to read:

Sec. B.301 Secretary's office - global commitment

Grants	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988
Source of funds		
General fund	~~668,380,623~~	716,109,638
Special funds	32,047,905	32,047,905
Tobacco fund	21,049,373	21,049,373
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
Federal funds	~~1,285,494,243~~	1,363,223,270
Interdepartmental transfers	4,487,210	4,124,245
Total	~~2,039,512,911~~	2,164,607,988

Sec. F.111 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.305 is amended to read:

Sec. B.305 AHS - administrative fund

Personal services	330,000	330,000
Operating expenses	~~13,170,000~~	16,870,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000

Source of funds		
Interdepartmental transfers	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000
Total	~~13,500,000~~	17,200,000

Sec. F.112 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.306 is amended to read:

Sec. B.306 Department of Vermont health access - administration

Personal services	~~134,929,148~~	136,693,560
Operating expenses	~~44,171,193~~	39,250,661
Grants	3,112,301	3,112,301
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,872,315~~	42,023,781
Special funds	4,733,015	4,733,015
Federal funds	~~128,790,580~~	124,836,223
Global Commitment fund	4,308,574	4,308,574
Interdepartmental transfers	~~4,508,158~~	3,154,929
Total	~~182,212,642~~	179,056,522

Sec. F.113 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.307 is amended to read:

Sec. B.307 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – global commitment

Personal services	547,983	547,983
Grants	~~899,550,794~~	964,407,046
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029
Total	~~900,098,777~~	964,955,029

Sec. F.114 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.309 is amended to read:

Sec. B.309 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid program – state only

Grants	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595
Source of funds		
General fund	~~62,151,546~~	62,308,757
Global Commitment fund	~~882,402~~	5,471,838
Total	~~63,033,948~~	67,780,595

Sec. F.115 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.310 is amended to read:

Sec. B.310 Department of Vermont health access - Medicaid non-waiver matched

Grants	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431

Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,511,405~~	13,459,034
Federal funds	~~22,483,483~~	24,773,397
Total	~~34,994,888~~	38,232,431

Sec. F.116 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.311 is amended to read:

Sec. B.311 Health - administration and support

Personal services	8,373,168	8,373,168
Operating expenses	~~7,519,722~~	8,166,662
Grants	7,985,727	7,985,727
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,189,843~~	3,513,313
Special funds	2,308,186	2,308,186
Federal funds	~~11,040,433~~	11,363,903
Global Commitment fund	7,173,924	7,173,924
Interdepartmental transfers	166,231	166,231
Total	~~23,878,617~~	24,525,557

Sec. F.117 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.312 is amended to read:

Sec. B.312 Health - public health

Personal services	67,812,371	67,812,371
Operating expenses	11,025,497	11,025,497
Grants	~~46,766,832~~	46,866,832
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700
Source of funds		
General fund	~~12,908,892~~	13,008,892
Special funds	24,906,804	24,906,804
Tobacco fund	1,088,918	1,088,918
Federal funds	64,038,301	64,038,301
Global Commitment fund	17,036,150	17,036,150
Interdepartmental transfers	5,600,635	5,600,635
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~125,604,700~~	125,704,700

Sec. F.118 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.313 is amended to read:

Sec. B.313 Health - substance use programs

Personal services	6,570,967	6,570,967
Operating expenses	511,500	511,500
Grants	~~58,215,510~~	59,240,635
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102

Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,672,061~~	7,697,186
Special funds	2,413,678	2,413,678
Tobacco fund	949,917	949,917
Federal funds	15,456,754	15,456,754
Global Commitment fund	39,805,567	39,805,567
Total	~~65,297,977~~	66,323,102

Sec. F.119 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.314 is amended to read:

Sec. B.314 Mental health - mental health

Personal services	50,191,086	50,191,086
Operating expenses	~~5,517,999~~	5,709,973
Grants	~~270,625,138~~	272,536,080
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139
Source of funds		
General fund	~~25,555,311~~	26,279,270
Special funds	1,718,092	1,718,092
Federal funds	~~11,436,913~~	12,661,803
Global Commitment fund	~~287,609,767~~	287,763,834
Interdepartmental transfers	14,140	14,140
Total	~~326,334,223~~	328,437,139

Sec. F.120 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.316 is amended to read:

Sec. B.316 Department for children and families - administration & support services

Personal services	~~46,644,080~~	44,844,080
Operating expenses	~~17,560,755~~	19,402,705
Grants	5,627,175	5,627,175
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960
Source of funds		
General fund	~~39,722,724~~	40,113,958
Special funds	2,781,912	2,781,912
Federal funds	~~24,448,223~~	24,098,939
Global Commitment fund	2,417,024	2,417,024
Interdepartmental transfers	462,127	462,127
Total	~~69,832,010~~	69,873,960

Sec. F.121 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.317 is amended to read:

Sec. B.317 Department for children and families - family services

Personal services	~~45,197,694~~	45,286,553
Operating expenses	5,315,309	5,315,309

Grants	~~98,251,027~~	97,732,465
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327
Source of funds		
General fund	~~58,838,741~~	59,984,059
Special funds	729,587	729,587
Federal funds	~~34,666,196~~	36,180,206
Global Commitment fund	~~54,514,506~~	51,425,475
Interdepartmental transfers	15,000	15,000
Total	~~148,764,030~~	148,334,327

Sec. F.122 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.318 is amended to read:

Sec. B.318 Department for children and families - child development

Personal services	5,908,038	5,908,038
Operating expenses	813,321	813,321
Grants	~~223,329,336~~	211,815,836
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195
Source of funds		
General fund	~~76,723,518~~	51,443,165
Special funds	~~96,312,000~~	109,512,000
Federal funds	~~43,511,414~~	42,902,383
Global Commitment fund	~~13,503,763~~	14,679,647
Total	~~230,050,695~~	218,537,195

Sec. F.123 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.319 is amended to read:

Sec. B.319 Department for children and families - office of child support

Personal services	~~13,157,660~~	13,061,794
Operating expenses	3,759,992	3,759,992
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786
Source of funds		
General fund	~~5,200,064~~	5,163,429
Special funds	455,719	455,719
Federal funds	~~10,874,269~~	10,815,038
Interdepartmental transfers	387,600	387,600
Total	~~16,917,652~~	16,821,786

Sec. F.124 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.320 is amended to read:

Sec. B.320 Department for children and families - aid to aged, blind and disabled

Personal services	~~2,252,206~~	2,481,741
Grants	~~10,717,444~~	10,369,155
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896

Source of funds		
General fund	~~7,376,133~~	7,368,843
Global Commitment fund	~~5,593,517~~	5,482,053
Total	~~12,969,650~~	12,850,896

Sec. F.125 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.321 is amended to read:

Sec. B.321 Department for children and families - general assistance

Personal services	15,000	15,000
Grants	~~11,054,252~~	10,702,625
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625
Source of funds		
General fund	~~10,811,345~~	10,486,987
Federal funds	~~11,320~~	11,070
Global Commitment fund	~~246,587~~	219,568
Total	~~11,069,252~~	10,717,625

Sec. F.126 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.322 is amended to read:

Sec. B.322 Department for children and families - 3SquaresVT

Grants	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Source of funds		
Federal funds	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812
Total	~~44,377,812~~	45,677,812

Sec. F.127 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.323 is amended to read:

Sec. B.323 Department for children and families - reach up

Operating expenses	23,821	23,821
Grants	~~37,230,488~~	36,730,493
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314
Source of funds		
General fund	~~24,733,042~~	24,233,047
Special funds	5,970,229	5,970,229
Federal funds	2,806,330	2,806,330
Global Commitment fund	3,744,708	3,744,708
Total	~~37,254,309~~	36,754,314

Sec. F.128 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.325 is amended to read:

Sec. B.325 Department for children and families - office of economic opportunity

Personal services	~~817,029~~	1,042,639
Operating expenses	100,407	100,407
Grants	~~35,466,283~~	35,812,536
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582
Source of funds		
General fund	~~28,178,010~~	28,687,068
Special funds	83,135	83,135
Federal funds	~~4,935,273~~	4,998,078
Global Commitment fund	3,187,301	3,187,301
Total	~~36,383,719~~	36,955,582

Sec. F.129 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.329 is amended to read:

Sec. B.329 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - administration & support

Personal services	~~45,217,977~~	46,217,977
Operating expenses	~~6,472,558~~	6,714,680
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657
Source of funds		
General fund	~~22,916,281~~	24,037,342
Special funds	1,390,457	1,390,457
Federal funds	~~26,063,097~~	26,184,158
Global Commitment fund	35,000	35,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,285,700	1,285,700
Total	~~51,690,535~~	52,932,657

Sec. F.130 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.330 is amended to read:

Sec. B.330 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - advocacy and independent living grants

Grants	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798
Source of funds		
General fund	~~8,392,303~~	8,504,605
Federal funds	7,321,114	7,321,114
Global Commitment fund	~~8,857,643~~	8,956,079
Total	~~24,571,060~~	24,781,798

Sec. F.131 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.332 is amended to read:

Sec. B.332 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - vocational rehabilitation

Grants	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845

Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,371,845~~	371,845
Federal funds	7,558,000	7,558,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,250,000	1,250,000
Total	~~10,179,845~~	9,179,845

Sec. F.132 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.333 is amended to read:

Sec. B.333 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - developmental services

Grants	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271
Source of funds		
General fund	132,732	132,732
Special funds	15,463	15,463
Federal funds	403,573	403,573
Global Commitment fund	~~328,697,576~~	330,660,503
Interdepartmental transfers	50,000	50,000
Total	~~329,299,344~~	331,262,271

Sec. F.133 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334 Disabilities, aging, and independent living - TBI home and community based waiver

Grants	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Source of funds		
Global Commitment fund	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520
Total	~~6,845,005~~	6,864,520

Sec. F.134 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.334.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.334.1 Disabilities, aging and independent living - Long Term Care

Grants	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122
Source of funds		
General fund	498,579	498,579
Federal funds	2,450,000	2,450,000
Global Commitment fund	~~290,635,966~~	344,427,543
Total	~~293,584,545~~	347,376,122

Sec. F.135 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.338 is amended to read:

Sec. B.338 Corrections - correctional services

Personal services	~~147,472,104~~	148,472,104
Operating expenses	~~24,914,205~~	25,249,795
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899
Source of funds		
General fund	~~162,807,888~~	163,643,478
Special funds	935,963	935,963
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~499,888~~	999,888
Global Commitment fund	2,746,255	2,746,255
Interdepartmental transfers	396,315	396,315
Total	~~172,386,309~~	173,721,899

Sec. F.136 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.342 is amended to read:

Sec. B.342 Vermont veterans' home - care and support services

Personal services	~~17,631,222~~	17,595,290
Operating expenses	~~5,013,462~~	13,247,462
Grants	0	1,583,157
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909
Source of funds		
General fund	~~4,320,687~~	11,224,018
Special funds	~~10,051,903~~	12,450,095
Federal funds	~~8,272,094~~	8,751,796
Total	~~22,644,684~~	32,425,909

Sec. F.137 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.347 is amended to read:

Sec. B.347 Total human services

Source of funds		
General fund	~~1,328,118,806~~	1,364,156,647
Special funds	~~202,800,452~~	218,398,644
Tobacco fund	23,088,208	23,088,208
State health care resources fund	28,053,557	28,053,557
ARPA State Fiscal	5,000,000	5,000,000
Federal funds	~~1,803,398,922~~	1,882,012,745
Global Commitment fund	~~1,980,839,553~~	2,108,560,133
Internal service funds	490,853	490,853
Interdepartmental transfers	~~32,893,535~~	34,367,341
Permanent trust funds	25,000	25,000
Total	~~5,404,708,886~~	5,664,153,128

Sec. F.138 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.501 is amended to read:

Sec. B.501 Education - education services

Personal services	~~28,237,700~~	28,312,700
Operating expenses	1,134,912	1,134,912
Grants	322,345,763	322,345,763
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,387,955~~	6,462,955
Special funds	3,033,144	3,033,144
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Federal funds	340,584,414	340,584,414
Interdepartmental transfers	962,474	962,474
Total	~~351,718,375~~	351,793,375

Sec. F.139 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.503 is amended to read:

Sec. B.503 Education - state-placed students

Grants	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000
Total	~~20,000,000~~	19,000,000

Sec. F.140 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504 Education - adult education and literacy

Grants	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820
Source of funds		
General fund	~~3,778,133~~	4,081,770
Federal funds	916,050	916,050
Total	~~4,694,183~~	4,997,820

Sec. F.141 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.504.1 is amended to read:

Sec. B.504.1 Education - Flexible Pathways

Grants	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179
Source of funds		
General fund	921,500	921,500
Education fund	~~10,440,255~~	10,642,679
Total	~~11,361,755~~	11,564,179

Sec. F.142 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.505 is amended to read:

Sec. B.505 Education - adjusted education payment

Grants	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394
Total	~~1,893,267,394~~	1,882,267,394

Sec. F.143 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.508 is amended to read:

Sec. B.508 Education - nutrition

Grants	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Source of funds		
Education fund	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000
Total	~~20,400,000~~	17,500,000

Sec. F.144 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.516 is amended to read:

Sec. B.516 Total general education

Source of funds		
General fund	~~228,890,519~~	229,269,156
Special funds	23,651,687	23,651,687
Tobacco fund	750,388	750,388
Education fund	~~2,323,283,242~~	2,308,585,666
Federal funds	354,654,849	354,654,849
Global Commitment fund	260,000	260,000
Interdepartmental transfers	1,467,771	1,467,771
Pension trust funds	3,572,780	3,572,780
Total	~~2,936,531,236~~	2,922,212,297

Sec. F.145 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.704 is amended to read:

Sec. B.704 Forests, parks and recreation - forestry

Personal services	~~7,880,566~~	7,913,766
Operating expenses	1,005,046	1,005,046
Grants	~~1,712,423~~	1,713,923
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735
Source of funds		
General fund	~~6,299,512~~	6,334,212
Special funds	547,215	547,215
Federal funds	3,394,931	3,394,931
Interdepartmental transfers	356,377	356,377
Total	~~10,598,035~~	10,632,735

Sec. F.146 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.710 is amended to read:

Sec. B.710 Environmental conservation - air and waste management

Personal services	27,995,328	27,995,328
Operating expenses	~~10,788,954~~	10,816,954
Grants	4,943,000	4,943,000
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282
Source of funds		
General fund	~~199,372~~	227,372
Special funds	24,643,580	24,643,580
Federal funds	18,800,064	18,800,064
Interdepartmental transfers	84,266	84,266
Total	~~43,727,282~~	43,755,282

Sec. F.147 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.711 is amended to read:

Sec. B.711 Environmental conservation - office of water programs

Personal services	50,153,806	50,153,806
Operating expenses	~~8,362,915~~	8,370,915
Grants	92,365,140	92,365,140
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861
Source of funds		
General fund	~~11,887,629~~	11,895,629
Special funds	30,967,150	30,967,150
Federal funds	107,154,542	107,154,542
Interdepartmental transfers	872,540	872,540
Total	~~150,881,861~~	150,889,861

Sec. F.148 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.714 is amended to read:

Sec. B.714 Total natural resources

Source of funds		
General fund	~~42,792,800~~	42,863,500
Special funds	81,275,829	81,275,829
Fish and wildlife fund	10,418,331	10,418,331
Federal funds	152,068,301	152,068,301
Interdepartmental transfers	14,131,324	14,131,324
Total	~~300,686,585~~	300,757,285

Sec. F.149 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.100 is amended to read:

Sec. D.100 ALLOCATIONS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

(a) This act contains the following amounts allocated to special funds that receive revenue from the property transfer tax. These allocations shall not exceed available revenues.

(1) The sum of $575,662 is allocated from the Current Use Administration Special Fund to the Department of Taxes for administration of the Use Tax Reimbursement Program. Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), amounts in excess of $575,662 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Current Use Administration Special Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(2) Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, amounts in excess of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 from the property transfer tax and surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a deposited into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund.

(A) The dedication of $2,500,000 in revenue from the property transfer tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 9610(d) for the debt payments on the affordable housing bond pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 314 shall be offset by the reduction of $1,500,000 in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and $1,000,000 from the surcharge established in 32 V.S.A. § 9602a. The fiscal year 2025 appropriation of ~~$22,106,740~~ $28,238,050 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board reflects the $1,500,000 reduction. The affordable housing bond and related property transfer tax and surcharge provisions are repealed after the life of the bond on July 1, 2039. Once the bond is retired, the $1,500,000 reduction in the appropriation to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall be restored.

(3) Notwithstanding 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), amounts in excess of ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 from the property transfer tax deposited into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund shall be transferred into the General Fund. The ~~$7,772,373~~ $9,052,113 shall be allocated as follows:

(A) ~~$6,404,540~~ $7,300,358 for disbursement to regional planning commissions in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b);

(B) ~~$931,773~~ $1,187,721 for disbursement to municipalities in a manner consistent with 24 V.S.A. § 4306(b); and

(C) ~~$436,060~~ $564,034 to the Agency of Digital Services for the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

Sec. F.150 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. D.102 is amended to read:

Sec. D.102 REVERSIONS

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the General Fund from the accounts indicated:

* * *

3150892104 MH – Case Management Serv	~~$350,000.00~~	$350,199.34

* * *

1100892208 AOA – VT Housing Finance Agency	$3,000,000.00
1100892403 AOA – Health Equity Community Grants	$500,000.00
1120020000 Tuition Assistance Program	$133,877.86
1120892401 DHR – New Position in DHR Ops	$477,769.00
1120892402 DHR – New Position in VTHR Ops	$40,726.07
1140010000 Tax Operation Costs	$1,267,062.22
1140060000 Reappraisal and Listing Payments	$35,270.75
1140070000 Use Tax Reimbursement Program	$37,864.25
1140330000 Renter Rebates	$2,186,940.33
1140892403 Tax – Child Care Contr Positions	$3,591,823.02
1260980000 Debt Service	$235,445.15
1266892401 VPIC – Pension System Assets	$5,000.00
2100892201 AG – Racial Disparities	$48,465.00
2120892203 JUD – County Court House HVAC	$800,000.00
2120892402 JUD – Essex County Courthouse Reno	$50,000.00
2130400000 SIUS Parent Account	$395,749.64
2150010000 Mil Admin/TAGO	$142,789.80
2150050000 Mil Vet Affairs Office	$100,000.00
2160892201 CCVS – VT Forensic Nursing	$246.43
2160892304 CCVS – Kurn Hattin Survivor	$250.00
2200010000 Administration Division	$167,222.00
3310000000 Commission on Women	$25,390.43
3330892401 GMCB – VHCURES Database Implemen	$545,782.90
3400892111 Supp New Americans Refugee	$23,431.00

3400892301 AHSCO – Refugee Resettlement	$1,293.00
3420892405 HD – Regional Emergency Med	$8,295.01
3440050000 DCFS – AABD	$35,310.73
3440892110 DCF – Grants to Reachup	$5.10
3440892203 DCF – Parent Child Ctrs Cap Imp	$20,708.22
3440892214 DCF – Child Care Provider Workfor	$294.79
4100500000 VT Department of Labor	$8,000,000.00
5100070000 Education Services	$100,000.00
5100892101 AOE – VSC Committee Per Diem	$16,295.33
5100892102 AOA – Advisory Group Per Diem	$9,018.00
5100892103 AOE – ESESAG Per Diems	$8,960.00
5100892201 AOE – Comm Pub Sch Emp Hlth Ben	$29,050.00
5100892202 AOE – Task Force Equit Inclusive	$6,150.00
5100892302 AOE – Ethnic&Social Equity Per D	$14,386.24
6100010000 Administration Management and Planning	$402,052.99
6100040000 Property Tax Assessment Approp	$11,692.11
6140880005 152/00 State Asst Munic Poll Cont	$126.26
7100892301 Everyone Eats	$144,565.43
7120892304 DED – Relocated and Remote Worker	$127,314.33
8100002100 Department of Motor Vehicles	$2,482.81

* * *

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in fiscal year 2025, the following amounts shall revert to the Education Fund from the accounts indicated:

5100010000 Administration	$301,041.03
5100050000 State-Placed Students	$13,687,528.41
5100090000 Education Grant	$359,570.31
5100110000 Small School Grant	$593,700.00
5100200000 Education – Technical Education	$1,802,347.44
5100210000 Education – Flexible Pathways	$1,312,334.72

5100892405 AOE – Universal School Meals $6,201,479.69

Sec. F.151 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.100 is amended to read:

Sec. E.100 POSITIONS

* * *

(d) The conversion of eight limited service positions to exempt permanent status is authorized in fiscal year 2025 as follows:

(1) Office of the Defender General:

(A) one Administrative Services Tech;

(B) two DG IT Specialist II's;

(C) one ODG Legal Assistant I;

(D) two Staff Attorney I's;

(E) one Financial Specialist III; and

(F) one Admin Secretary.

* * *

Sec. F.152 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.301 is amended to read:

Sec. E.301 SECRETARY'S OFFICE; GLOBAL COMMITMENT

* * *

(b) In addition to the State funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, a total estimated sum of ~~$24,301,185~~ $28,307,335 is anticipated to be certified as State matching funds under Global Commitment as follows:

(1) ~~$21,295,850~~ $25,302,000 certified State match available from local education agencies for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment. This amount, combined with ~~$29,204,150~~ $34,698,000 of federal funds appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act, equals a total estimated expenditure of ~~$50,500,000~~ $60,000,000. An amount equal to the amount of the federal matching funds for eligible special education school-based Medicaid services under Global Commitment shall be transferred from the Global Commitment Fund to the Medicaid Reimbursement Special Fund created in 16 V.S.A. § 2959a.

(2) $3,005,335 certified State match available from local designated mental health and developmental services agencies for eligible mental health services provided under Global Commitment.

(c) Up to ~~$4,487,210~~ $3,614,245 is transferred from the Agency of Human Services Federal Receipts Holding Account to the Interdepartmental Transfer Fund consistent with the amount appropriated in Sec. B.301 of this act.

Sec. F.153 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. G.109 is amended to read:

Sec. G.109 PAY ACT APPROPRIATIONS; FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

(a) Executive Branch. The first and second years of the two-year agreements between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association for the Defender General, Non-Management, Supervisory, and Corrections bargaining units, and, for the purpose of appropriation, the State's Attorneys' offices bargaining unit, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; the collective bargaining agreement with the Vermont Troopers' Association for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; and salary increases for employees in the Executive Branch not covered by the bargaining agreements shall be funded as follows:

(1) Fiscal year 2025.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

(2) Fiscal year 2026.

* * *

(D) Transfers. With due regard to the possible availability of other funds, for fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Administration may transfer from the various appropriations and various funds and from the receipts of the Liquor Control ~~Board~~ Fund such sums as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act to the various agencies supported by State funds.

* * *

Sec. F.154 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 7 is amended to read:

Sec. 7. TELEPHONE TAX; REPEAL; TRANSITION

(a) 32 V.S.A. § 8521 (telephone personal property tax) is repealed on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. The final monthly installment payment of the telephone personal property tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8521 levied on the net book value of the taxpayer's personal property as of December 31, ~~2024~~ 2025 shall be due on or before July 25, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(b) 32 V.S.A. § 8522 (alternative telephone gross revenues tax) is repealed on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027. The final quarterly payment of the alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due on or before January 25, ~~2026~~ 2027.

(c) Any taxpayer who paid the alternative tax imposed by 32 V.S.A. § 8522 prior to the repeal of the tax on January 1, ~~2026~~ 2027 shall become subject to the income tax imposed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 151 beginning with the taxpayer's first income tax year starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026. No alternative tax under 32 V.S.A. § 8522 shall be due for any period included in the taxpayer's income tax filing for tax years starting on or after January 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

(d) In fiscal year ~~2025~~ 2026, the Division of Property Valuation and Review of the Department of Taxes and all communications service providers with taxable communications property in Vermont shall be subject to the inventory and valuation provisions prescribed in 32 V.S.A. § 4452, as applicable.

Sec. F.155 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 145, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

* * *

(3) Secs. 8–12 (communications property tax) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 and shall apply to grand lists lodged on or after April 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

Sec. F.156 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 166, Sec. 15 is amended to read:

Sec. 15. TRANSFER AND APPROPRIATION

Notwithstanding 7 V.S.A. § 845(c), in fiscal year 2025:

(1) $500,000.00 is transferred from the Cannabis Regulation Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 845 to the Cannabis Business Development Fund established pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987; and

(2) $500,000.00 is appropriated from the Cannabis Business ~~19~~ Development Fund to the ~~Agency of Commerce and Community Development~~

Department of Economic Development to fund technical assistance and provide loans and grants pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 987.

Sec. F.157 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 78 is amended to read:

Sec. 78. ~~TRANSFERS; PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX~~

~~Notwithstanding 10 V.S.A. § 312, 24 V.S.A. § 4306(a), 32 V.S.A. § 9610(c), or any other provision of law to the contrary, amounts in excess of $32,954,775.00 from the property transfer tax shall be transferred into the General Fund. Of this amount:~~

~~(1) $6,106,335.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.~~

~~(2) $1,279,740.00 shall be transferred from the General Fund into the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. F.158 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 96 is amended to read:

Sec. 96. APPROPRIATION; RENT ARREARS ASSISTANCE FUND

The sum of $2,500,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Vermont State Housing Authority~~ Department of Housing and Community Development in fiscal year 2025 for the Rent Arrears Assistance Fund established by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 45.

Sec. F.159 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 3, as amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 75, 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.119, and 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 106, is further amended to read:

Sec. 3. MANUFACTURED HOME IMPROVEMENT AND REPAIR PROGRAM

(a) ~~Amounts~~ Of the amounts available from the American Rescue Plan Act – State Fiscal Recovery funds, $4,000,000 is appropriated to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Manufactured Home Improvement and Repair Program and shall be used for one or more of the following purposes:

* * *

Sec. F.160 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 181, Sec. 113b is amended to read:

Sec. 113b. APPROPRIATION; ~~NATURAL RESOURCES~~ LAND USE REVIEW BOARD

The sum of ~~$1,300,000.00~~ $400,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the ~~Natural Resources~~ Land Use Review Board in fiscal year 2025.

Sec. F.161 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 24a is amended to read:

Sec. 24a. COMPENSATION FOR OVERPAYMENT

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, ~~the sum of $29,224.00~~ a $29,224.00 credit shall be ~~transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of~~ applied to the Canaan Town School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the ~~Town of~~ Canaan Town School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. ~~The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Canaan.~~

(b) ~~Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $5,924.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Bloomfield in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Bloomfield for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Bloomfield.~~

~~(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,575.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Brunswick in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Brunswick for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Brunswick.~~

~~(d) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $6,145.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of East Haven in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of East Haven for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of East Haven.~~

~~(e) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,046.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Granby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Granby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Granby.~~

~~(f) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $10,034.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Guildhall in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Guildhall for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Guildhall.~~

~~(g) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $20,536.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Kirby in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Kirby for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Kirby.~~

~~(h) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,402.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Lemington in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Lemington for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Lemington.~~

~~(i) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $11,464.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Maidstone in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Maidstone for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Maidstone.~~

~~(j) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $4,349.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Norton in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Norton for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Norton.~~

~~(k) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the sum of $2,657.00 shall be transferred from the Education Fund to the Town of Victory in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Town of Victory for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating~~

~~average daily membership. The transfer under this subsection shall be made directly to the Town of Victory.~~

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a $68,132.00 credit shall be applied to the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District's education spending, as defined per 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), in fiscal year 2025 to compensate the homestead taxpayers of the Northeast Kingdom Choice School District for an overpayment of education taxes in fiscal year 2024 due to erroneous accounting of certain students for the purposes of calculating average daily membership.

Sec. F.162 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1102, as added by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 3, Sec. 47, is amended to read:

Sec. B.1102 FISCAL YEAR 2023 ONE-TIME TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

(a) In fiscal year 2023, funds are appropriated from the Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951) for new and ongoing initiatives as follows:

(1) $40,010,000 to the Agency of Digital Services to be used as follows:

(A) $11,800,000 for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system upgrade of Human Capital Management and core statewide financial accounting system and integration with the Department of Labor and Agency of Transportation financial systems;

* * *

Sec. F.163 3 V.S.A. § 3306 is amended to read:

§ 3306. TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION SPECIAL FUND

* * *

(b) Funds. The Fund shall consist of:

(1) any amounts transferred ~~or appropriated~~ to it by the General Assembly; and

(2) any interest earned by the Fund.

* * *

Sec. F.164 WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND; REPEAL

(a) 10 V.S.A. § 543 (Workforce Education and Training Fund) is repealed.

Sec. F.165 18 V.S.A. § 9502 is amended to read:

§ 9502. TOBACCO TRUST FUND

(a)(1) The Tobacco Trust Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the purposes of creating a self-sustaining, perpetual fund for tobacco cessation and prevention that is not dependent upon tobacco sales volume.

(2) The Trust Fund shall ~~comprise~~ be composed of:

(A) ~~appropriations~~ transfers made by the General Assembly; and

(B) ~~transfers from the Litigation Settlement Fund pursuant to subdivision (b) of this section; and~~

~~(C)~~ contributions from any other source.

(3) The State Treasurer shall not disburse monies from the Trust Fund, except upon appropriation by the General Assembly. In any fiscal year, total appropriations from the Trust Fund shall not exceed seven percent of the fair market value of the Fund at the end of the prior fiscal year.

(4) The Trust Fund shall be administered by the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer may invest monies in the Fund in accordance with the provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 434. All balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain in the Fund. The State Treasurer's annual financial report to the Governor and the General Assembly shall contain an accounting of receipts, disbursements, and earnings of the Fund.

(b) ~~Unless otherwise authorized by the General Assembly on or before June 30, 2000, and on June 30 of each subsequent fiscal year, any unencumbered balance in the Litigation Settlement Fund shall be transferred to the Trust Fund.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. F.166 32 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Loan" means a loan that is interest free or below market value.

(2) "State agency" means an Executive Branch agency, department, commission, office, or board.

* * *

Sec. F.167 32 V.S.A. § 706 is amended to read:

§ 706. TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS

Notwithstanding any authority granted elsewhere, all transfers of appropriations shall be made pursuant to this section upon the initiative of the Governor or upon the request of a secretary or commissioner.

(1) With the approval of the Governor, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may transfer balances of appropriations not to exceed ~~$50,000.00~~ $100,000.00 made under any appropriation act for the support of the government from one component of an agency, department, or other unit of State government to any component of the same agency, department, or unit.

(2) Except as specified in ~~subdivisions~~ subdivision (1) ~~and (4)~~ of this section, the transfer of balances of appropriations may be made only with the approval of the Emergency Board.

(3) For the specific purpose of balancing and closing out fund accounts at the end of a fiscal year, the Commissioner of Finance and Management may adjust a balance within an account of an agency or department in an amount not to exceed ~~$100.00~~ $200.00.

* * *

Sec. F.168 32 V.S.A. § 902 is amended to read:

§ 902. AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW MONEY

* * *

(b) The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on~~,~~ and principal of ~~and expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing of such~~ notes as the same fall due without further order or authority from the ~~General Fund or from the Transportation or other applicable funds or from the proceeds of bonds or notes~~ governmental debt service funds established in section 951a of this chapter. The authority hereby granted is in addition to and not in limitation of any other authority. Such notes shall be sold at public or private sale with or without published notice, as the State Treasurer may determine to be in the best interests of the State.

Sec. F.169 32 V.S.A. § 951a is amended to read:

§ 951a. DEBT SERVICE FUNDS

(a) Three governmental debt service funds are hereby established:

* * *

(b) Financial resources in each fund shall consist of ~~appropriations by the General Assembly to fulfill debt service obligations,~~ the transfer of funding sources by the General Assembly to fulfill future debt service obligations,

bond proceeds raised to fund a permanent reserve required by a trust agreement entered into to secure bonds, transfers of appropriations effected pursuant to section 706 of this title, investment income earned on balances held in trust agreement accounts as required by a trust agreement, and such other amounts as directed by the General Assembly or that are specifically authorized by provisions of this title. Each debt service fund shall account for the accumulation of resources and the fulfillment of debt service obligations within the current fiscal year and the accumulation of resources for debt service obligations maturing in future fiscal years.

* * *

Sec. F.170 32 V.S.A. § 954 is amended to read:

§ 954. PROCEEDS

(a) The proceeds arising from the sale of bonds, inclusive of any premiums, shall be applied to the purposes for which they were authorized, and the purposes ~~shall~~ may be considered to include ~~the expenses of preparing, issuing, and marketing the bonds and any notes issued under section 955 of this title, and~~ underwriters' fees and amounts for reserves, but no purchasers of the bonds shall be in any way bound to see to the proper application of the proceeds. The State Treasurer shall pay the interest on, principal of, investment return on, and maturity value of the bonds and notes as the same fall due or accrue without further order or authority. The State Treasurer, with the approval of the Governor, may establish sinking funds, reserve funds, or other special funds of the State as the State Treasurer may deem for the best interests of the State. To the extent not otherwise provided, the amount necessary each year to fulfill the maturing principal and interest of, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on all the bonds then outstanding shall be included in and made a part of the annual appropriation bill for the expense of State government, and the principal and interest on, investment return and maturity value of, and sinking fund installments on the bonds as may come due before appropriations for their fulfillment have been made shall be fulfilled from the applicable debt service fund.

(b) The ~~State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the~~ estimated cost of bond issuance or issuances ~~to the entities to which funds are appropriated by a capital construction act and for which bonding is required as the source of funds. If estimated receipts are insufficient, the State Treasurer shall allocate additional costs to the entities. Any remaining receipts shall not be expended, but carried forward to be available for future capital construction acts. If the source of funds appropriated by a capital construction act is other than by issuance of bonds, the State Treasurer is authorized to allocate the estimated~~

~~cost of ongoing debt management services to the entities to which those funds are appropriated~~, including the costs of preparing, issuing, and marketing such bonds or notes shall be appropriated annually from the funds from which transfers are made to fund debt service costs.

* * *

Sec. F.171 VERMONT TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY FUND; REPEAL

(a) 33 V.S.A. chapter 78 (Vermont Traumatic Brain Injury Fund) is repealed.

Sec. F.172 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 47, Sec. 38 is amended to read:

Sec. 38. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

(a) Creation; administration. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall design and implement a Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program and shall create and administer a revolving loan fund to provide subsidized loans for rental housing developments that serve middle-income households.

(b) Loans; eligibility; criteria.

* * *

(7) The Agency shall use one or more legal mechanisms to ensure that:

(A) a subsidized unit remains affordable to a household earning the applicable percent of area median income for the longer of:

(i) seven years; or

(ii) full repayment of the loan plus three years; and

(B) during the affordability period determined pursuant to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (7), the annual increase in rent for a subsidized unit does not exceed three percent or an amount otherwise authorized by the Agency.

* * *

Sec. F.173 32 V.S.A. § 308b is amended to read:

§ 308b. HUMAN SERVICES CASELOAD RESERVE

(a) There is created within the General Fund a Human Services Caseload Reserve. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be subject to an appropriation by the General Assembly or approval by the Emergency Board. Expenditures from the Reserve shall be limited to Agency of Human Services caseload-related needs primarily in the Departments for Children and Families, of Health, of Mental Health, of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, of

Vermont Health Access, and settlement costs associated with managing the Global Commitment waiver.

(b) The Secretary of Administration may transfer to the Human Services Caseload Reserve any General Fund ~~carry-forward~~ carryforward directly attributable to Agency of Human Services caseload reductions and the effective management of related federal receipts, with the exclusion of the Department of Corrections.

(c) The Human Services Caseload Reserve shall contain two ~~sub-accounts~~ subaccounts:

(1) A ~~sub-account~~ subaccount for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses. Each fiscal year ~~beginning with fiscal year 2020~~, the Department of Finance and Management shall adjust the amount reserved for incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses to equal the amount specified in the ~~Comprehensive~~ Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year occurring two years prior for the estimated amount of incurred but not reported Medicaid expenses associated with the current Medicaid Global Commitment waiver.

* * *

Sec. F.174 CHILD CARE CONTRIBUTION SPECIAL FUND; UNALLOCATED AND UNRESERVED BALANCE

(a) In fiscal year 2025, the Secretary of Administration shall unreserve and transfer funds from the Human Services Caseload Reserve to the Child Care Contribution Special Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 10554 as necessary to maintain a balance that appropriately supports the State's statutory obligations under the Child Care Financial Assistance Program established in 33 V.S.A. §§ 3512 and 3513.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that any unreserved and unallocated balance in the Child Care Contribution Special Fund shall remain in the Fund to support the future establishment of a reserve for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program.

Sec. F.175 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; FACILITY WORK PROGRAMS; STRATEGIC PLAN

(a) Findings and intent.

(1) The General Assembly finds that a significant budget deficit has developed within previously existing programs despite a wage structure that pays incarcerated individuals in Vermont at rates ranging from $0.25 to $1.35 per hour, significantly below the federal minimum wage.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly that all Department of Corrections facility work programs operate in a manner that is fiscally sustainable to the extent possible within current statutory limitations and effective in preparing offenders for meaningful employment upon release.

(b) Strategic plan. On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Corrections shall, in consultation with the Department of Labor, submit a strategic plan with proposed benchmarks for improvement to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary. The strategic plan shall include:

(1) A business plan to improve program efficiency and self-sustainability to ensure all facility work programs, including Vermont Correctional Industries, vocational training programs, and other paid facility duties, operate without recurring deficits or to clearly identify funding sources to address the deficits.

(2) A comprehensive evaluation of the skills provided through facility work programs to determine if those skills are transferable to employment opportunities post-incarceration. The evaluation shall include consideration of expanding technical training and certification opportunities that carry recognized value in the labor market.

(3) An analysis of facility work programs to determine if each program serves a sufficient portion of the incarcerated population to justify its administration. The analysis shall also consider whether participants gain meaningful and valuable work experiences.

(4) A review of wages paid to facility work program participants, the implications of wage structures on program outcomes, and the appropriate use of funds in relation to program objectives.

(c) In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, the Department of Corrections shall submit timely reports to the House Committees on Appropriations and on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Institutions, and on Judiciary, or the Joint Fiscal Committee and the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee when the General Assembly is not in session, on the development of facility work program deficits. The Department shall include in these reports any financial or operational actions taken to address deficits, increase oversight, and prevent future deficits.

Sec. F.176 MEDICAID PROVIDERS WITH STABILIZATION NEEDS; GRANT ELIGIBILITY

(a) All Vermont Medicaid participating providers with demonstrated stabilization needs and a plan to achieve sustainability shall be eligible to

apply for funds appropriated pursuant to 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), including substance use residential treatment facilities, federally qualified health centers, residential mental health providers, and other providers of health care and human services.

(b) On or before December 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall submit a report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Appropriations. The report shall include:

(1) A detailed account of grants distributed pursuant to the appropriation made in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1100(o)(4), as added by this act. This shall include the dollar amount and recipient of each grant.

(2) A description of each grant recipient's financial status prior to receipt of the grant, a summary of the impact of the grant for each recipient, and a summary of a revised long-term sustainability plan for each grant recipient.

(3) An analysis of grant outcomes and any recommendations for enhancing the financial stability of Vermont Medicaid providers.

Sec. F.177 ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM AND HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAM TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS

(a) Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 945 and any other provision of law to the contrary, a high school may award a high school diploma to any student who meets the following criteria:

(1) Prior to July 1, 2024, the student was participating in the High School Completion Program as the program existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

(2) The student has met the requirements of the student's individual graduation plan and would have been eligible to receive a diploma pursuant to the High School Completion Program as it existed under 16 V.S.A. § 943 on June 30, 2024.

Sec. F.178 SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; DISCRETIONARY EXEMPTIONS

(a) For the remainder of federal fiscal year 2025, the Department for Children and Families shall utilize the State's allocation of discretionary exemptions in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to the extent permitted by federal regulation for the purposes of:

(1) extending benefits to Program participants who would otherwise experience a disruption of benefits; and

(2) ensuring that Program participants are not accruing any time-limited benefit work requirement countable months.

Sec. F.179 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 19, Secs. 5 and 6 are amended to read:

Sec. 5. [Deleted.]

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 4 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

(b) ~~Sec. 5 (marriage licenses; 32 V.S.A. § 1712) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.~~

~~(c)~~ All other sections shall take effect 30 calendar days after passage.

Sec. F.180 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 82, Sec. 1, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 108, Sec. 3, is further amended to read:

Sec. 1. REIMBURSEMENT TO MUNICIPALITIES OF STATE EDUCATION PROPERTY TAXES THAT WERE ABATED DUE TO FLOODING

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Taxes may approve an application by a municipality for reimbursement of State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426. To be eligible for reimbursement under this section, prior to November 15, ~~2024~~ 2025, a municipality must have abated, in proportion to the abated municipal tax, under 24 V.S.A. § 1535 the State education property taxes that were assessed on eligible property, after application of any property tax credit allowed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 154.

(2) As used in this subsection, "eligible property" means property lost or destroyed due directly or indirectly to severe storms and flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, provided the loss or destruction resulted in one or more of the following:

(A) a 50 percent or greater loss in value to the primary structure on the property;

(B) loss of use by the property owner of the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more;

(C) loss of access by the property owner to utilities for the primary structure on the property for 60 days or more; or

(D) condemnation of the primary structure on the property under federal, State, or municipal law, as applicable.

(b) If a municipality demonstrates that, due to disruption to tax collections resulting from flooding in an area that was declared a federal disaster between July 1, 2023 and ~~October 15, 2023~~ December 31, 2024, the municipality incurred unanticipated interest expenses on funds borrowed to make State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426, the municipality may be reimbursed by an amount equal to its reasonable interest expenses under this subsection, provided the amount of reimbursed interest expenses shall not exceed eight percent.

* * *

Sec. F.181 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. E.106 is amended to read:

Sec. E.106 CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND APPROPRIATIONS; REVERSION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SPENDING AUTHORITY

* * *

(b) The Commissioner of Finance and Management shall revert all unobligated American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority prior to December 31, 2024. The total amount of American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund spending authority reverted in accordance with this subsection shall equal the amount of new spending authority established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 511 for the following purposes in the following order:

* * *

(3) $30,000,000 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to provide support and enhance capacity for the production and preservation of: affordable mixed-income rental housing and homeownership units~~,~~ including improvements to manufactured homes and communities~~,~~; permanent homes and emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness~~,~~; recovery residences~~,~~; and housing available to farm workers, refugees, and individuals who are eligible to receive Medicaid-funded home and community based services.

Sec. F.182 CARRYFORWARD AUTHORITY

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law and subject to the approval of the Secretary of Administration, General Fund, Transportation Fund, Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund, Education Fund, Technology Modernization Special Fund (21951), Clean Water Fund (21932), and Agricultural Water Quality Fund (21933) appropriations remaining

unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Executive Branch shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, General Fund appropriations remaining unexpended on June 30, 2025 in the Legislative and Judicial Branches shall be carried forward and shall be designated for expenditure.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. G.100 EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. B.1101, C.100, C.101, C.102, C.103, C.104, C.105, C.106, C.107, E.127.3, E.306.1, E.312.1, E.313.3, F.100, F.101, F.102, F.103, F.104, F.105, F.106, F.107, F.108, F.109, F.110, F.111, F.112, F.113, F.114, F.115, F.116, F.117, F.118, F.119, F.120, F.121, F.122, F.123, F.124, F.125, F.126, F.127, F.128, F.129, F.130, F.131, F.132, F.133, F.134, F.135, F.136, F.137, F.138, F.139, F.140, F.141, F.142, F.143, F.144, F.145, F.146, F.147, F.148, F.149, F.150, F.151, F.152, F.153, F.156, F.157, F.158, F.159, F.160, F.162, F.163, F.164, F.165, F.166, F.167, F.168, F.169, F.170, F.171, F.172, F.173, F.174, F.175, F.176, F.177, F.178, F.179, F.181, and F.182 shall take effect on passage.

(b) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Secs. E.111 and E.111.1 shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and shall apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2024.

(c) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. E.111.2 shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and shall apply to taxable years beginning on and after January 1, 2025.

(d) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. E.111.3 shall take effect retroactively on January 1, 2025 and shall apply to taxable years and periods beginning on and after January 1, 2025 and ending on or before December 31, 2025.

(e) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Secs. F.154 and F.155 shall take effect retroactively on March 31, 2025.

(f) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. F.161 shall take effect retroactively on July 1, 2024.

(g) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. F.180 shall take effect retroactively on November 15, 2024.

(h) All remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

And by renumbering all of the sections of the bill to be numerically correct (including internal references) and adjusting all of the totals to be arithmetically correct.

SEN. ANDREW J. PERCHLIK
SEN. RICHARD A. WESTMAN
SEN. VIRGINA V. LYONS
Committee on the part of the Senate

REP. ROBIN P. SCHEU
REP. JAMES F. HARRISON
REP. TIFFANY BLUEMLE
Committee on the part of the House

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate accept and adopt the report of the Committee of Conference?, was decided in the affirmative.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 401.

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

An act relating to exemptions for food manufacturing establishments.

Senate Resolution Adopted

S.R. 11.

Senate resolution of the following title was read the third time and adopted:

Senate resolution supporting warm and cooperative relations on the part of both the United States and the State of Vermont with Canada and urging President Trump to remove all tariffs that he has imposed against Canadian imports and to refrain from subsequently imposing any new tariffs against Canadian imports

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 56.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to creating an Office of New Americans.

Were taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill in Sec. 1, Office of New Americans Study Committee; report, in subsection (b), by striking out subdivision (4) in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new subdivision (4) to read as follows:

(4) six members, appointed by the Governor, one who must be a New American with lived experience, who shall include:

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

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

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

(D) one member, nominated by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation;

(E) one member, nominated by Migrant Justice; and

(F) one member, nominated by the Vermont State College System.

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

Rules Suspended; Bill Messaged

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

H. 493.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Perchlik addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Clarkson, his remarks were entered into the Journal.

"I wanted to speak on a point of personal privilege after hearing the Senator of Chittenden-Southeast talk about Trump's cancellation of AmeriCorps programs.

"I'm supportive of eliminating our national debt and I'm OK with a president making budget cut proposals to programs – in fact I'd welcome them. And I wouldn't welcome a series of speeches in the Senate that were a litany of policy differences Senators have with the President. This is different, the actions of the Trump administration are not budget or policy proposals.

"The manner in the way the Trump administration is acting is causing waste fraud and abuse that they say they are trying to address. Trump's actions should raise alarm that we are sliding away from democracy and the rule of law towards autocracy and kleptocracy.

"The example of the termination of the AmeriCorps program is now a pattern of targeted, political, cutting of programs that are likely illegal. Trump

unilaterally ended AmeriCorps mid-year while volunteers were in the midst of their service. Cutting a program mid-year that relies on volunteers and brings so many benefits is incomprehensibly cruel to the volunteers and host organizations, many of which are local and state Governments, until you realize that the cruelty is part of the purpose.

"The point I want to make is how the programs are being cut. I wouldn't be giving this speech if Congress and the President cut programs as part of the budgeting and legislative process, that is the way it works. But what Trump is doing is cutting programs without warning, causing maximum confusion, waste, inefficiencies, and pain targeted at those he sees as political enemies.

"Another example of this is Trump's termination of LIHEAP - The Low-income Heating Energy Assistance Program. For context LIHEAP in FY25 served Vermont 17,000 VT Households, disbursing over $ 17M in funds. The average benefit in VT was $1,079.

"In early April federal employees who oversee the federal LIHEAP program, were locked out of their offices after arriving to work on a Monday – with no notice that they were all fired.

"Many states were alarmed at this news and warned the Trump Administration that the terminations will undermine a crucial lifeline for low-income seniors and families.

"The program had already delivered the bulk of its aid to the states for this year but had yet to distribute $378 million. That money is being held back by the Trump administration.

"Without any staff in place, states started questioning how and if they will get the rest of their money, especially for upcoming summer cooling programs. (LIHEAP also helps households pay for the cost of air conditioning during sweltering summer months.)

"And other states started wondering how they would get needed funds for next winter.

"Then President Trump on May 2 sent to Congress an initial proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 that would completely eliminate funding for LIHEAP. Which is fine if it was only a budget proposal from the White House and hadn't been preceded by Trump firing all the federal workers that operate the program – which makes funding the program moot.

"This reminded me of a quote attributed to different autocratic kleptocratic leaders:

'To my friends, everything, to my enemies, the law.'

"This is the axiom that Trump is following whether it be pardoning those that attacked police officers on Jan. 6th, or arresting people based on their political speech, not providing due process or habeus corpus to those he sees as political enemies, or cutting specific federal programs that Trump sees as benefiting enemies like AmeriCorps and LIHEAP.

"To me, two of the reasons given for ending LIHEAP were the most concerning part. The White House budget document states that the LIHEAP program is unnecessary because 'States have policies preventing utility disconnection for low-income households, effectively making LIHEAP a pass-through benefitting utilities in the Northeast.'

"In reality, only 17 states and the District of Columbia provide consumers with summer shut-off protections. And the cooling season is the concern now. It was over 100 degrees not only in Arizona but also in the Dakotas last week.

"And in Vermont only 5% of LIHEAP beneficiaries heat with electricity – similar numbers in the rest of the Northeast. Utility disconnection laws may keep the power on but if you heat with oil (like 38% of VT participants due) you are going to freeze if you can't buy heating oil.

"The budget also justifies the cuts saying that LIHEAP specifically benefits consumers in 'states like New York and California'.

"The mentioning of the Northeast and two other largely 'blue' states tells me this budget choice is not about efficiencies or saving tax dollars. This is about Trump sending a message that he can and will hurt low-income Americans in states Trump sees as political enemies.

"The loss of LIHEAP funding to Vermonters will be devastating. It will cause Vermonters to run out of fuel, which leads to safety concerns as folks try and heat their homes with space heaters and ovens, or they buy diesel at the pump instead of heating oil at a higher cost, living in a cold house causes health issues, and it will cause a lot of stress and difficulties for the local fuel dealers that don't want their customers running out of fuel and not paying their bills.

"We do need to speak out about such abuses of power by the President and the subjugation of power by the United States Congress.

"I will leave you with a pertinent quote by James Baldwin:

'It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.'

"Thank you."

Message from the House No. 60

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

Pursuant to the request of the Senate for a Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on Senate bill of the following title:

S. 51. An act relating to the Vermont unpaid caregiver tax credit.

The Speaker has appointed as members of such committee on the part of the House:

Rep. Kornheiser of Brattleboro
Rep. Kimbell of Woodstock
Rep. Canfield of Fair Haven.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Ms. Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the thirteenth day of May, 2025 he approved and signed bills originating in the Senate of the following titles:

S. 18. An act relating to licensure of freestanding birth centers.

S. 28. An act relating to access to certain legally protected health care services.

Report of Committee of Conference Accepted and Adopted on the Part of the Senate

H. 494.

Senator Harrison, for the Committee of Conference, submitted the following report:

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The Committee of Conference to which were referred the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon House bill entitled:

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

Respectfully reports that it has met and considered the same and recommends that the Senate recede from its proposals of amendment and that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Legislative Intent * * *

Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that of the $111,965,288.44 authorized in this act, not more than $61,969,761.44 shall be appropriated in the first year of the biennium, and the remainder shall be appropriated in the second year.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that in the second year of the biennium, any amendments to the appropriations or authorities granted in this act shall take the form of the Capital Construction and State Bonding Adjustment Bill. It is the intent of the General Assembly that unless otherwise indicated, all appropriations in this act are subject to capital budget adjustment.

Sec. 2. STATE BUILDINGS

(a) The following sums are appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services, and the Commissioner is authorized to direct funds appropriated in this section to the projects contained in this section; however, no project shall be canceled unless the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions are notified before that action is taken.

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026:

(1) Statewide, major maintenance:	$6,493,401.00
(2) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance:	$1,500,000.00
(3) Statewide, Art in State Buildings Program:	$75,000.00

(4) Rutland, Asa Bloomer Building roof repair and sewage system upgrades: $1,500,000.00

(5) Rutland, multimodal garage renovation: $600,000.00

(6) Middlesex, Print and Postal uninterruptable power supply upgrade: $58,279.44

(7) Waterbury, State Office Complex historic core roof replacement: $2,000,000.00

(8) Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs: $1,500,000.00

(c) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027:

(1) Statewide, major maintenance: $8,500,000.00

(2) Statewide, planning, reuse, and contingency: $250,000.00

(3) Statewide, physical security enhancements: $250,000.00

(4) Statewide, three-acre parcel stormwater compliance: $1,100,000.00

(5) Statewide, Art in State Buildings Program: $75,000.00

(6) Pittsford, Academy firing range upgrades $200,000.00

(7) Montpelier, State House replacement of historic interior finishes: $50,000.00

(8) Montpelier, 120 State Street HVAC – steam lines interior renovation: $2,000,000.00

(9) Middlesex, Vermont State Archives roof replacement, main building: $1,000,000.00

(10) Waterbury, State Office Complex historic core roof replacement: $2,000,000.00

(11) Burlington, 32 Cherry St. parking garage repairs: $500,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026 $13,726,680.44

Appropriation – FY 2027 $15,925,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 2 $28,951,680.44

Sec. 3. HUMAN SERVICES

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the following projects:

(1) Statewide, planning, design, and construction for HVAC system upgrades at correctional facilities: $4,000,000.00

(2) Statewide, accessibility upgrades at correctional facilities: $2,000,000.00

(3) Statewide, correctional facility safety and security upgrades: $225,000.00

(4) St. Johnsbury, Northeast Correctional Complex (NECC) door control system replacements: $1,000,000.00

(5) St. Albans, Northwest State Regional Correctional Facility (NWSCF) roof replacement: $1,000,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Human Services for the following projects:

(1) Statewide, planning, design, and construction for HVAC system upgrades at correctional facilities: $1,000,000.00

(2) Statewide, correctional facility safety and security upgrades: $200,000.00

(3) Rutland, Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility (MVRCF) door control system replacements: $500,000.00

(4) St. Johnsbury, Northeast Correctional Complex (NECC) door control system replacements: $2,600,000.00

(5) Newport, Northern State Correctional Facility (NSCF) sprinkler system upgrades: $500,000.00

(c) Notwithstanding 29 V.S.A. § 152(a)(20), the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services is authorized to transfer any unexpended project balances between the amount appropriated in subdivision (a)(5) of this section and the amount appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 3(b)(1), as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, Sec. 3 (NWSCF, booking expansion, planning, design, and construction), and the Commissioner of Finance and Management may release the amount notwithstanding 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 27(a) (NWSCF; funding request for federal detainees).

Appropriation – FY 2026	$8,225,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$4,800,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 3	$13,025,000.00

Sec. 4. COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance at statewide historic sites: $550,000.00

(2) Vermont Underwater Historic Preserves: $46,000.00

(3) Roadside historic site markers: $25,000.00

(4) Bennington, Battle Monument, maintenance of safety fencing, restoration, planning, and design: $425,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance at statewide historic sites: $550,000.00

(2) Vermont Underwater Historic Preserves: $46,000.00

(3) Roadside historic site markers: $25,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026 $1,046,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 $621,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 4 $1,667,000.00

Sec. 5. GRANT PROGRAMS

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 for the Building Communities Grants established in 24 V.S.A. chapter 137:

(1) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Preservation Grant Program: $300,000.00

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: $300,000.00

(3) To the Vermont Council on the Arts for the Cultural Facilities Grant Program, the sum of which may be used to match funds that may be made available from the National Endowment for the Arts, provided that all capital funds are made available to the Cultural Facilities Grant Program: $300,000.00

(4) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Recreational Facilities Grant Program: $300,000.00

(5) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Human Services and Educational Facilities Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(6) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Regional Economic Development Grant Program: $300,000.00

(7) To the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 for the Building Communities Grants established in 24 V.S.A. chapter 137:

(1) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Preservation Grant Program: $300,000.00

(2) To the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Division for Historic Preservation, for the Historic Barns Preservation Grant Program: $300,000.00

(3) To the Vermont Council on the Arts for the Cultural Facilities Grant Program, the sum of which may be used to match funds that may be made available from the National Endowment for the Arts, provided that all capital funds are made available to the Cultural Facilities Grant Program: $300,000.00

(4) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Recreational Facilities Grant Program: $300,000.00

(5) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Human Services and Educational Facilities Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(6) To the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Regional Economic Development Grant Program: $300,000.00

(7) To the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program: $300,000.00

(c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the sums appropriated in subdivisions (a)(5) and (b)(5) of this section be equally allocated between grants for human services and grants for educational facilities.

Appropriation – FY 2026 $2,100,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 $2,100,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 5 $4,200,000.00

Sec. 6. VETERANS' HOME

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Vermont Veterans' Home for the following projects:

(1) Replacement of air handlers: $710,000.00

(2) Expansion of laundry facilities: $340,000.00

(b) The Chief Executive Officer of the Vermont Veterans' Home is authorized to transfer any unexpended project balances between the amounts appropriated in subdivisions (a)(1)–(2) of this section.

Appropriation – FY 2026 $1,050,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 6 $1,050,000.00

Sec. 7. UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

(a) The sum of $1,500,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the University of Vermont for construction, renovations, and major maintenance.

(b) The sum of $1,500,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the University of Vermont for the projects described in subsection (a) of this section.

Appropriation – FY 2026 $1,500,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 $1,500,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 7 $3,000,000.00

Sec. 8. VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Vermont State Colleges for the following projects:

(1) Statewide, construction, renovations, and major maintenance: $1,500,000.00

(2) Johnson, the central heating plant replacement: $1,500,000.00

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Vermont State Colleges for the following projects:

(1) Statewide, construction, renovations, and major maintenance: $1,500,000.00

(2) Johnson, central heating plant replacement: $3,500,000.00

(c) For the amounts appropriated in subdivisions (a)(2) and (b)(2) of this section, the Vermont State Colleges shall work with Efficiency Vermont to develop a central heating plant replacement.

Appropriation – FY 2026 $3,000,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 $5,000,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 8 $8,000,000.00

Sec. 9. NATURAL RESOURCES

(a) The sum of $500,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for dam safety and hydrology projects.

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the following projects:

(1) Park infrastructure and rehabilitation, improvement, and three-acre rule compliance: $3,500,000.00

(2) Public lands access infrastructure: $700,000.00

(c) The sum of $1,105,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Fish and Wildlife for major maintenance and infrastructure projects.

(d) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for the following projects:

(1) State match, drinking water supply, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: $590,000.00

(2) Dam safety and hydrology projects: $500,000.00

(e) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the following projects:

(1) Park infrastructure and rehabilitation, improvement, and three-acre rule compliance: $2,500,000.00

(2) Public lands access infrastructure: $700,000.00

(f) The sum of $1,029,360.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Fish and Wildlife for major maintenance and infrastructure projects.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$5,805,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$5,319,360.00
Total Appropriation – Section 9	$11,124,360.00

Sec. 10. CLEAN WATER INITIATIVES

(a) The sum of $3,000,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for water quality grants and contracts.

(b) The sum of $4,000,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for municipal pollution control grants.

(c) The sum of $200,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for water quality improvements to forest access roads.

(d)(1) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for the following projects:

(A) Agricultural water quality projects: $800,000.00

(B) Land conservation and water quality projects: $2,000,000.00

(2) A grant issued under subdivision (1)(A) of this subsection:

(A) shall not be considered a State grant under 6 V.S.A. chapter 215, subchapter 3 for purposes of calculating the maximum amount of a State water quality assistance award under 6 V.S.A. § 4824 or 4826; and

(B) may be used to satisfy a grant recipient's cost-share requirements.

(e) The sum of $10,000,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for clean water implementation projects.

(f) In FY 2026 and FY 2027, any agency that receives funding from this section shall consult with the State Treasurer to ensure that the projects are capital eligible.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$10,000,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$10,000,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 10	$20,000,000.00

Sec. 11. MILITARY

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Military Department for the following projects:

(1) Major maintenance, renovations, and ADA compliance at State armories: $1,272,838.00

(2) Northwest Regional Readiness Center, planning and design: $1,343,333.00

(b) The sum of $1,310,167.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the Military Department for major maintenance, renovations, and ADA compliance at State armories.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$2,616,171.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$1,310,167.00
Total Appropriation – Section 11	$3,926,338.00

Sec. 12. AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the following projects:

(1) Renovations to the Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition: $1,500,000.00

(2) Upgrades to the heat systems serving the Vermont State University Randolph Campus and the Vermont Agricultural and Environmental Laboratory: $3,500,000.00

(b) The sum of $1,500,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for renovations to the Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition.

(c) For the amount appropriated in subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall negotiate the maintenance of propane summer boilers and update the memorandum of understanding with Vermont State University. The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services is additionally authorized to transfer any unexpended project balances between the amount appropriated in subdivision (a)(2) of this section and the amounts appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 12(b)(1) (Vermont Agriculture and Environmental Laboratory Heat Plant, construction).

Appropriation – FY 2026	$5,000,000.00
Appropriation – FY 2027	$1,500,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 12	$6,500,000.00

Sec. 13. PUBLIC SAFETY

(a) The sum of $2,000,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Department of Public Safety for Rutland Field Station.

(b) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2027 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Department of Public Safety for the following projects:

(1) Shaftsbury Field Station, land acquisition, planning, and design: $150,000.00

(2) Rutland Field Station: $1,645,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2026 $2,000,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 $1,795,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 13 $3,795,000.00

Sec. 14. JUDICIARY

(a) The following sums are appropriated in FY 2026 to the Judiciary for the following projects:

(1) Woodstock Courthouse, purchase and installation of backup power system: $100,000.00

(2) Essex County Courthouse, connector and security upgrades: $3,685,910.00

(3) Lamoille County Courthouse, purchase and installation of backup power system: $190,000.00

(b) The sum of $1,100,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction.

Appropriation – FY 2026 $5,075,910.00

Total Appropriation – Section 14 $5,075,910.00

Sec. 15. VERMONT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION

(a) The sum of $125,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Department of Public Safety for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the dry hydrant program.

(b) The sum of $125,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2027 to the Department of Public Safety for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the project described in subsection (a) of this section.

Appropriation – FY 2026 $125,000.00

Appropriation – FY 2027 $125,000.00

Total Appropriation – Section 15 $250,000.00

Sec. 16. VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The sum of $700,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2026 to the Vermont Historical Society to mitigate water infiltration at the roof, foundation, and basement of the Spaulding Building in Barre.

Appropriation – FY 2026	$700,000.00
Total Appropriation – Section 16	$700,000.00

* * * Funding * * *

Sec. 17. REALLOCATION OF FUNDS; TRANSFER OF FUNDS

(a) The following sums are reallocated to the Department of Buildings and General Services from prior capital appropriations to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act:

(1) of the amount appropriated in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 2(c)(5), as amended by 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 139, Sec. 1 (108 Cherry Street, parking garage repairs): $399,803.36

(2) of the amount appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 2(c)(18), as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 180, Sec. 2 (108 Cherry Street, parking garage repairs): $37,519.86

(3) of the amount appropriated in in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 13(a), as amended by 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 139, Sec. 9 (Middlesex Field Station): $371.89

(4) of the amount appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 12(a)(2) (Middlesex Field Station): $18,309.45

(5) of the amount appropriated in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 12(c), as amended by 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 180, Sec. 10, as further amended by 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 35 (Williston Public Safety Field Station): $2,220,099.10

(6) of the amount appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 2(b)(3) (statewide, planning, reuse, and contingency): $425,000.00

(7) of the amount appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 2(c)(7) (Northern State Correctional Facility, planning and construction for the boiler replacement): $1,000,000.00

(8) of the amount appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 3(b)(5), as added by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, Sec. 3 (South Burlington, justice-involved men, feasibility study for reentry facility): $125,000.00

(9) of the amounts appropriated in 2015 Acts and Resolves No. 26, Sec. 2(b) (various projects): $58,279.44

(10) of the amounts appropriated in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 2(b) (various projects): $23,237.47

(11) of the amounts appropriated in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 2(b) (various projects): $73,784.44

(b) The following sums appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development from prior capital appropriations are reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act:

(1) of the amount appropriated in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 5(c)(3), as amended by 2020 Acts & Resolves No. 139, Sec. 3 (Highgate Native American Cemetery): $12,042.00

(2) of the amount appropriated in 2017 Acts & Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(m), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 8 (Downtown Transportation Fund pilot project): $67,000.00

(c) The following sums appropriated to the Agency of Transportation from prior capital appropriations are reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act:

(1) of the amount appropriated in 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 139, Sec. 12(b)(1) (Lamoille Valley Rail Trail): $112.31

(2) of the amount appropriated in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(c) (Municipal Mitigation Program): $19,342.69

(3) of the amount appropriated in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(l)(2), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 8 (Better Roads Grant Program): $41,238.46

(d) Of the amount appropriated to the Department of Buildings and General Services in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 2(b)(4) (Bennington, Battle Monument, construction of safety fencing), $419,000.00 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 4 of this act.

(e) Of the amount appropriated to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(e)(1)(B), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 8 (phosphorus removal equipment), $115,000.00 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act.

(f) Of the amount appropriated to the Agency of Education in 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 50, Sec. 6(a) (funding emergency projects), $19,549.00 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act.

(g) Of the amount appropriated to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(b)(2) (ecosystem restoration and protection), $249.01 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Secs. 2–16 of this act.

(h) Of the amount appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Vermont Veterans' Home in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1103(a)(7) and authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(d)(7) (design for the renovation of the Brandon and Cardinal units), $1,500,000.00 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 19 of this act.

(i) Of the amount appropriated from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Department of Buildings and General Services in 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 113, Sec. B.1103(a)(9) and authorized in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 18(d)(10) (111 State Street; renovation of the stack area), $200,000.00 is reallocated to defray expenditures authorized in Sec. 19 of this act.

(j) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 701a(c)(2), the Department of Buildings and General Services may retain for the same purposes the unexpended amounts not reallocated in this act that were appropriated in the following capital construction acts:

(1) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 13(b)(2), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 10 (East Cottage); and

(2) 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 2(b) (various projects).

(k) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 701a(c)(2), the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets may retain for the same purposes the unexpended amount not reallocated in this act appropriated in 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(e)(1)(B), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 8 (phosphorus removal equipment).

(l) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 701a(c)(2), the Department of Environmental Conservation may retain for the same purposes the unexpended amounts not reallocated in this act that were appropriated in the following capital construction acts:

(1) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(f)(2)(A), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 8 (Standard EcoSystem Restoration and Protection programs);

(2) 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 11(b) (pollution control); and

(3) 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 42, Sec. 10(a)(2) (dam safety and hydrology projects).

(m) Notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 701a(c)(2), the Agency of Transportation may retain for the same purposes the unexpended amounts not reallocated in this act that were appropriated in the following capital construction acts:

(1) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(c) (Municipal Mitigation Program); and

(2) 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 84, Sec. 11(l), as added by 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 190, Sec. 8 (Municipal Mitigation Program).

Bonded Dollars	$5,074,938.48
Cash	$1,700,000.00
Total Reallocations and Transfers – Section 17	$6,774,938.48

Sec. 18. GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND APPROPRIATIONS

(a) The State Treasurer is authorized to issue general obligation bonds in the amount of $100,000,000.00 for the purpose of funding the appropriations made in Secs. 2–16 of this act. The State Treasurer, with the approval of the Governor, shall determine the appropriate form and maturity of the bonds authorized by this section consistent with the underlying nature of the appropriation to be funded.

(b) The State Treasurer is authorized to issue additional general obligation bonds in the amount of $6,890,350.00 that were previously appropriated but unissued under 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, as amended by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, for the purpose of funding the appropriations in this act.

Total Revenues – Section 18	$106,890,350.00

Sec. 19. FY 2026 AND 2027; CAPITAL PROJECTS; FY 2026 APPROPRIATIONS ACT; INTENT; AUTHORIZATIONS

(a) Findings. The General Assembly finds that in addition to the issuance of general obligation bonds, eligible capital projects may be funded from the Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 1001b.

(b) Intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly to authorize certain capital projects eligible for funding by 32 V.S.A. § 1001b in this act but appropriate the funds for these projects in the FY 2026 Appropriations Act. It is also the intent of the General Assembly that the FY 2026 Appropriations Act appropriate funds to the Fund established in 32 V.S.A. § 1001b for projects in FY 2027.

(c) Authorizations; Capital Infrastructure subaccount. In FY 2026, spending authority for the following capital projects from the Capital

Infrastructure subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments are authorized as follows:

(1) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide major maintenance: $1,506,599.00

(2) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide planning, reuse, and contingency: $250,000.00

(3) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for statewide physical security enhancements: $250,000.00

(4) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for State House repointing: $219,500.00

(5) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for an uninterruptable power supply system for the Middlesex print and postal facility: $250,000.00

(6) to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the Judiciary for renovations at the Windsor County Courthouse in White River Junction: $6,900,000.00

(7) to the Vermont Veterans' Home for the design and construction of the American unit: $1,500,000.00

(8) to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for infrastructure improvements that are either municipally leased for a term of at least 30 years or municipally owned and that support the development of new or rehabilitated housing, provided that a grant agreement shall be in place between the State and the municipality prior to the release of funds: $2,500,000.00

(9) to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Lake Champlain Walleye Association, Inc. to upgrade and repair the Walleye rearing, restoration, and stocking infrastructure: $25,000.00

(10) to the Department of Public Safety for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the dry hydrant program: $35,000.00

(d) Authorizations; Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount. In FY 2026, spending authority is authorized from the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments to the Agency of Natural Resources for the Department of Environmental Conservation for the State match to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund, in accordance with

the provisions of 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 78, Sec. C.108(b), in the amount of $14,500,000.00.

(e) Transfer. Notwithstanding 29 V.S.A. § 152(a)(20), the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services is authorized to transfer any unexpended project balances between the amount appropriated in subdivision (c)(7) of this section and the amounts appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15(b)(1) (emergency generator and boiler plant replacement).

* * * Policy * * *

* * * Capital Budgeting Process* * *

Sec. 20. 32 V.S.A. § 701a is amended to read:

§ 701a. CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION BILL

* * *

(d)(1) On or before November 15 each year, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall require each entity to which spending authority has been authorized by a capital construction act enacted in a legislative session that was two or more years prior to the current legislative session to submit a report on the current fund balances of each authorized project with unexpended funds. The report shall include plans for the unexpended funds, any projects or contracts the funds are assigned to, and an anticipated timeline for expending the funds.

(2) On or before ~~December 15 each year~~ the third Tuesday of every annual session, the Commissioner of Finance and Management shall submit in a consolidated format the reports required by subdivision (1) of this subsection to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions.

* * *

Sec. 21. 32 V.S.A. § 310 is amended to read:

§ 310. FORM OF ANNUAL CAPITAL BUDGET AND 10-YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAM PLAN

* * *

(b) The capital budget request for the following biennium shall be presented as the next increment of the 10-year plan. Elements of the plan shall include:

* * *

(2) Comprehensive cost and financing assessment.

(A) Amounts appropriated and expended for the current fiscal year and for the preceding fiscal year shall be indicated for capital programs and for individual projects. For the five fiscal years preceding these, the assessment shall include the aggregate amounts appropriated and expended for individual projects, which amounts shall be categorized by funding type and presented in a format that concisely displays the funding stream and project phases for each individual project over time. The assessment shall indicate further the source of funds for any project that required additional funding and a description of any authorized projects that were delayed.

* * *

Sec. 22. 32 V.S.A. § 1001b is amended to read:

§ 1001b. CASH FUND FOR CAPITAL AND ESSENTIAL INVESTMENTS

* * *

(e) Spending authority. Any entity authorized to make expenditures from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount shall have not more than ~~two~~ three years from the end of the legislative session in which the act authorizing the expenditure was enacted to encumber the funds. Any remaining unencumbered funds shall remain part of the Fund account.

Sec. 22a. CASH FUND; JOINT FISCAL OFFICE; REPORT

On or before December 15, 2025, the Joint Fiscal Office shall submit a report to the Senate Committee on Institutions and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions on considerations for use of the Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments under 32 V.S.A. § 1001b that:

(1) provides the historical context, including the economic rationale, for the Cash Fund;

(2) compares financial management practices for expenditures made through cash and through bonded dollars, including long-term financial impacts;

(3) distinguishes between the intended uses of the Capital Infrastructure subaccount and the Other Infrastructure, Essential Investments, and Reserves subaccount;

(4) describes, for each year since the Cash Fund's inception:

(A) the sources of funds; and

(B) the annual expenditures from the Capital Infrastructure subaccount; and

(5) outlines the current legislative process by which appropriations are made from the Cash Fund.

* * * Buildings and General Services * * *

Sec. 23. TRANSFER OF RANDALL MEADOW PROPERTY IN THE TOWN OF WATERBURY

Notwithstanding 29 V.S.A. § 166(b), the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services is authorized to survey, subdivide, and transfer to the Town of Waterbury the portion of land in the Waterbury State Office Complex (Parcel ID # 69622111909 as designated on the Town of Waterbury's Tax Parcel Maps) that is commonly referred to as the "Randall Meadow," provided that the Commissioner may transfer the Randall Meadow property only once:

(1) the parcel has been subdivided to reflect stormwater management needs of the Waterbury State Office Complex to the satisfaction of the Commissioner;

(2) any permits required for transfer have been obtained; and

(3) the Commissioner and the Town of Waterbury have created a plan to align the transfer with the current lease for the parcel.

Sec. 24. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, Sec. 27 is amended to read:

Sec. 27. CAPITOL COMPLEX FLOOD RECOVERY; SPECIAL COMMITTEE

* * *

(c) The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall provide quarterly updates to the Special Committee on the planning process for Capitol Complex flood recovery and shall provide timely notification to the City of Montpelier and the Montpelier Commission for Recovery and Resilience of alterations to proposals and plans for Capitol Complex flood recovery.

* * *

* * * Human Services * * *

Sec. 25. REPEAL

2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, Sec. 31 (potential reuse of Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility Site; feasibility; report) is repealed.

* * * Vermont Veterans' Home * * *

Sec. 26. USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS; EMERGENCY GENERATOR AND BOILER REPLACEMENT; ELEVATOR UPGRADE

If the Commissioner of Finance and Management offsets any capital funds appropriated in 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15 (b)(1)–(2) (emergency generator and boiler plant replacement; elevator upgrade) with federal funds, then any offset amounts shall be reused for future capital construction projects as part of the capital budget process.

* * * Sergeant at Arms * * *

Sec. 27. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 69, Sec. 15b, as added by 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 162, Sec. 8, is amended to read:

Sec. 15b. SERGEANT AT ARMS

The sum of $100,000.00 is appropriated in FY 2025 to the Sergeant at Arms for the following projects:

(1) the replacement of State House cafeteria furnishings; and

(2) the purchase and installation at the State House of an X-ray machine designed to screen baggage.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 28. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

SEN. WENDY K. HARRISON
SEN. ROBERT PLUNKETT
SEN. RUSSELL H. INGALLS
Committee on the part of the Senate

REP. ALICE M. EMMONS
REP. JAMES A.R. GREGOIRE
REP. TROY HEADRICK
Committee on the part of the House

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate accept and adopt the report of the Committee of Conference?, was decided in the affirmative.

Report of Committee of Conference Accepted and Adopted on the Part of the Senate

H. 488.

Senator Westman, for the Committee of Conference, submitted the following report:

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The Committee of Conference to which were referred the disagreeing votes of the two Houses upon House bill entitled:

An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.

Respectfully reports that it has met and considered the same and recommends that the House accede to the Senate's proposals of amendment and that the bill be further amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * Transportation Program Adopted as Amended; Definitions * * *

Sec. 1. TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM ADOPTED; DEFINITIONS

(a) Adoption. The Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program appended to the Agency of Transportation's proposed fiscal year 2026 budget, as amended by this act, is adopted to the extent federal, State, and local funds are available.

(b) Definitions. As used in this act, unless otherwise indicated:

(1) "Agency" means the Agency of Transportation.

(2) "Candidate project" means a project approved by the General Assembly that is not anticipated to have significant expenditures for preliminary engineering or right-of-way expenditures, or both, during the budget year and funding for construction is not anticipated within a predictable time frame.

(3) "Development and evaluation (D&E) project" means a project approved by the General Assembly that is anticipated to have preliminary engineering expenditures or right-of-way expenditures, or both, during the budget year and that the Agency is committed to delivering to construction on a timeline driven by priority and available funding.

(4) "Electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE)" and "electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public" have the same meanings as in 30 V.S.A. § 201.

(5) "Front-of-book project" means a project approved by the General Assembly that is anticipated to have construction expenditures during the budget year or the following three years, or both, with expected expenditures shown over four years.

(6) "Mileage-based user fee" or "MBUF" means a fee for vehicle use of the public road system with distance, stated in miles, as the measure of use.

(7) "Plug-in electric vehicle (PEV)," "plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV)," and "battery electric vehicle (BEV)" have the same meanings as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(85).

(8) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Transportation.

(9) "TIB funds" means monies deposited in the Transportation Infrastructure Bond Fund in accordance with 19 V.S.A. § 11f.

(10) The table heading "As Proposed" means the Proposed Transportation Program referenced in subsection (a) of this section; the table heading "As Amended" means the amendments as made by this act; the table heading "Change" means the difference obtained by subtracting the "As Proposed" figure from the "As Amended" figure; the terms "change" or "changes" in the text refer to the project- and program-specific amendments, the aggregate sum of which equals the net "Change" in the applicable table heading; and "State" in any tables amending authorizations indicates that the source of funds is State monies in the Transportation Fund, unless otherwise specified.

* * * Summary of Transportation Investments * * *

Sec. 2. FISCAL YEAR 2026 TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS INTENDED TO REDUCE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, REDUCE FOSSIL FUEL USE, AND SAVE VERMONT HOUSEHOLDS MONEY

This act includes the State's fiscal year 2026 transportation investments intended to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, reduce fossil fuel use, and save Vermont households money in furtherance of the policies articulated in 19 V.S.A. § 10b and the goals of the Comprehensive Energy Plan and the Vermont Climate Action Plan and to satisfy the Executive and Legislative Branches' commitments to the Paris Agreement climate goals. In fiscal year 2026, these efforts will include the following:

(1) Park and Ride Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $2,435,740.00, which will fund two construction projects to create new park-and-ride facilities, the construction of improvements to two existing park-and-ride facilities, funding for a municipal park-and-ride grant program, and paving projects for existing park-and-ride facilities. This year's Park and Ride Program will create 60 new State-owned spaces. Specific additions and improvements include:

(A) Manchester—construction of 50 new spaces; and

(B) Sharon—design and construction of 10 new spaces.

(2) Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure, including local match, of $21,879,965.00, which will fund 33 bike and pedestrian construction projects; 17 bike and pedestrian design, right-of-way, or design and right-of way projects for construction in

future fiscal years; and 10 scoping studies. The construction projects include the creation, improvement, or rehabilitation of walkways, sidewalks, shared-use paths, bike paths, and cycling lanes. Projects are funded in Arlington, Bakersfield, Bennington, Bethel, Brattleboro, Bristol, Burke, Burlington, Castleton, Chester, Danville, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Greensboro, Hardwick, Hartford, Highgate, Hinesburg, Huntington, Hyde Park, Irasburg, Jericho, Lyndonville, Middlebury, Montpelier, Moretown, Newfane, Newport City, Northfield, Pawlet, Randolph, Royalton, Rutland City, Rutland Town, Sheffield, Shelburne, Sheldon, South Burlington, Springfield, St. Albans City, St. Albans Town, Swanton, Wallingford, Waterbury, West Rutland, Williston, Wilmington, and Windsor. This act also provides funding for:

(A) some of Local Motion's operation costs to run the bike ferry on the Colchester Causeway, which is part of the Island Line Trail;

(B) a small-scale municipal bicycle and pedestrian grant program for projects to be selected during the fiscal year;

(C) projects funded through the Safe Routes to School Program; and

(D) community grants along the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT).

(3) Transportation Alternatives Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $6,471,054.00, including local funds, which will fund 17 transportation alternatives construction projects; 26 transportation alternatives design, right-of-way, or design and right-of-way projects; and eight scoping studies. Of these 51 projects, 20 involve environmental mitigation related to clean water or stormwater concerns, or both clean water and stormwater concerns, and 32 involve bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Projects are funded in Athens, Barre City, Bennington, Brandon, Brattleboro, Bridgewater, Bristol, Burke, Burlington, Castleton, Derby, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Fairlee, Ferrisburgh, Grafton, Guilford, Hartford, Hinesburg, Hyde Park, Jericho, Londonderry, Lyndon, Montgomery, Newark, Proctor, Rockingham, Rutland City, Shoreham, South Burlington, Springfield, St. Albans Town, Swanton, Tinmouth, Warren, Williston, and Wilmington.

(4) Public Transit Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $52,695,234.00 for public transit uses throughout the State. Included in the authorization are:

(A) Go! Vermont, with an authorization of $380,000.00. This authorization supports transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, including the State's Trip Planner and commuter services, to promote the use of carpools and vanpools.

(B) Mobility and Transportation Innovations (MTI) Grant Program, with an authorization of $340,000.00, which includes $315,000.00 in federal

funds. This authorization continues to support projects that improve both mobility and access to services for transit-dependent Vermonters, reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

(5) Rail Program. This act provides for a fiscal year expenditure of $61,887,348.00, including local funds and $31,894,436.00 in federal funds, for intercity passenger rail service, including funding for the Ethan Allen Express and Vermonter Amtrak services, and rail infrastructure that supports freight rail as well. Moving freight by rail instead of trucks lowers greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75 percent, on average.

* * * Rail Program; Technical Correction * * *

Sec. 3. RAIL PROGRAM

(a) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Rail the following project is deleted: Barre–Berlin–Montpelier 04-9038–WACR Subsidy.

(b) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Rail, the following project is added: Hartford HRRD(1) 25G002–White River Junction Depot Repairs.

(c) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Rail, spending authority for Hartford HRRD(1) 25G002–White River Junction Depot Repairs is authorized as follows:

FY26	As Proposed	As Amended	Change
Other	0	260,000	260,000
Total	0	260,000	260,000
Sources of funds			
State	0	260,000	260,000
Total	0	260,000	260,000

* * * Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters * * *

Sec. 4. TOWN HIGHWAY NON-FEDERAL DISASTERS

(a) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters, spending is authorized as follows:

FY26	As Proposed	As Amended	Change
Grants	1,150,000	1,150,000	0
Total	1,150,000	1,150,000	0

Sources of funds

State	1,150,000	0	-1,150,000
Other	0	1,150,000	1,150,000
Total	1,150,000	1,150,000	0

(b) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Transportation Program for Town Highway Non-Federal Disasters, the following footnote is added: "Other funds of $1,150,000 are amounts appropriated from the PILOT Special Fund established pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3709."

* * * State and Federal Funding Updates * * *

Sec. 5. STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING; MILEAGE BASED USER FEE; UPDATES

(a) On or before September 30, 2025 and December 15, 2025, the Secretary of Transportation shall provide the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee with a briefing on the status of State Transportation Fund revenues and federal funding for the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program, funding-related impacts on the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program, and the Agency's progress in designing the mileage-based user fee. The briefing shall include:

(1) a summary of federal funding that has been received to date, federal funding that is anticipated later in the State fiscal year, federal funding that is delayed, and federal funding that has been reduced or subject to rescission;

(2) a summary of the Transportation Fund revenues to date in State fiscal year 2026;

(3) a summary of the impacts on the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program that are caused by changes in State Transportation Fund revenues from the consensus forecast or delays or reductions in federal funding;

(4) a summary of any legislative action that may be necessary to address reductions in State revenues or federal funding;

(5) a summary of the status of State and federal funding for the design of the mileage-based user fee pursuant to the provisions of 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 62, Secs. 27–29, as amended by Sec. 17 of this act; and

(6) the Agency's progress in designing the mileage-based user fee.

(b) Upon becoming aware of a significant change in State revenues or a reduction in federal funding, rescission of federal grants, or delay of anticipated federal funding that will impact the Agency's ability to carry out

significant portions of the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program, the Secretary of Transportation may request that the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee meet within 14 days to review the Agency's plan to address the reduction in funding.

(c) In the event of a decrease in overall State or federal funding for the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program that is in excess of four percent, the Secretary shall submit to the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee a written report detailing the impact of the decrease on projects that are in the 2026 Transportation Program.

* * * Relinquishment of Vermont Route 36 in the Town of St. Albans * * *

Sec. 6. RELINQUISHMENT OF VERMONT ROUTE 36 IN THE TOWN OF ST. ALBANS

Pursuant to 19 V.S.A. § 15(a)(2), the General Assembly authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to enter into an agreement with the Town of St. Albans to relinquish a segment of the State highway in the Town of St. Albans known as Vermont Route 36. The segment authorized to be relinquished begins at mile marker 0.00, just east of the "Black Bridge" (B2), and continues 14,963 feet (approximately 2.834 miles) easterly to mile marker 2.834, where Vermont Route 36 meets the boundary of the City of St. Albans, and includes the 0.106-mile westbound section of Vermont Route 36 and approaches at the entrance to the St. Albans Bay Town Park.

* * * State-Owned Railroads; Rail Trails * * *

Sec. 7. 5 V.S.A. chapter 58 is redesignated to read:

CHAPTER 58. ~~STATE ACQUISITION OF~~ STATE-OWNED RAILROADS AND RAIL TRAILS

Sec. 8. 5 V.S.A. § 3408 is amended to read:

§ 3408. RAILBANKING; NOTIFICATION

(a) If the Secretary finds that the continued operation of any State-owned railroad property is not economically feasible under present conditions, ~~he or she~~ the Secretary may place the line in railbanked status after giving advance notice of ~~such~~ the planned railbanking to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation when the General Assembly is in session, and when the General Assembly is not in session, to the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee. The Agency, on behalf of the State, shall continue to hold the right-of-way of a railbanked line for reactivation of railroad service or for other public purposes not inconsistent with future reactivation of railroad service. ~~Such~~ The railbanking shall not be treated, for purposes of any law or rule of law, as an abandonment of the use of the rights-of-way for railroad purposes.

* * *

(c)(1) The Secretary may, after consulting with municipalities, adopt rules consistent with the provisions of section 3408a of this chapter governing the interim trail use of State-owned railroad rights-of-way that have been placed in railbanked status.

(2) Signs indicating the rules shall be conspicuously posted in or near all areas affected.

(3) Any person who violates ~~these~~ rules adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to a penalty of not more than $300.00.

Sec. 9. 5 V.S.A. § 3408a is added to read:

§ 3408a. USE OF RAIL TRAILS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Rail trail" means the right-of-way of a State-owned railroad line that has been authorized for railbanking and interim trail use pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d) or section 3408 of this chapter.

(2) "Trail sponsor" means the Agency of Transportation in the case of a rail trail maintained by the Agency or the municipality in the case of a rail trail maintained by a municipality.

(b) Use of rail trails. The following acts are prohibited within a rail trail right-of-way:

(1) Throwing, dropping, or discarding bottles, cans, paper, garbage, rubbish, sewage, or other material of any kind.

(2) Cutting, mutilating, or removing any tree, shrub, flower, plant, top soil, or sod or attempting to do so.

(3) Injury, defacement, removal, or destruction of the surface of the rail trail or a rail trail's structures, appurtenances, recreation facilities, or property.

(4) Except as authorized by the trail sponsor, erecting, placing, or displaying any advertising materials, posters, or placards of any kind. This prohibition shall not apply to official signs erected by the trail sponsor.

(5) Except as authorized by the trail sponsor, entering or remaining on the rail trail for the purpose of:

(A) selling, hiring, or leasing any goods or services; or

(B) distributing samples, pamphlets, or advertising materials, except for official information authorized by the trail sponsor.

(6) Parades, demonstrations, picnics, games, entertainment, or organizations, except at times and locations approved by the trail sponsor.

(7) Harassing or molesting wildlife, except for fishing.

(8) Using or discharging any firearms or other weapons or fireworks, except by a person authorized by the trail sponsor or as otherwise permitted by law.

(9) Igniting fires for any purpose, except in fireplaces or firepits at locations designated by the trail sponsor or for trail maintenance purposes.

(10) Soliciting alms or contributions.

(11) Use of motorized vehicles, except for:

(A) maintenance purposes;

(B) snowmobiles, subject to applicable State rules, when the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. has declared the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System officially open;

(C) Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) utilized by an individual with a disability as permitted by the Agency's Rail Trail Accessibility Policy;

(D) electric bicycles as permitted pursuant to applicable State rules; and

(E) other circumstances that the trail sponsor determines are appropriate.

(12) Overnight camping, except at areas designated for that purpose by the trail sponsor.

(c) Penalty. Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (b) of this section shall be subject to a civil penalty pursuant to subdivision 3408(c)(3) of this chapter.

* * * Transportation Board * * *

Sec. 10. 19 V.S.A. § 3 is amended to read:

§ 3. TRANSPORTATION BOARD; CREATION; MEMBERS

~~A transportation board~~ The Transportation Board is formed to be attached to the Agency of Transportation. There shall be seven members of the Board, appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Governor shall so far as is possible appoint Board members whose interests and expertise lie in various areas of the transportation field. The Governor shall appoint the ~~chair~~ Chair, and the Board may vote to appoint other officers.

The members of the Board shall be appointed for terms of three years. Board members may be appointed for two additional three-year terms but shall not be eligible for further reappointment. ~~No~~ Not more than four members of the Board shall belong to the same political party. No member of the Board shall:

* * *

Sec. 11. 19 V.S.A. § 5 is amended to read:

§ 5. TRANSPORTATION BOARD; POWERS AND DUTIES

* * *

(d) Specific duties and responsibilities. The Board shall:

* * *

(4) provide appellate review, when requested in writing, regarding legal disputes in the execution of contracts awarded by the Agency or by municipalities cooperating with the Agency to advance projects in the State's Transportation Program, except that the Agency shall provide appellate review relating to bids and the competitive negotiation process under 19 V.S.A. § 10a;

(5) provide appellate review, when requested in writing, of decisions of the Secretary in administering the provisions of Title 24, relating to ~~junkyards~~ salvage yards;

* * *

* * * Green Mountain Transit Authority * * *

Sec. 12. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 801 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 801. GREEN MOUNTAIN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

* * *

§ 2. AREA OF OPERATION

(a) The area of operation shall be the urbanized area of Chittenden~~, Franklin, Grand Isle, and Washington Counties and the Towns of Orange, Washington, and Williamstown. The area of operation shall include Addison and Caledonia Counties and the Towns of Orange County other than Orange, Washington, and Williamstown, but only for the provision of commuter services. The area of operation shall include Lamoille County, but only for the provision of published scheduled services~~ County as established by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Green Mountain Transit Authority may operate service outside the urbanized area of Chittenden County with approval from the Agency of Transportation. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent other transit providers from offering transit connecting to the

urbanized area of Chittenden County, or providing on demand services in that area, with the approval of the Agency of Transportation.

* * *

§ 10. IMPLEMENTATION

* * *

~~(c) Immediately upon joining the Authority, the municipality shall appoint two commissioners as provided herein. The initial terms of the commissioners of the initial members shall be arranged by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission so that the terms of approximately one-third of the commissioners shall expire in each year. The initial terms of commissioners from municipalities joining after March 7, 1973, shall be set by the Board of Commissioners.~~

* * *

* * * Town Highways * * *

Sec. 13. 19 V.S.A. § 306 is amended to read:

§ 306. APPROPRIATION; STATE AID FOR TOWN HIGHWAYS

(a) General State aid to town highways.

(1) An annual appropriation to class 1, 2, and 3 town highways shall be made. This appropriation shall increase over the previous fiscal year's appropriation by the same percentage change as the following, whichever is less, or shall remain at the previous fiscal year's appropriation if either of the following are negative or zero:

(A) the percentage change of the Agency's total appropriations funded by Transportation Fund revenues, excluding appropriations ~~for town highways~~ under this subsection (a) and subsections (e) and (h) of this section, for the most recently closed fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year immediately preceding the most recently closed fiscal year; or

* * *

(e) State aid for town highway structures.

(1) There shall be an annual appropriation for grants to municipalities for maintenance (including actions to extend life expectancy) and for construction of bridges and culverts; for maintenance and construction of other structures, including causeways and retaining walls, intended to preserve the integrity of the traveled portion of class 1, 2, and 3 town highways; and for alternatives that eliminate the need for a bridge, culvert, or other structure, such as the construction or reconstruction of a highway, the purchase of parcels of land that would be landlocked by closure of a bridge, the payment

of damages for loss of highway access, and the substitution of other means of access. This appropriation shall increase over the previous fiscal year's appropriation by the same percentage change as the following, whichever is less, or shall remain at the previous fiscal year's appropriation if either of the following are negative or zero:

(A) the percentage change in the Agency's total appropriations funded by Transportation Fund revenues, excluding appropriations under this subsection (e) and subsections (a) and (h) of this section, for the most recently closed fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year immediately preceding the most recently closed fiscal year; or

(B) the percentage change in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

(2) For purposes of subdivision (1)(B) of this subsection, the percentage change in the CPI-U is calculated by determining the increase or decrease, to the nearest one-tenth of a percent, in the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year one year prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made compared to the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year two years prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made.

(3) Each fiscal year, the Agency shall approve qualifying projects with a total estimated State share cost of $7,200,000.00 at a minimum as new grants. ~~The Agency's proposed appropriation for the Program shall take into account the estimated amount of qualifying invoices submitted to the Agency with respect to project grants approved in prior years but not yet completed as well as with respect to new project grants to be approved in the fiscal year~~ Beginning with State fiscal year 2027, the minimum total estimated State share cost for the approved grants shall increase over the prior fiscal year's minimum total estimated State share cost by the same percentage as the appropriation for State aid for town highway structures is increased pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(4) In a given fiscal year, should expenditures in the Town Highway Structures Program exceed the amount appropriated, the Agency shall advise the Governor of the need to request a supplemental appropriation from the General Assembly to fund the additional project cost, provided that the Agency has previously committed to completing those projects.

~~(3)~~(5) Funds received as grants for State aid for town highway structures may be used by a municipality to satisfy a portion of the matching requirements for federal earmarks, subject to subsection 309b(c) of this title.

* * *

(h) Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program.

(1) There shall be an annual appropriation for grants to municipalities for resurfacing, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of paved or unpaved class 2 town highways. ~~However, municipalities~~ Municipalities that have no State highways or class 1 town highways within their borders may use the grants for such activities with respect to both class 2 and class 3 town highways. ~~Each fiscal year, the Agency shall approve qualifying projects with a total estimated State share cost of $8,600,000.00 at a minimum as new grants. The Agency's proposed appropriation for the Program shall take into account the estimated amount of qualifying invoices submitted to the Agency with respect to project grants approved in prior years but not yet completed as well as with respect to new project grants to be approved in the fiscal year.~~ This appropriation shall increase over the previous fiscal year's appropriation by the same percentage change as the following, whichever is less, or shall remain at the previous fiscal year's appropriation if either of the following are negative or zero:

(A) the percentage change in the Agency's total appropriations funded by Transportation Fund revenues, excluding appropriations under this subsection (h) and subsections (a) and (e) of this section, for the most recently closed fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year immediately preceding the most recently closed fiscal year; or

(B) the percentage change in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

(2) For purposes of subdivision (1)(B) of this subsection, the percentage change in the CPI-U is calculated by determining the increase or decrease, to the nearest one-tenth of a percent, in the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year one year prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made compared to the CPI-U for the month ending on June 30 in the calendar year two years prior to the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriation will be made.

(3) Each fiscal year, the Agency shall approve qualifying projects with a total estimated State share cost of $8,600,000.00 at a minimum as new grants. Beginning with State fiscal year 2027, the minimum total estimated State share cost for the approved grants shall increase over the prior fiscal year's minimum total estimated State share cost by the same percentage as the appropriation for the Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program is increased pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(4) In a given fiscal year, should expenditures in the Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program exceed the amount appropriated, the Agency shall advise the Governor of the need to request a supplemental appropriation from

the General Assembly to fund the additional project cost, provided that the Agency has previously committed to completing those projects. Funds received as grants for State aid under the Class 2 Town Highway Roadway Program may be used by a municipality to satisfy a portion of the matching requirements for federal earmarks, subject to subsection 309b(c) of this title.

* * *

Sec. 14. CANCELLATION OF LOCALLY MANAGED PROJECTS; PROCESS; IMPROVEMENTS; REPORT

The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Transportation Board, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall engage a consultant to examine the requirements of 19 V.S.A. § 309c, cancellation of locally managed projects, to evaluate the obligations, risks, and benefits imposed by the provisions of that section on the State and the local sponsor of a locally managed project and to identify potential changes to the provisions of that section to ensure that State and federal transportation funding resources are appropriately administered. The Agency shall, on or before January 15, 2026, submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the consultant's findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

Sec. 15. MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION ASSETS; ASSESSMENT; FUNDING NEEDS; REPORT

(a) The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall engage a consultant to:

(1) review current municipal practices relating to planning for ongoing maintenance, upgrades, and replacement of municipal transportation assets, including roads, pavement, bridges, culverts, signals, signage, highway equipment, and highway facilities;

(2) develop a framework for a system to assess the current condition of municipal highway networks and the potential impacts of improvements to or degradation of those networks on the State's transportation system;

(3) develop a prioritization process to direct State funding to the repair, upgrade, or replacement of specific municipal transportation assets based on the need for such work in the context of the asset's role in the State and regional highway networks; and

(4) identify and recommend potential statutory changes to implement the assessment framework developed pursuant to subdivision (2) of this

subsection and the prioritization process developed pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(b) The Agency of Transportation shall, not later than January 15, 2027, submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the consultant's findings and recommendations for legislative action.

Sec. 16. STATE TOWN HIGHWAY AID; MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAMS; EFFICIENCIES; IMPROVEMENTS; REPORT

(a) The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, shall engage a consultant to evaluate the State's Town Highway Aid and municipal grant programs administered by the Agency to identify potential efficiencies and improvements related to the administration of Town Highway Aid and municipal grant programs. The consultant shall evaluate the various funding streams authorized pursuant to 19 V.S.A. § 306 as well as programs administered through the Agency's Municipal Assistance Bureau, including the Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, Municipal Mitigation Program, Municipal Park and Ride Program, Better Roads Program, Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program, and Grants in Aid.

(b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Agency shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the consultant's findings and any recommendations for legislative or administrative actions to improve or increase the efficiency of the Town Highway Aid and municipal grant programs.

* * * Mileage-Based User Fee * * *

Sec. 17. 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 62, Secs. 27–29 are amended to read:

Sec. 27. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE LEGISLATIVE INTENT

It is the intent of the General Assembly for the State:

(1) to start collecting a mileage-based user fee from all battery-electric vehicles registered in Vermont starting on ~~July 1, 2025, which is expected to be the first day of the first fiscal year when more than 15 percent of new pleasure car registrations in the State are plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs)~~ or before January 1, 2027 subject to sufficient funding being available for implementation;

(2) to ~~start subjecting~~ subject plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) that are a pleasure car to an ~~increased~~ annual or a biennial ~~registration~~ electric vehicle infrastructure fee starting on ~~July~~ January 1, 2025, and that PHEVs shall not be subject to a mileage-based user fee;

(3) to ~~work towards~~ examine collecting a fee on ~~kWhs~~ electricity that ~~are~~ is dispensed through certain electric vehicle supply equipment available to the public so as to supplant lost ~~gas~~ fuel tax revenue from out-of-state PEVs traveling in Vermont; and

(4) to not commence collecting a mileage-based user fee until ~~such~~ the General Assembly has enacted legislation that establishes the amount of the fee and codifies any necessary authorizing language ~~is codified~~ in statute and that legislation becomes effective.

Sec. 28. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE AUTHORIZATION

(a) Within the Agency of Transportation's Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Program for Environmental Policy and Sustainability, the Agency of Transportation, including the Department of Motor Vehicles, is authorized to apply for and accept a competitive federal Strategic Innovation for Revenue Collection grant established pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58 (IIJA), Sec. 13001, with up to $350,000.00 in Transportation Fund monies authorized for the nonfederal match in fiscal year 2024 and ~~a to-be-determined amount for the nonfederal match in subsequent fiscal years~~ up to $350,000.00 in Transportation Fund monies authorized for the nonfederal match in fiscal year 2025.

(b) ~~As permitted under federal regulations and grant terms, the~~ The Agency shall utilize ~~grant monies to design~~ State or federal funding, or both, authorized to be used for the purpose of designing a mileage-based user fee that is consistent with Secs. 27 and 29 of this act.

(c) Subject to State procurement requirements and the availability of sufficient funding, the Agency may retain one or more contractors or consultants, or both, to assist with the design of a process to commence collecting a mileage-based user fee on ~~July 1, 2025~~ January 1, 2027.

Sec. 29. MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE DESIGN

(a) Definitions. As used in Secs. 27–30 of this act:

(1) "Account manager" means a person under contract with the Agency of Transportation or Department of Motor Vehicles to administer and manage the mileage-based user fee.

(2) "Annual vehicle miles traveled" means the total number of miles that a BEV is driven between annual inspections as reported ~~by an inspection mechanic~~ to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

(3) "Mileage-based user fee" means the total amount that an owner or lessee of a BEV registered in Vermont owes the State and is calculated by:

(A) multiplying the mileage-based user fee rate by the annual vehicle miles traveled ~~or,~~;

(B) in the case of a terminating event, by multiplying the mileage-based user fee rate by the vehicle miles traveled between the last Vermont annual inspection and the terminating event; or

(C) in the absence of a recorded odometer reading during the mileage reporting period, by multiplying the mileage-based user fee by the 98th percentile of estimated annual vehicle miles traveled for a pleasure car in Vermont.

(4) "Mileage-based user fee rate" means the per-mile usage fee charged to the owner or lessee of a BEV registered in Vermont.

(5) "Mileage reporting period" means the time between annual inspections or the time between ~~an~~ the most recent annual inspection and a terminating event.

(6) "Pleasure car" has the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(28).

(7) "Plug-in electric vehicle (PEV)" has the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(85) and includes battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), which have the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(85)(A) and (B).

(8) "Terminating event" means either the registering of a BEV that had been registered in Vermont in a different state or a change in ownership or lesseeship of the BEV, or both.

(b) Commencement date. The Agency shall design a process to collect a mileage-based user fee for miles driven by a BEV registered in Vermont to commence collecting revenue on ~~July 1, 2025~~ January 1, 2027.

(c) Covered vehicles. The Agency shall design a process to collect a mileage-based user fee based on the annual vehicle miles traveled by BEVs registered in the State.

(d) Imposition of a mileage-based user fee. The Agency shall design a process to collect a mileage-based user fee from the owner or lessee of a BEV registered in Vermont for each mileage reporting period ~~within 60 days after the Vermont annual inspection~~ on an annual, quarterly, or monthly basis selected by the owner or lessee and reconciled upon renewal of the vehicle registration or within 60 days after a terminating event that closes the mileage reporting period.

Sec. 18. INTENT

It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

(1) the mileage-based user fee for a BEV pleasure car be approximately equivalent to the average amount collected by the State in fuel tax revenue from the use of a non-PEV pleasure car registered in Vermont and the average amount collected by the State in fuel tax revenue and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure fee from the use of a PHEV pleasure car; and

(2) that the mileage-based user fee for BEV pleasure cars will be an interim step towards gradually expanding the mileage-based user fee to all motor vehicles upon elimination of the State fuel taxes for motor vehicles.

* * * Authority to Transfer Monies in State Fiscal Year 2026 * * *

Sec. 19. AUTHORIZATION TO USE MONIES TO CONTINUE PARTNERSHIP WITH DRIVE ELECTRIC VERMONT IN STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026

In State fiscal year 2026, the Secretary of Transportation is authorized to spend up to $325,000.00 in remaining monies appropriated to the Electrify Your Fleet Program in State Fiscal Year 2024 to continue the Agency of Transportation's partnership with Drive Electric Vermont. The monies shall be used for programs and activities that support increased ownership and use of PEVs in the State through:

(1) stakeholder coordination;

(2) consumer education and outreach;

(3) infrastructure development; and

(4) the provision of technical assistance and support to Vermont municipalities and Vermont businesses desiring to electrify their vehicle fleets.

* * * Consideration of Vehicle Miles Traveled in Project Planning * * *

Sec. 20. 19 V.S.A. § 1 is amended to read:

§ 1. DEFINITIONS

As used in this title:

* * *

(26) "Vehicle miles traveled" means the estimated sum of the miles traveled by all motor vehicle trips within a specific area during a calendar year.

Sec. 21. 19 V.S.A. § 10b is amended to read:

§ 10b. STATEMENT OF POLICY; GENERAL

(a) The Agency shall be the responsible agency of the State for the development of transportation policy. It shall develop a mission statement to reflect:

(1) that State transportation policy shall be to encompass, coordinate, and integrate all modes of transportation and to consider complete streets, as defined in section 2401 of this title, principles; and

(2) the need for transportation projects that will improve the State's economic infrastructure~~,~~; ~~as well as the~~ use ~~of~~ resources in efficient, coordinated, integrated, cost-effective, and environmentally sound ways~~,~~; reduce vehicle miles traveled within the State when feasible; and that will be consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP) issued under 30 V.S.A. § 202b.

* * *

Sec. 22. 19 V.S.A. § 10c is amended to read:

§ 10c. STATEMENT OF POLICY; HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES

* * *

(c) In choosing between the improvement of an existing highway and complete reconstruction, the Agency shall weigh the following factors:

* * *

(9) the impact on the historic, scenic, and aesthetic values of the municipality, as interpreted by the municipality, in which the highway is located; ~~and~~

(10) if it is a forest highway under federal jurisdiction; and

(11) opportunities to reduce vehicle miles traveled or otherwise reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to the highway.

* * *

Sec. 23. 19 V.S.A. § 10i is amended to read:

§ 10i. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

* * *

(c) Transportation Program. The Transportation Program shall be developed in a fiscally responsible manner to accomplish the following objectives:

* * *

(3) strengthening the economy, protecting the quality of the natural environment, and improving Vermonters' quality of life; ~~and~~

(4) achieving the recommendations of the CEP; and

(5) striving to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions.

* * *

* * * Medical Transports * * *

Sec. 24. PUBLIC TRANSIT DEMAND RESPONSE VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS; GRANTS; APPROPRIATION

(a) The Agency of Transportation is authorized to utilize up to $600,000.00 in one-time funds appropriated from the Transportation Fund to the Agency of Transportation in fiscal year 2026 for the purpose of providing grants to public transit agencies to hire volunteer coordinators. Volunteer coordinators hired with grants provided pursuant to this section shall be responsible for the identification, recruitment, and retention of volunteers to provide transportation services to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

(b) The Agency shall, to the extent possible, seek to provide grants to public transit providers in a manner that is geographically balanced and ensures the distribution of volunteer coordinators throughout the State.

(c) Not later than December 15, 2026, the Agency, in consultation with public transit agencies that receive grants pursuant to this section, shall submit a written report the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the extent to which grants issued pursuant to this section resulted in an increase in volunteer capacity in the State.

Sec. 25. MEDICAID NON-EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

(a) In fiscal year 2026, prior to executing a contract to provide Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation services, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall provide to the Joint Fiscal Committee a detailed analysis outlining:

(1) any potential degradation or expansion of service to eligible individuals under a new contract to provide Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation services;

(2) any federal requirements contained in the request for proposals for the new contract; and

(3) the outcome of the consultation between the Department and the Agency of Transportation pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(b) The Department shall consult with the Agency of Transportation prior to developing the request for proposals for a new contract to provide Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation services.

Sec. 26. VOLUNTEERS PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES; BACKGROUND CHECKS; EXPANSION OF VOLUNTEER POOL; REPORT

(a) On or before July 15, 2025, the Department of Vermont Health Access shall commence meeting with the Vermont Public Transit Association, the Agency of Transportation, and, in the discretion of the Commissioner of Vermont Health Access, other stakeholders to identify potential, federally permissible opportunities to expand the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program's pool of volunteer drivers. As part of this work, the Department and Association shall collaborate to determine if there are specific classes of offenses that currently prevent volunteer drivers from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program.

(1) The Vermont Public Transit Association shall, to the extent possible, gather and provide to the Department anonymized information from its members regarding:

(A) the number of potential volunteers who were barred from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program due to a background check during the past year;

(B) which of the background checks currently required by the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program resulted in potential volunteers being barred from providing transportation services, broken out by percentage; and

(C) a summary of the offenses that resulted in potential volunteers being barred from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program, broken out by:

(i) the type of offense;

(ii) whether the offense was a felony or misdemeanor;

(iii) whether the offense was under State or federal law;

(iv) the percentage of potential volunteers who were barred from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program for each type of offense; and

(v) to the extent that it is possible to determine, the number of rides that could have been provided by the individuals barred under each type of offense.

(2) The Department shall utilize the information provided by the Association pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection to determine, to the extent possible, whether the identified offenses are:

(A) fraud-based or otherwise implicate potential Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse;

(B) an offense that otherwise bars an individual from providing transportation services through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program; or

(C) an offense that caused harm to an individual other than the offender, or otherwise negatively impacted the safety of the general public.

(b) The Department of Vermont Health Access and the Vermont Public Transit Association shall, on or before January 30, 2026, make themselves available to provide an update to the House Committees on Transportation and on Health Care and to the Senate Committees on Transportation and on Health and Welfare regarding the work performed pursuant to this section and opportunities that were identified to expand the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program's pool of volunteer drivers.

Sec. 27. VOLUNTEER DRIVERS; PUBLICITY; OUTREACH

(a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Vermont Public Transit Association, shall identify and pursue opportunities to communicate with the Vermont driving public regarding volunteer and community driver participation in the State's demand response transportation programs, including the Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities program and the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program. Outreach conducted pursuant to this section may include:

(1) invitations for individuals to voluntarily indicate their interest through the operator licensing and vehicle registration processes, subject to any data privacy requirements under State or federal law;

(2) notices or other public outreach placed on the Department's website or other internet-based platforms; and

(3) messaging by the Agency of Transportation on social media platforms, including providing links to informational resources provided by the Vermont Public Transit Association.

(b) The Department of Vermont Health Access shall develop informational materials related to eligibility for the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation program. The Department shall, in consultation with the Agency of Transportation and other relevant stakeholders, make the materials available to the public on the Department's website and other internet-based platforms.

Sec. 28. COORDINATION OF HEALTH CARE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES; WORKING GROUP; REPORT

(a) The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Commissioner of Vermont Health Access, shall convene a working group to improve the coordination of health care and transportation services in relation to individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs. The working group shall be composed of stakeholders identified by the Secretary in consultation with the Commissioner of Vermont Health Access, including representatives of the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, independent dialysis and methadone facilities, and the Vermont Public Transportation Association.

(b) The working group shall examine various options for improving the coordination of health care and transportation services, including:

(1) opportunities to coordinate the scheduling of health care appointments and treatments to maximize the use of shared rides; and

(2) opportunities to improve communication between the public transit agencies and health care providers to facilitate coordination of health care and transportation services for individuals enrolled in the State's demand response transportation programs.

(c) On or before January 15, 2026, the Secretary and Commissioner shall submit a written report to the House Committees on Transportation and on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Transportation and on Health and Welfare with the working group's findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

* * * Vehicle Identification Numbers for Certain Vehicles * * *

Sec. 29. ULTRA-LOW VOLUME VEHICLE MANUFACTURING; KIT-CARS; HOMEBUILT MOTOR VEHICLES; VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER; REPORT

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Secretary of Natural Resources and representatives of the ultra-low volume vehicle manufacturing industry in Vermont, shall examine processes for issuing vehicle identification numbers to ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles and opportunities to facilitate the registration of such vehicles.

(2) As used in this section:

(A) "Homebuilt motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle that is constructed or assembled by an individual from new or used parts, or both, and is not a kit-car.

(B) "Kit-car" means a motor vehicle that is constructed by an individual from a manufactured kit that includes some or all parts and components necessary to construct the motor vehicle.

(C) "Ultra-low volume motor vehicle" means a vehicle that is manufactured for sale by a manufacturer whose annual worldwide production is not more than 325 motor vehicles.

(b) In preparing the report, the Commissioner shall:

(1) examine how other states address motor vehicle emissions requirements for ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles;

(2) identify a cost-effective process for certifying the safety of ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles; and

(3) develop a streamlined process to provide State Vehicle Identification Numbers to ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles.

(c) On or before January 15, 2026, the Commissioner shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the Commissioner's findings and identifying any legislative action necessary to enable the issuance of vehicle identification numbers to and registration of ultra-low volume motor vehicles, kit-cars, and homebuilt motor vehicles.

* * * Railroad Rights-of-Way * * *

Sec. 30. 5 V.S.A. § 3410 is added to read:

§ 3410. RAILROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY; COMMUNICATIONS LEASES; ANNUAL REPORT

Annually, on or before December 15, the Secretary shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation regarding the most recent fiscal year's lease revenues for State-owned railroad rights-of-way related to:

(1) wired or wireless telephone infrastructure located in the rights-of-way;

(2) broadband infrastructure located in the rights-of-way; and

(3) leases of the rights-of-way for purposes other than the operation of the railroads within the rights-of-way.

Sec. 31. AVAILABILITY OF STATE-OWNED RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR COMMUNICATIONS LEASES

In order to expand the use of State-owned railroad rights-of-way, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Service, shall provide information to communications companies regarding the availability for lease of property located in State-owned railroad rights-of-way.

* * * Dig Safe * * *

Sec. 32. 30 V.S.A. § 7006 is amended to read:

§ 7006. MARKING OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITIES

A company notified in accordance with section 7005 of this title shall, within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, ~~of~~ after the receipt of the notice, mark the approximate location of its underground utility facilities in the area of the proposed excavation activities; provided, however, if the company advises the person that the proposed excavation area is of such length or size that the company cannot reasonably mark all of the underground utility facilities within ~~48~~ 72 hours, the person shall notify the company of the specific locations in which the excavation activities will first occur and the company shall mark facilities in those locations within ~~48~~ 72 hours and the remaining facilities within a reasonable time thereafter. A company and an excavator may by agreement fix a later time for the company's marking of the facilities, provided the marking is made prior to excavation activities. For the purposes of this chapter, the approximate location of underground facilities shall be marked with stakes, paint, or other physical means as designated by the Commission.

Sec. 33. 30 V.S.A. § 7006a is amended to read:

§ 7006a. MAINTENANCE OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITY MARKINGS

After a company has marked its underground facilities in accordance with section 7006 of this title, the excavator shall be responsible for maintenance of the designated markings. In the event said markings are obliterated, destroyed, or removed, the person engaged in excavation activities shall notify the System referred to in section 7002 of this title that remarking is needed. The System shall then notify all member companies whose facilities may be affected. ~~The~~ Each applicable company shall within ~~48~~ 72 hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, following receipt of the notice, remark the location of its underground utility facilities.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 34. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 32 and 33 (dig safe) shall take effect on passage.

(b) The remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

SEN. RICHARD A. WESTMAN
SEN. ANDREW J. PERCHLIK
SEN. REBECCA E. WHITE
Committee on the part of the Senate

REP. MATTHEW E. WALKER
REP. TIMOTHY R. CORCORAN
REP. MOLLIE SULLIVAN BURKE
Committee on the part of the House

Thereupon, the question, Shall the Senate accept and adopt the report of the Committee of Conference?, was decided in the affirmative.

Rules Suspended; Bills Messaged

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

H. 494, H. 488.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 266.

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

An act relating to the 340B prescription drug pricing program.

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. 18 V.S.A. chapter 91, subchapter 6 is added to read:

Subchapter 6. 340B Drug Pricing Program

§ 4681. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "340B contract pharmacy" means a pharmacy that has a contract with a 340B covered entity to receive and dispense 340B drugs to the 340B covered entity's patients on the covered entity's behalf.

(2) "340B covered entity" means an entity participating or authorized to participate in the federal 340B drug pricing program, as described in 42 U.S.C. § 256b. The term includes a 340B covered entity's pharmacy.

(3) "340B drug" means a drug that has been subject to any offer for reduced prices by a manufacturer pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 256b and is purchased by a 340B covered entity.

(4) "Discount" means a reduction in the amount a 340B covered entity is charged for a 340B drug at the time of purchase.

(5) "Manufacturer" has the same meaning as in 26 V.S.A. § 2022.

(6) "Pharmacy" means a place licensed by the Vermont Board of Pharmacy at which drugs, chemicals, medicines, prescriptions, and poisons are compounded, dispensed, or sold at retail.

(7) "Pharmacy benefit manager" has the same meaning as in section 3602 of this title.

(8) "Rebate" means a discount in which the terms are fixed and are disclosed in writing to a 340B covered entity at the time of the initial purchase of the 340B drug to which the discount applies, but which discount is not applied at the time of purchase.

§ 4682. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST 340B ENTITIES PROHIBITED

(a) A manufacturer or its agent shall not deny, restrict, prohibit, or otherwise interfere with, directly or indirectly, the acquisition of a 340B drug by or delivery of a 340B drug to a 340B contract pharmacy on behalf of a 340B covered entity unless receipt by the 340B contract pharmacy is prohibited by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

(b) A manufacturer or its agent shall not directly or indirectly require a 340B covered entity to submit any claims, utilization, encounter, purchase, or other data as a condition for allowing the acquisition of a 340B drug by or delivery of a 340B drug to a 340B contract pharmacy unless the claims or utilization data sharing is required by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

(c) A manufacturer or its agent shall not interfere with the ability of a pharmacy contracted with a 340B covered entity to dispense 340B drugs to eligible patients of the 340B covered entity.

(d) A manufacturer or its agent shall offer or otherwise make available 340B drug pricing to a 340B covered entity or 340B contract pharmacy in the form of a discount at the time of purchase and shall not offer or otherwise make available 340B drug pricing in the form of a rebate.

§ 4683. MEDICAID UNAFFECTED

Nothing in this subchapter shall be deemed to apply to the Vermont Medicaid program as payor.

§ 4684. VIOLATIONS

(a) A 340B covered entity, 340B contract pharmacy, or other person injured by a manufacturer's or its agent's violation of this subchapter may bring an action in Superior Court for injunctive relief, compensatory and punitive damages, costs and reasonable attorney's fees, and other appropriate relief.

(b) A violation occurs each time a prohibited act is committed. For purposes of section 4682 of this subchapter, a prohibited act is defined as each package of 340B drugs that is subject to a discriminatory action by a manufacturer or its agent.

§ 4685. NO CONFLICT WITH FEDERAL LAW

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed or applied to conflict with or to be less restrictive than federal law for a person regulated by this subchapter.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 9406 is added to read:

§ 9406. REPORTING ON PARTICIPATION IN 340B DRUG PRICING PROGRAM

(a) Annually on or before January 31, each hospital participating in the federal 340B drug pricing program established by 42 U.S.C. § 256b shall submit to the Green Mountain Care Board, in a form and manner prescribed by the Board, a report detailing the hospital's participation in the program during the previous hospital fiscal year, which report shall be posted on the Green Mountain Care Board's website and which shall contain at least the following information:

(1)(A) For prescription drugs that the hospital or any entity acting on behalf of the hospital obtained through the 340B program and dispensed or administered to patients during the previous calendar year:

(i) the aggregated acquisition cost for all such prescription drugs; and

(ii) the aggregated payment amount that the hospital received for all such prescription drugs, with information reported separately for each of the following distribution channels:

(I) dispensed drugs from an in-house pharmacy;

(II) dispensed drugs from a contract pharmacy;

(III) administered drugs paid separately; and

(IV) administered drugs paid by bundled payments.

(B) For administered drugs for which payment was bundled with payment for other services, as set forth in subdivision (A)(ii)(IV) of this subdivision (1), the hospital shall estimate the payment amount by comparing the actual acquisition cost for a drug to the wholesale acquisition cost for that drug.

(2) The aggregated payment amount that the hospital made to pharmacies with which the hospital contracted to dispense drugs to its patients under the 340B program during the previous hospital fiscal year.

(3) The aggregated payment amount that the hospital made to any other outside vendor for managing, administering, or facilitating any aspect of the hospital's 340B drug program during the previous hospital fiscal year.

(4) A description of the ways in which the hospital uses revenue from its participation in the 340B program to benefit its community through programs and services funded in whole or in part by revenue from the 340B program, including services that support community access to care that the hospital could not continue without this revenue.

(5) A description of the hospital's internal review and oversight of its participation in the 340B program in compliance with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration's 340B program rules and guidance.

(b) In addition to the vendor information required pursuant to subdivision (a)(3) of this section, each hospital shall also provide to the Board a list of the names of all vendors that managed, administered, or facilitated any aspect of the hospital's 340B program during the previous calendar year, along with a brief description of the work performed by each vendor. The vendor information reported pursuant to this subsection shall be exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and shall be kept confidential, except that the Board shall provide the information to the Office of the Health Care Advocate, which shall not further disclose this confidential information.

Sec. 3. REPEAL

Sec. 2 (18 V.S.A. § 9406; reporting on participation in 340B drug pricing program) is repealed on January 1, 2031.

Sec. 4. 8 V.S.A. § 4089j is amended to read:

§ 4089j. RETAIL PHARMACIES; FILLING OF PRESCRIPTIONS

* * *

(d)(1) A health insurer or pharmacy benefit manager shall permit a participating network pharmacy to perform all pharmacy services within the lawful scope of the profession of pharmacy as set forth in 26 V.S.A. chapter 36.

* * *

(4) ~~A health insurer or pharmacy benefit manager shall not, by contract, written policy, or written procedure, require that a pharmacy designated by the health insurer or pharmacy benefit manager dispense a medication directly to a health care setting for a health care professional to administer to a patient.~~ [Repealed.]

* * *

Sec. 5. 8 V.S.A. § 4089j is amended to read:

§ 4089j. RETAIL PHARMACIES; FILLING OF PRESCRIPTIONS

* * *

(d)(1) A health insurer or pharmacy benefit manager shall permit a participating network pharmacy to perform all pharmacy services within the lawful scope of the profession of pharmacy as set forth in 26 V.S.A. chapter 36.

* * *

(4) ~~[Repealed.]~~ A health insurer or pharmacy benefit manager shall not, by contract, written policy, or written procedure, require that a pharmacy designated by the health insurer or pharmacy benefit manager dispense a medication directly to a health care setting for a health care professional to administer to a patient.

* * *

Sec. 6. GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD; WHITE BAGGING; REPORT

On or before January 15, 2029, the Green Mountain Care Board, in consultation with the Department of Financial Regulation, shall report to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare regarding the impact of the repeal of 8 V.S.A. § 4089j(d)(4) on hospital budgets, on health insurance premiums, and on health insurer solvency.

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) Sec. 5 (restoring language in 8 V.S.A. § 4089j(d)(4)) shall take effect on January 1, 2030.

(b) The remainder of this act shall take effect on passage, with the first report under Sec. 2 (18 V.S.A. § 9406) due on or before January 31, 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.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 167.

Senator Heffernan, for the Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

Reported that the bill ought to pass in concurrence.

Senator Watson, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, 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.

Message from the House No. 61

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 117. An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 98. An act relating to confirmatory adoptions and standby guardianships.

And has concurred therein.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to House proposal of amendment to Senate bill of the following title:

S. 50. An act relating to increasing the size of solar net metering projects that qualify for expedited registration.

And has concurred therein.

The Governor has informed the House that on May 13, 2025, he approved and signed bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 13. An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for community-based service providers.

H. 96. An act relating to increasing the monetary thresholds for certificates of need.

H. 206. An act relating to the Uniform Commercial Code.

H. 218. An act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund.

H. 463. An act relating to technical corrections for the 2025 legislative session.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, May 15, 2025.

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2025

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. 231.

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 technical corrections to fish and wildlife statutes.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 1.

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

An act relating to accepting and referring complaints by the State Ethics Commission.

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. 3 V.S.A. § 1223 is amended to read:

§ 1223. PROCEDURE FOR ACCEPTING AND REFERRING COMPLAINTS

(a) Accepting complaints.

(1) On behalf of the Commission, the Executive Director shall accept complaints from any source regarding governmental ethics in any of the three branches of State government or of the State's campaign finance law set forth in 17 V.S.A. chapter 61.

* * *

(b) Preliminary review by Executive Director. The Executive Director shall conduct a preliminary review of complaints made to the Commission in order to take action as set forth in this subsection ~~and section 1223a of this title~~, which shall include referring complaints to all relevant entities~~, including the Commission itself~~.

(1) Governmental conduct regulated by law.

* * *

(2) Department of Human Resources, Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual.

* * *

(3) Campaign finance.

* * *

(4) Legislative and Judicial Branches; attorneys.

* * *

(5) Municipal Code of Ethics. If the complaint alleges a violation of the Municipal Code of Ethics, the Executive Director shall refer the complaint to the designated ethics liaison of the appropriate municipality.

(6) The Executive Director shall close any complaint that the Executive Director does not refer as set forth in subdivisions (1)–(5) of this subsection.

(c) ~~Consultation on unethical conduct~~ Commission advice on the application of the State Code of Ethics on referred complaints.

(1) If the Executive Director refers a complaint under subsection (b) of this section, the Executive Director shall signify any likely unethical conduct described in the complaint~~. Any entity receiving a referred complaint~~ and, except ~~those~~ for complaints alleging a violation of the Municipal Code of Ethics as set forth in subdivision (b)(5) of this section, shall ~~consult with the Commission regarding the~~ specify any application of the State Code of Ethics to ~~facts~~ the allegations presented in the complaint and include a recommended action. ~~The consultation shall be in writing and occur within 60 days after an entity receives a referred complaint and prior to the entity making a determination on the complaint, meaning either closing a complaint without further investigation or issuing findings following an investigation.~~

(2) Any advice the Commission provides to the referred entity under this subsection shall be confidential and nonbinding on the entity.

(d) Confidentiality. Complaints and related documents in the custody of the Commission shall be exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and kept confidential~~, except as provided for in section 1231 of this title~~.

Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 1223 is amended to read:

§ 1223. PROCEDURE FOR ACCEPTING AND REFERRING COMPLAINTS

* * *

(b) Preliminary review by Executive Director. The Executive Director shall conduct a preliminary review of complaints made to the Commission in order to take action as set forth in this subsection, which shall include referring complaints to all relevant entities, including the Commission itself.

* * *

(d) Confidentiality. Complaints and related documents in the custody of the Commission shall be exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and kept confidential, except as provided for in section 1231 of this title.

Sec. 3. 3 V.S.A. § 1231 is amended to read:

§ 1231. RECORDS; CONFIDENTIALITY

(a) Intent. It is the intent of this section both to protect the reputation of public servants from public disclosure of frivolous complaints against them and to fulfill the public's right to know any unethical conduct committed by a public servant that results in issued warnings, reprimands, or recommended actions.

(b) Public records. Except as where otherwise provided in this chapter, public records relating to the Commission's handling of complaints, alleged unethical conduct, investigations, proceedings, and executed resolution agreements are exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and shall be kept confidential, except those public records required or permitted to be released under this chapter. Records subject to public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act shall include:

* * *

(6) any records, as determined by the Commission, that support a warning, reprimand, recommendation, or summary of an executed resolution agreement, including ~~consultations created pursuant to subsection 1223(c) of this title and~~ investigation reports in accordance with subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection.

* * *

Sec. 4. 2024, Acts and Resolves No. 171 (2024 Ethics Act), Sec. 24 is amended to read:

Sec. 24. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

(1) Sec. 13 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1230, Commission procedure, rulemaking) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2027;

(2) Sec. 22 (creating Municipal Code of Ethics) shall take effect on January 1, 2025;

(3) ~~Sees~~ Sec. 7 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1221(a), describing expansion of Commission powers)~~,~~ shall take effect on September 1, 2027;

(4) Sec. 8 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1222; title redesignation), shall take effect on July 1, 2025;

(5) Sec. 9 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1223, Commission procedure for accepting and referring complaints), shall take effect on September 1, 2025.

(6) Secs. 10 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1227, Commission investigations), 11 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1228, Commission hearings), 12 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1229, Commission warnings, reprimands, recommended actions, and agreements), and 14 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1231, Commission public records regarding complaints) shall take effect on September 1, ~~2025~~ 2027; and

(7) Sec. 1 (amending 17 V.S.A. § 2414, candidate disclosures) shall take effect on January 1, 2026.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

(1) Sec. 1 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1223, Commission procedure for accepting and referring complaints) shall take effect on September 1, 2025 and shall supersede those provisions of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 171, Sec. 9 that amended 3 V.S.A. § 1223 and that conflict with the language in this act;

(2) Sec. 2 (amending future version of 3 V.S.A. § 1223) shall take effect on September 1, 2027; and

(3) Sec. 3 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1231, Commission public records regarding complaints) shall take effect on September 1, 2027 and shall supersede those provisions of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 171, Sec. 14 that amended 3 V.S.A. § 1231 and that conflict with the language in this act.

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. 44.

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

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving.

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. 4 V.S.A. § 33 is amended to read:

§ 33. JURISDICTION; FAMILY DIVISION

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the Family Division shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and dispose of the following proceedings filed or pending on or after October 1, 1990:

* * *

(8) All ~~juvenile~~ proceedings filed pursuant to 33 V.S.A. chapters 51, 52, 52A, and 53, including proceedings involving "youthful offenders" pursuant to 33 V.S.A. § 5281 whether the matter originated in the Criminal or Family Division of the Superior Court, except for a proceeding charging the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial learner's permit as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4103 ~~with an offense or violation listed in 23 V.S.A. § 4116 that would result in the license holder being disqualified from driving a commercial motor vehicle if convicted~~ or operating a commercial motor vehicle with any offense or violation of any traffic control law other than parking, vehicle weight, or vehicle defect violations.

* * *

(b) The Family Division of the Superior Court has jurisdiction to hear and dispose of proceedings involving ~~misdemeanor~~ motor vehicle offenses filed ~~or pending on or after July 1, 2016,~~ pursuant to 33 V.S.A. §§ 5201, 5203, ~~and~~ 5280, and 5281. The Family Division of the Superior Court shall forward a record of any conviction or adjudication for violation of a law related to motor vehicle traffic control, other than a parking violation, to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 1709. As used in this subsection, "conviction" has the same meaning as in 23 V.S.A. § 4(60).

Sec. 2. 23 V.S.A. chapter 13, subchapter 13 is amended to read:

Subchapter 13. Drunken Driving

§ 1200. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

* * *

(11) "Serious bodily injury" has the same meaning as in 13 V.S.A. § 1021(a)(2)(A).

§ 1201. OPERATING VEHICLE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR OTHER SUBSTANCE; CRIMINAL REFUSAL; ENHANCED PENALTY FOR BAC OF 0.16 OR MORE

(a) A person shall not operate, attempt to operate, or be in actual physical control of any vehicle on a highway:

(1) when the person's alcohol concentration is:

(A) 0.08 or more; or

(B) 0.02 or more if the person is operating a school bus as defined in subdivision 4(34) of this title; or

(C) 0.04 or more if the person is operating a commercial vehicle as defined in subdivision 4103(4) of this title; or

(2) when the person is under the influence of alcohol; or

(3) when the person is under the influence of any other drug or under the combined influence of alcohol and any other drug.

(b) A person who has previously been convicted of a violation of this section shall not operate, attempt to operate, or be in actual physical control of any vehicle on a highway and refuse a law enforcement officer's reasonable request under the circumstances for an evidentiary test where the officer had reasonable grounds to believe the person was in violation of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) A person shall not operate, attempt to operate, or be in actual physical control of any vehicle on a highway and be involved in a crash or collision resulting in serious bodily injury or death to another and refuse a law enforcement officer's reasonable request under the circumstances for an evidentiary test where the officer has reasonable grounds to believe the person has any amount of alcohol or drugs in ~~his or her~~ the person's system.

(d)(1) A person who is convicted of a second or subsequent violation of subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this section when the person's alcohol concentration is proven to be 0.16 or more shall not, for three years from the date of the conviction for which the person's alcohol concentration is 0.16 or more, operate, attempt to operate, or be in actual physical control of any vehicle on a highway when the person's alcohol concentration is 0.02 or more. The prohibition imposed by this subsection shall be in addition to any other penalties imposed by law.

(2) A person shall not operate, attempt to operate, or be in actual physical control of any vehicle on a highway when the person's alcohol concentration is 0.02 or more if the person has previously been convicted of a

second or subsequent violation of subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this section within the preceding three years and the person's alcohol concentration for the second or subsequent violation was proven to be 0.16 or greater. A violation of this subsection shall be considered a third or subsequent violation of this section and shall be subject to the penalties of subsection 1210(d) of this title.

(e) The fact that a person charged with a violation of this section is or has been entitled to use a drug under the laws of this State shall not constitute a defense against any charge of violating this section.

(f) A person may not be convicted of more than one violation of subsection (a) or (j) of this section arising out of the same incident.

(g) For purposes of this section and section 1205 of this title, the defendant may assert as an affirmative defense that the person was not operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of the vehicle because the person:

(1) had no intention of placing the vehicle in motion; and

(2) had not placed the vehicle in motion while under the influence.

(h) As used in subdivision (a)(3) of this section, "under the influence of a drug" means that a person's ability to operate a motor vehicle safely is diminished or impaired in the slightest degree. This subsection shall not be construed to affect the meaning of the term "under the influence of alcohol."

(i) Evidence of the results of a standardized field sobriety test conducted by a law enforcement officer trained in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement or a certified Drug Recognition Expert's systematic evaluation of observable signs and symptoms of a person charged with a violation of this section shall be presumptively admissible at trial to demonstrate whether or not the person was operating under the influence in violation of this section.

(j) A person suspected of violating this section shall submit to the collection of an evidentiary blood sample when a warrant for that person's blood is issued pursuant to subdivision 1202(f)(1) of this title. This subsection shall not be construed as impairing a person's right to challenge the validity of a search warrant in any subsequent legal proceedings.

* * *

§ 1202. CONSENT TO TAKING OF TESTS TO DETERMINE BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT OR PRESENCE OF OTHER DRUG

(a)(1) Implied consent. Every person who operates, attempts to operate, or is in actual physical control of any vehicle on a highway in this State is deemed to have given consent to an evidentiary test of that person's breath for

the purpose of determining the person's alcohol concentration or the presence of other drug in the blood. The test shall be administered at the direction of a law enforcement officer.

(2) Blood test. If breath testing equipment is not reasonably available or if the officer has reason to believe that the person is unable to give a sufficient sample of breath for testing or if the law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person is under the influence of a drug other than alcohol, the person is deemed to have given consent to the taking of an evidentiary sample of blood. If in the officer's opinion the person is incapable of decision or unconscious or dead, it is deemed that the person's consent is given and a sample of blood shall be taken. A blood test sought pursuant to this subdivision shall be obtained pursuant to subsection (f) of this section.

(3) Saliva test. If the law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person is under the influence of a drug other than alcohol, or under the combined influence of alcohol and a drug, the person is deemed to have given consent to providing of an evidentiary sample of saliva. A saliva test sought pursuant to this subdivision shall be obtained pursuant to subsection (f) of this section. Any saliva test administered under this section shall be used only for the limited purpose of detecting the presence of a drug in the person's body and shall not be used to extract DNA information.

(4) Evidentiary test. The evidentiary test shall be required of a person when a law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title.

(5) Fatal collision or incident resulting in serious bodily injury. The evidentiary test shall also be required if the person is the surviving operator of a motor vehicle involved in a fatal incident or collision or an incident or collision resulting in serious bodily injury and the law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person has any amount of alcohol or other drug in ~~his or her~~ the person's system.

* * *

(d) At the time a test is requested, the person shall be informed of the following statutory information:

(1) Vermont law authorizes a law enforcement officer to request a test to determine whether the person is under the influence of alcohol or other drug.

(2) If the officer's request is reasonable and testing is refused, the person's license or privilege to operate will be suspended for at least six months.

(3) If a test is taken and the results indicate that the person is under the influence of alcohol or other drug, the person will be subject to criminal charges and the person's license or privilege to operate will be suspended for at least 90 days.

(4) A person who is requested by a law enforcement officer to submit to an evidentiary test or tests has the limited right to consult an attorney before deciding whether or not to submit to such a test or tests. The person must decide whether or not to submit to the evidentiary test or tests within a reasonable time and not later than 30 minutes from the time of the initial attempt to contact the attorney, regardless of whether a consultation took place. The person also has the right to have additional tests made by someone of the person's own choosing at the person's own expense. The person shall also be informed of the location of one or more facilities available for drawing blood.

(5) A person who is requested by a law enforcement officer to submit to an evidentiary test administered with an infrared breath-testing instrument may elect to have a second infrared test administered immediately after receiving the results of the first test.

(6) If the person refuses to take an evidentiary test, the refusal may be offered into evidence against the person at trial, whether or not a search warrant is sought. The person may be charged with the crime of criminal refusal if the person:

(A) has previously been convicted of a violation of section 1201 of this title; ~~or~~

(B) is involved in a crash or collision resulting in serious bodily injury or death to another, in which case the court may issue a search warrant and order the person to submit to a blood test, the results of which may be offered into evidence against the person at trial; or

(C) knowingly hinders the collection of an evidentiary blood sample when a warrant for that person's blood is issued pursuant to subdivision (f)(1) of this section.

(e) In any proceeding under this subchapter, a law enforcement officer's testimony that ~~he or she~~ the officer is certified pursuant to section 20 V.S.A. § 2358 shall be prima facie evidence of that fact.

(f)(1) If a blood test is sought from a person pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, or if a person who has been involved in a crash or collision resulting in serious bodily injury or death to another refuses an evidentiary test, a law enforcement officer may apply for a search warrant pursuant to Rule 41 of the Vermont Rules of Criminal Procedure to obtain a sample of blood for an evidentiary test. Pursuant to subdivision (d)(6) of this section, if

a blood sample is obtained by search warrant, the fact of the refusal may still be introduced in evidence, in addition to the results of the evidentiary test. Once a law enforcement official begins the application process for a search warrant, the law enforcement official is not obligated to discontinue the process even if the person later agrees to provide an evidentiary sample. The limitation created by Rule 41(g) of the Vermont Rules of Criminal Procedure regarding blood specimens shall not apply to search warrants authorized by this section.

(2) If an evidentiary saliva test is sought from a person pursuant to subdivision (a)(3) of this section, a law enforcement officer may apply for a search warrant pursuant to Rule 41 of the Vermont Rules of Criminal Procedure to obtain a sample of saliva for the evidentiary test. Pursuant to subdivision (d)(6) of this section, if a saliva sample is obtained by search warrant, the fact of the refusal may still be introduced in evidence, in addition to the results of the evidentiary test.

(g) The Defender General shall provide statewide 24-hour coverage seven days a week to ensure that adequate legal services are available to persons entitled to consult an attorney under this section.

* * *

§ 1205. CIVIL SUSPENSION; SUMMARY PROCEDURE

(a) Refusal; alcohol concentration at or above legal limits; suspension periods.

* * *

(2) Upon affidavit of a law enforcement officer that the officer had reasonable grounds to believe that the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title and that the person submitted to a test and the test results indicated that the person's alcohol concentration was at or above a limit specified in subsection 1201(a) of this title, at the time of operating, attempting to operate, or being in actual physical control, the Commissioner shall suspend the person's operating license or nonresident operating privilege or the privilege of an unlicensed operator to operate a vehicle for a period of 90 days and until the person complies with section 1209a of this title. However, during the suspension, an eligible person may operate under the terms of an ignition interlock RDL or ignition interlock certificate issued pursuant to section 1213 of this title.

* * *

(b) Form of officer's affidavit. A law enforcement officer's affidavit in support of a suspension under this section shall be in a standardized form for use throughout the State and shall be sufficient if it contains the following statements:

(1) The officer is a certified law enforcement officer.

(2) The officer who administered the test was certified to operate the testing equipment.

(3) The officer had reasonable grounds to believe the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title (noting the time and date of operating, attempting to operate, or being in actual physical control).

(4) The officer informed the person of ~~his or her~~ the person's rights under subsection 1202(d) of this title.

(5) The officer obtained an evidentiary test (noting the time and date the test was taken) and the test indicated that the person's alcohol concentration was at or above a legal limit specified in subsection 1201(a) or (d) of this title, or the person refused to submit to an evidentiary test.

(6) The officer complied with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, codified at 50 U.S.C. chapter 50.

(7) The officer confirmed the person's correct mailing address.

(c) Notice of suspension. On behalf of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, a law enforcement officer requesting or directing the administration of an evidentiary test shall serve notice of intention to suspend and of suspension on a person who refuses to submit to an evidentiary test or on a person who submits to a test the results of which indicate that the person's alcohol concentration was at or above a legal limit specified in subsection 1201(a) or (d) of this title, at the time of operating, attempting to operate, or being in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title. The notice shall be signed by the law enforcement officer requesting the test. A copy of the notice shall be sent to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, and a copy shall be mailed or given to the defendant within three business days after the date the officer receives the results of the test. If mailed, the notice is deemed received three days after mailing to the address provided by the defendant to the law enforcement officer. A copy of the affidavit of the law enforcement officer shall also be mailed by first-class mail or given to the defendant and the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles within seven days after the date of notice.

* * *

(f) Review by Superior Court. Within seven days following receipt of a notice of intention to suspend and of suspension, a person may make a request for a hearing before the Superior Court by mailing or delivering the form provided with the notice. The request shall be mailed or delivered to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, who shall then notify the Criminal Division of the Superior Court that a hearing has been requested and provide the Criminal Division and the State's Attorney with a copy of the notice of intention to suspend and of suspension and the officer's affidavit.

* * *

(h) Final hearing.

(1) If the defendant requests a hearing on the merits, the court shall schedule a final hearing on the merits to be held within 21 days after the date of the preliminary hearing. In no event may a final hearing occur more than 42 days after the date of the alleged offense without the consent of the defendant or for good cause shown. The final hearing may only be continued by the consent of the defendant or for good cause shown. The issues at the final hearing shall be limited to the following:

(A) Whether the law enforcement officer had reasonable grounds to believe the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title.

(B) Whether at the time of the request for the evidentiary test the officer informed the person of the person's rights and the consequences of taking and refusing the test substantially as set out in subsection 1202(d) of this title.

(C) Whether the person refused to permit the test.

(D) Whether the test was taken and the test results indicated that the person's alcohol concentration was at or above a legal limit specified in subsection 1201(a) or (d) of this title, at the time of operating, attempting to operate, or being in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title, whether the testing methods used were valid and reliable, and whether the test results were accurate and accurately evaluated. Evidence that the test was taken and evaluated in compliance with rules adopted by the Department of Public Safety shall be prima facie evidence that the testing methods used were valid and reliable and that the test results are accurate and were accurately evaluated.

(E) Whether the requirements of section 1202 of this title were complied with.

(2) No less than seven days before the final hearing, and subject to the requirements of Vermont Rule of Civil Procedure 11, the defendant shall provide to the State and file with the court a list of the issues (limited to the issues set forth in this subsection) that the defendant intends to raise. Only evidence that is relevant to an issue listed by the defendant may be raised by the defendant at the final hearing. The defendant shall not be permitted to raise any other evidence at the final hearing, and all other evidence shall be inadmissible.

(i) Finding by the court. The court shall electronically forward a report of the hearing to the Commissioner. Upon a finding by the court that the law enforcement officer had reasonable grounds to believe that the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title and that the person refused to submit to a test, or upon a finding by the court that the law enforcement officer had reasonable grounds to believe that the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control of a vehicle in violation of section 1201 of this title and that the person submitted to a test and the test results indicated that the person's alcohol concentration was at or above a legal limit specified in subsection 1201(a) or (d) of this title, at the time the person was operating, attempting to operate, or in actual physical control, the person's operating license, or nonresident operating privilege, or the privilege of an unlicensed operator to operate a vehicle shall be suspended or shall remain suspended for the required term and until the person complies with section 1209a of this title. Upon a finding in favor of the person, the Commissioner shall cause the suspension to be canceled and removed from the record, without payment of any fee.

* * *

(n) Presumption. In a proceeding under this section, if at any time within two hours of operating, attempting to operate, or being in actual physical control of a vehicle a person had an alcohol concentration ~~of~~ at or above a legal limit specified in subsection 1201(a) or (d) of this title, it shall be a rebuttable presumption that the person's alcohol concentration was above the applicable limit at the time of operating, attempting to operate, or being in actual physical control.

* * *

§ 1210. PENALTIES

* * *

(f) Death resulting.

(1) If the death of any person results from a violation of section 1201 of this title, the person convicted of the violation shall be fined not more than $10,000.00 or imprisoned not less than one year nor more than 15 years, or both. The provisions of this subsection do not limit or restrict prosecutions for manslaughter.

(2) If the death or serious bodily injury of more than one person results from a violation of section 1201 of this title, the operator may be convicted of a separate violation of this subdivision for each decedent or person injured.

(3)(A) If the death of any person results from a violation of section 1201 of this title and the person convicted of the violation previously has been convicted two or more times of a violation of that section, a sentence ordered pursuant to this subsection shall, except as provided in subdivision (B) of this subdivision (3), include at least a five-year term of imprisonment. The five-year minimum term of imprisonment required by this subdivision (3)(A) shall be served and may not be suspended, deferred, or served as a supervised sentence. The defendant shall not be eligible for probation, parole, furlough, or any other type of early release until the expiration of the five-year term of imprisonment.

(B) Notwithstanding subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3), if the death or serious bodily injury of any person results from a violation of section 1201 of this title and the person convicted of the violation previously has been convicted two or more times of a violation of that section, the court may impose a sentence that does not include a term of imprisonment or that includes a term of imprisonment of less than five years if the court makes written findings on the record that such a sentence will serve the interests of justice and public safety.

(g) Injury resulting.

(1) If serious bodily injury~~, as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1021(2),~~ results to any person other than the operator from a violation of section 1201 of this title, the person convicted of the violation shall be fined not more than $5,000.00 or imprisoned not more than 15 years, or both.

(2) If serious bodily injury ~~as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1021(2)~~ or death results to more than one person other than the operator from a violation of section 1201 of this title, the operator may be convicted of a separate violation of this subdivision for each person injured or decedent.

(3)(A) If serious bodily injury ~~as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1021(2)~~ results to any person other than the operator from a violation of section 1201 of this title and the person convicted of the violation previously has been convicted two or more times of a violation of section 1201, a sentence ordered pursuant

to this subsection shall, except as provided in subdivision (B) of this subdivision (3), include at least a five-year term of imprisonment. The five-year minimum term of imprisonment required by this subdivision (3)(A) shall be served and may not be suspended, deferred, or served as a supervised sentence. The defendant shall not be eligible for probation, parole, furlough, or any other type of early release until the expiration of the five-year term of imprisonment.

(B) Notwithstanding subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3), if serious bodily injury ~~as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1021(2)~~ results to any person other than the operator from a violation of section 1201 of this title and the person convicted of the violation previously has been convicted two or more times of a violation of section 1201, the court may impose a sentence that does not include a term of imprisonment or that includes a term of imprisonment of less than five years if the court makes written findings on the record that such a sentence will serve the interests of justice and public safety.

* * *

Sec. 3. 33 V.S.A. § 5202 is amended to read:

§ 5202. ORDER OF ADJUDICATION; NONCRIMINAL

(a)(1) An order of the Family Division of the Superior Court in proceedings under this chapter shall not:

(A) be deemed a conviction of crime;

(B) impose any civil disabilities sanctions ordinarily resulting from a conviction; or

(C) operate to disqualify the child in any civil service application or appointment.

(2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, ~~an order of delinquency in proceedings~~ a merits adjudication order issued pursuant to section 5229 of this title in proceedings concerning a child or youthful offender who is alleged to have committed a violation of those sections specified in 23 V.S.A. § 801(a)(1) shall be an event in addition to those specified therein, enabling the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to require proof of financial responsibility under 23 V.S.A. chapter 11.

(3) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, a merits adjudication order issued pursuant to section 5229 of this title in proceedings concerning a child or youthful offender who is alleged to have committed a violation of 23 V.S.A. chapter 13, subchapter 13 shall be reported to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles in accordance with the provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 1709.

* * *

Sec. 4. 33 V.S.A. § 5229 is amended to read:

§ 5229. MERITS ADJUDICATION

* * *

(g) If, based on the child's admission or the evidence presented, the court finds beyond a reasonable doubt that the child has committed a delinquent act, the court shall order the Department to prepare a disposition case plan not later than seven business days before the disposition hearing and shall send a record of the adjudication to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles within 10 days following its issuance. In no event shall a disposition hearing be held later than 35 days after a finding that a child is delinquent.

* * *

Sec. 5. IMPAIRED DRIVING; IMPLIED CONSENT; PROCESSING; TASK FORCE; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created the Impaired Driving Processing Task Force to study the concept of implied consent during impaired driving investigations with the objective to recommend approaches that minimize the duration for which impaired driving suspects are held during investigations and to streamline the processing and paperwork associated with such investigations.

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

(1) the Chief Judge of the Superior Court or designee;

(2) the Defender General or designee;

(3) the Commissioner of Public Safety or designee;

(4) the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles or designee;

(5) the Executive Director of the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs or designee;

(6) the President of the Vermont Sheriffs' Association or designee; and

(7) a representative from the Vermont Police Association.

(c) Powers and duties. The Task Force shall study impaired driving investigations in Vermont, including the following issues:

(1) the constitutional and statutory requirements of implied consent;

(2) how constitutional and statutory requirements related to implied consent affect the duration for which suspected impaired drivers are held by law enforcement;

(3) methods to minimize statutory requirements related to implied consent that pass constitutional muster; and

(4) any other relevant issues in accordance with subsection (a) of this section.

(d) Assistance. The Task Force shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Public Safety.

(e) Report. On or before November 15, 2025, the Task Force shall submit a written report in the form of proposed legislation to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary with any recommendations for legislative action.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Commissioner of Public Safety or designee shall call the first meeting of the Task Force to occur on or before August 1, 2025.

(2) The Task Force shall select a chair from among its members at the first meeting.

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

(4) A majority of the Task Force's membership shall constitute a quorum.

(5) The Task Force shall cease to exist on February 1, 2026.

(g) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Task Force who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed for their attendance shall be entitled to compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than six meetings.

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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

Senator Norris, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Judiciary.

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. 50.

Senator Douglass, for the Committee on Institutions, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to identifying underutilized State buildings and land.

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. 29 V.S.A. § 165 is amended to read:

§ 165. SPACE ALLOCATION, INVENTORY, AND USE; LEASING PROPERTY; COMMISSIONER'S PREAPPROVAL REQUIRED

* * *

(e) The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall maintain an inventory of all State-owned or State-leased buildings and land and shall biannually compile and update the information received under subsection (g) of this section, which shall be considered once available in making spacing allocations and designating uses under subsection (c) of this section.

* * *

(g) The head of each agency shall prepare and forward to the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services ~~when requested by the Commissioner~~ annually in a format prescribed by the Commissioner an inventory of~~:~~ square footage available for use; square footage in actual use; square footage not in use; square footage used for storage; square footage that is unfinished; cost per square foot for rent; cost per square foot for operation and maintenance; and the source of funds for rent, operation, and maintenance, including the act and section numbers of a legislative directive if applicable. The head of each agency shall additionally indicate in its inventory in a format prescribed by the Commissioner whether any building is vacant and whether any land is unnecessary for State purposes.

* * *

(j) On or before January 15 of each new legislative biennium, the Commissioner shall submit to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions the inventory maintained under subsection (e) of this section.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

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.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 167.

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

An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 266.

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

An act relating to the 340B prescription drug pricing program.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 505.

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

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Barre.

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.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until eleven o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon on Friday, May 16, 2025.

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pages Honored

In appreciation of their many services to the members of the General Assembly, the President recognized the following-named pages who are completing their services today and presented them with letters of appreciation.

Austen N. Boulanger of South Burlington
Eleanor Brady of Williston
Atticus Lawler of East Montpelier
Braeden Schuren Burns of Montpelier
Naomi Isla Segal of Woodstock
Oscar Vulte of Brattleboro
Alex Young-Springer of Burlington

Message from the House No. 62

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has passed a House bill of the following title:

H. 46. An act relating to the Rare Disease Advisory Council.

In the passage of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered bills originating in the Senate of the following titles:

S. 63. An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board.

S. 125. An act relating to workers' compensation and collective bargaining rights.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposals of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 41. An act relating to abuse of the dead body of a person.

And has concurred therein.

The House has considered the report of the Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on House bill of the following title:

H. 493. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government.

And has adopted the same on its part.

The House has considered joint resolution originating in the Senate of the following title:

J.R.S. 26. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 16, 2025.

And has adopted the same in concurrence.

Message from the Governor

A message was received from His Excellency, the Governor, by Ms. Jaye Pershing Johnson, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed by the Governor to inform the Senate that on the fifteenth day of May, 2025 he approved and signed bills originating in the Senate of the following titles:

S. 27. An act relating to medical debt relief and excluding medical debt from credit reports.

S. 36. An act relating to the delivery and payment of certain services provided through the Agency of Human Services, services for persons who are incapacitated, and Human Services Board proceedings.

Bill Referred to Committee on Finance

H. 319.

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 miscellaneous environmental subjects.

Bills Referred to Committee on Appropriations

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

H. 454. An act relating to transforming Vermont's education governance, quality, and finance systems.

H. 480. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to education law.

Bills Introduced

Senate bills of the following titles were introduced, read the first time and referred:

S. 155.

By Senators Gulick, Brock, Chittenden, Hardy, Lyons, Major, Plunkett, Weeks and White,

An act relating to the use of automated traffic law enforcement (ATLE) systems by municipalities.

To the Committee on Transportation.

S. 156.

By Senators Gulick, Major, Vyhovsky and White,

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System.

To the Committee on Government Operations.

Bill Referred

House bill of the following title was read the first time:

H. 46. An act relating to the Rare Disease Advisory Council.

And pursuant to Temporary Rule 44A, was referred to the Committee on Rules.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 87.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to extradition procedures.

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. 13 V.S.A. § 4955 is amended to read:

§ 4955. COMMITMENT TO AWAIT EXTRADITION; BAIL

If upon examination it appears that the person held is the person charged with having committed the crime alleged and that the person probably committed the crime, and, except in cases arising under section 4946 of this title, that the person has fled from justice, the judge or magistrate shall commit the person to jail by a warrant, reciting the accusation, for such a time, not

exceeding ~~30~~ 90 days, to be specified in the warrant as will enable the arrest of the accused to be made under a warrant of the Governor on a requisition of the executive authority of the state having jurisdiction of the offense, unless the accused give bail as provided in section 4956 of this title, or until the person shall be legally discharged. On request of the state, the hearing may be continued for up to three ~~working~~ business days, only for the purpose of determining whether the person probably committed the crime. Findings under this section may be based upon hearsay evidence or upon copies of affidavits, whether certified or not, made outside this State. It shall be sufficient for a finding that a person probably committed the crime that there is a current grand jury indictment from another state.

Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 4957 is amended to read:

§ 4957. EXTENDING TIME OF COMMITMENT

If the accused is not arrested under warrant of the Governor by the expiration of the time specified in the warrant, bond, or undertaking, such judge may discharge ~~him or her~~ or ~~may~~ recommit ~~him or her~~ the accused for a further period not to exceed ~~60~~ 30 days, or may again take bail for ~~his or her~~ the accused's appearance and surrender as provided in section 4956 of this title, but within a period not to exceed ~~60~~ 30 days after the date of such new bond.

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 4967 is amended to read:

§ 4967. WRITTEN WAIVER OF EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS

(a)(1) Any person arrested in this State charged with having committed any crime in another state or alleged to have escaped from confinement~~,~~ or broken the terms of ~~his or her~~ bail, probation, or parole may waive the issuance and service of the warrant provided for in sections 4947 and 4948 of this title and all other procedure incidental to extradition proceedings, by executing or subscribing in the presence of a judge of any court of record within this State a writing that states that ~~he or she~~ the person consents to return to the demanding state; provided, however, before ~~such~~ the waiver ~~shall be~~ is executed or subscribed by ~~such~~ the person ~~it shall be the duty of such~~, the judge ~~to~~ shall inform ~~such~~ the person of ~~his or her~~ the ~~rights~~ right to ~~the~~ issuance and service of a warrant of extradition and the right to obtain a writ of habeas corpus as provided for in section 4950 of this title.

(2) If the person previously signed an authenticated waiver of extradition to the demanding state, the waiver shall be presumed valid. If the person contests the validity of the previously signed waiver, the person bears the burden of proving that the waiver is not valid. If the court finds that the

waiver is valid, it may proceed as if the person had consented to return to the demanding state in accordance with subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(b) If and when such consent has been duly executed, it shall forthwith be forwarded to the office of the Governor of this State and filed therein. The judge shall direct the officer having such person in custody to deliver forthwith such person to the duly accredited agent or agents of the demanding state~~,~~ and shall deliver or cause to be delivered to such agent or agents a copy of such consent; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall be deemed to limit the rights of the accused person to return voluntarily and without formality to the demanding state, nor shall this waiver procedure be deemed to be an exclusive procedure or to limit the powers, rights, or duties of the officers of the demanding state or of this State.

Sec. 4. 13 V.S.A. § 5043 is amended to read:

§ 5043. HEARING, COMMITMENT, DISCHARGE

(a) If an arrest is made in this State by an officer of another state in accordance with the provisions of section 5042 of this title, ~~he or she shall~~ the officer, without unnecessary delay, shall take the person arrested before a Superior judge of the unit in which the arrest was made, who shall conduct a hearing for the purpose of determining the lawfulness of the arrest.

(b) If the judge determines that the arrest was lawful, ~~he or she~~ the judge shall commit the person arrested to await for ~~a reasonable time~~ the issuance of an extradition warrant by the Governor of this State within 90 days or admit such person to bail pending the issuance of such warrant. The judge shall consider the issuance of a judicial warrant for the arrest of the person who has fled justice to Vermont from another state when determining the risk of flight from prosecution.

(c) If the judge determines that the arrest was unlawful, ~~he or she~~ the judge shall discharge the person arrested.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage and shall apply prospectively and not affect extraditions in process at the time of enactment.

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. 482.

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

An act relating to Green Mountain Care Board authority to adjust a hospital's reimbursement rates and to appoint a hospital observer.

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. 18 V.S.A. § 9384 is added to read:

§ 9384. REDUCTION OR REALLOCATION OF REIMBURSEMENT RATES; RISKS TO HEALTH INSURER SOLVENCY

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Hospital" has the same meaning as in section 9451 of this title.

(2) "Hospital network" means a system comprising two or more affiliated hospitals, and may include other health care professionals and facilities, that derives 50 percent or more of its operating revenue, at the consolidated network level, from Vermont hospitals and in which the affiliated hospitals deliver health care services in a coordinated manner using an integrated financial and governance structure.

(b) If the Green Mountain Care Board determines, after consultation with the Commissioner of Financial Regulation, that a domestic health insurer faces an acute and immediate threat to its solvency because its risk-based capital level has triggered a regulatory action level event pursuant to 8 V.S.A. § 8304, the Board may order a reduction of the insurer's reimbursement rates to one or more Vermont hospitals as set forth in subsection (c) of this section until such time as the amount of the insurer's risk-based capital exceeds the company action level risk-based capital threshold defined in 8 V.S.A. § 8301. Notwithstanding any provision of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to the contrary, the Board's activities under this section shall not be construed to be a contested case. Any person aggrieved by a final Board action, order, or determination under this section may appeal as set forth in section 9381 of this title.

(c)(1) The Board shall only order a reduction in the reimbursement rates to a hospital that meets one or both of the following criteria:

(A) the hospital has more than 135 days' cash on hand and had a positive operating margin in the previous fiscal year; or

(B) the hospital is a member of a hospital network that, at the consolidated network level, has more than 135 days' cash on hand or had a positive operating margin in the previous fiscal year, or both.

(2) The Board shall order a reduction in reimbursement rates to a hospital pursuant to this section only to the extent necessary to remediate the threat to the domestic health insurer's solvency. In determining whether and to

what extent to reduce a hospital's reimbursement rates pursuant to this section, the Board shall consider the competing financial obligations of the hospital and of the domestic health insurer.

(3) The Board shall provide a hospital with the opportunity to request relief from a rate reduction ordered pursuant to this section.

(4) In no event shall a reduction ordered by the Board pursuant to this section result in a decrease to a hospital's or hospital network's projected days' cash on hand to below 125 days.

Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 9456 is amended to read:

§ 9456. BUDGET REVIEW

* * *

(c) Individual hospital budgets established under this section shall:

* * *

(4) reflect budget performances for prior years and, if not already addressed pursuant to subsection (h) of this section, account for any significant deviation in revenue during the most recently completed fiscal year in excess of the budget established for the hospital pursuant to this section;

* * *

(f)(1) The Board may, upon application, adjust a budget established under this section upon a showing of need based upon exceptional or unforeseen circumstances in accordance with the criteria and processes established under section 9405 of this title.

(2) The Board may, on its own initiative, adjust the commercial health insurance reimbursement rates payable to a hospital at any time during the hospital's fiscal year in order to ensure that the hospital operates within the budget established under this section.

(g)(1) The Board may request, and a hospital shall provide, information determined by the Board to be necessary to determine whether the hospital is operating within a budget established under this section. For purposes of this subsection, subsection (h) of this section, and subdivision 9454(a)(7) of this title, the Board's authority shall extend to an affiliated corporation or other person in the control of or controlled by the hospital to the extent that such authority is necessary to carry out the purposes of this subsection, subsection (h) of this section, or subdivision 9454(a)(7) of this title. As used in this subsection, a rebuttable presumption of "control" is created if the entity, hospital, or other person, directly or indirectly, owns, controls, holds with the power to vote, or holds proxies representing 20 percent or more of the voting

securities or membership interest or other governing interest of the hospital or other controlled entity.

(2)(A) The Board may, upon finding that a hospital has made a material misrepresentation in information or documents provided to the Board or that a hospital is materially noncompliant with the budget established by the Board pursuant to this section, appoint an independent observer with respect to any matter related to the Board's review or enforcement under this section if the Board believes that doing so is in the public interest. The independent observer shall be a person with experience and expertise relevant to the specific circumstances. At the direction of the Board, the independent observer may monitor the hospital's operations, obtain information from the hospital, and report findings and recommendations to the Board.

(B) An independent observer appointed pursuant to this subdivision (2) shall have the right to receive copies of all materials related to the Board's review under this section and the hospital shall provide any information requested by the independent observer, including any information regarding the hospital's participation in a hospital network. The independent observer shall share information provided by the hospital with the Board and with the Office of the Health Care Advocate in accordance with subdivision (d)(3) of this section but shall not otherwise disclose any confidential or proprietary information that the independent observer obtained from the hospital.

(C) The Board may order a hospital to pay for all or a portion of the costs of an independent observer appointed for the hospital pursuant to this subdivision (2).

* * *

Sec. 3. INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL OBSERVER AUTHORITY; PROSPECTIVE REPEAL

18 V.S.A. § 9456(g)(2) (authority to appoint independent hospital observer) is repealed on January 1, 2030.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.

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. 222.

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

An act relating to civil orders of protection.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill in Sec. 2, 15 V.S.A. § 1103, in subdivision (c)(2)(J), in the second sentence, after "civil contempt proceedings" by inserting "pursuant to Rule 16 of the Vermont Rules of Family Proceedings"

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.

Bills Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

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

H. 1. An act relating to accepting and referring complaints by the State Ethics Commission.

H. 44. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving.

Bill Passed in Concurrence

H. 505.

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

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Barre.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 209.

Senator Heffernan, for the Committee on Education, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to intranasal epinephrine in schools.

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. 16 V.S.A. § 1388 is amended to read:

§ 1388. STOCK SUPPLY AND EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATION OF EPINEPHRINE ~~AUTO-INJECTORS~~

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Designated personnel" means a school employee, agent, or volunteer who has completed training required by State Board policy and who has been authorized by the school administrator or delegated by the school nurse to ~~provide and~~ administer epinephrine ~~auto-injectors under~~ in accordance with a provider's standing order or protocol pursuant to this section ~~and who has completed the training required by State Board policy~~.

(2) "Epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~" means a U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved single-use ~~device that delivers a~~ epinephrine delivery system containing a premeasured single dose of epinephrine.

(3) "Health care professional" means a physician licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 23 or 33, an advanced practice registered nurse licensed to prescribe drugs and medical devices pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 28, or a physician assistant licensed to prescribe drugs and medical devices pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 31.

(4) "School" means a public or approved independent school and extends to school grounds, school-sponsored activities, school-provided transportation, and school-related programs.

(5) "School administrator" means a school's principal or headmaster.

(6) "School nurse" means a school nurse or associate school nurse endorsed by the Agency of Education pursuant to the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals rule (CVR 22-000-010).

(b)(1) A health care professional may prescribe ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ in a school's name, which may be maintained by the school for use as described in subsection (d) of this section. The health care professional shall issue to the school a standing order for the use of ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ prescribed under this section, including protocols for:

(A) ~~assessing~~ recognizing whether an individual is experiencing a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction;

(B) administering ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ to an individual experiencing a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction;

(C) caring for an individual after administering ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector to him or her~~, including contacting emergency services personnel and documenting the incident; and

(D) disposing of used or expired epinephrine ~~auto-injectors~~.

(2) A pharmacist licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 36 or a health care professional may dispense epinephrine ~~auto-injectors~~ prescribed to a school.

(c) A school may maintain a stock supply of epinephrine ~~auto-injectors~~. A school may enter into arrangements with epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ manufacturers or suppliers to acquire ~~epinephrine auto-injectors~~ these products for free or at reduced or fair market prices.

(d) The school administrator may authorize a school nurse or appropriately trained designated personnel, ~~or both,~~ to:

(1) provide ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ to a student for self-administration according to a plan of action for managing the student's life-threatening allergy maintained in the student's school health records pursuant to section 1387 of this title;

(2) administer ~~a~~ prescribed epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ to a student according to a plan of action maintained in the student's school health records; and

(3) administer ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~, in accordance with the protocol issued under subsection (b) of this section, to a student or other individual at a school if the school nurse or designated personnel believe in good faith that the student or individual is experiencing anaphylaxis, regardless of whether the student or individual has a prescription for ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~.

(e) Designated personnel, a school, a school nurse, and a health care professional prescribing ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ to a school shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability arising from the administration or self-administration of ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ under this section, unless the person's conduct constituted intentional misconduct. Providing or administering ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ under this section does not constitute the practice of medicine.

(f) ~~On or before January 1, 2014, the~~ The State Board, in consultation with the Department of Health, shall adopt policies for managing students with life-threatening allergies and other individuals with life-threatening allergies who may be present at a school. The policies shall:

(1) establish protocols to prevent exposure to allergens in schools;

(2) establish procedures for responding to life-threatening allergic reactions in schools, including postemergency procedures;

(3) implement a process for schools and the parents or guardians of students with a life-threatening allergy to jointly develop a written individualized allergy management plan of action that:

(A) incorporates instructions from a student's ~~physician~~ health care professional regarding the student's life-threatening allergy and prescribed treatment;

(B) includes the requirements of section 1387 of this title~~,~~ if a student is authorized to possess and self-administer emergency medication at school;

(C) becomes part of the student's health records maintained by the school; and

(D) is updated each school year;

(4) require education and training for school nurses and designated personnel, including training related to storing and administering ~~an~~ epinephrine ~~auto-injector~~ and recognizing and responding to a life-threatening allergic reaction; and

(5) require each school to make publicly available protocols and procedures developed in accordance with the policies adopted by the State Board under this section.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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 Concurred In

S. 117.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to rulemaking on safety and health standards and technical corrections on employment practices and unemployment compensation.

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:

* * * Safety and Health Rulemaking * * *

Sec. 1. [Deleted.]

Sec. 2. [Deleted.]

Sec. 3. [Deleted.]

Sec. 4. [Deleted.]

* * * Wage and Hour * * *

Sec. 5. 21 V.S.A. § 342a is amended to read:

§ 342a. INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS OF UNPAID WAGES

* * *

(d) If the Commissioner determines that the unpaid wages were willfully withheld by the employer, the order for collection ~~may~~ shall provide that the employer is liable to pay an additional amount not to exceed twice the amount of unpaid wages~~, one-half~~. One-half of ~~which will~~ the additional amount recovered above the employee's unpaid wages shall be remitted to the employee and one-half ~~of which~~ shall be retained by the Commissioner to offset administrative and collection costs.

* * *

Sec. 6. 21 V.S.A. § 384 is amended to read:

§ 384. EMPLOYMENT; WAGES

(a)(1) Beginning on January 1, 2022, an employer shall not employ any employee at a rate of less than $12.55, and on each subsequent January 1, the minimum wage rate shall be increased by five percent or the percentage increase of the Consumer Price Index, CPI-U, U.S. city average, not seasonally adjusted, or successor index, as calculated by the U.S. Department of Labor or successor agency, rounded to one decimal point, for the 12 months preceding the previous September 1, whichever is smaller, but in no event shall the minimum wage be decreased. The minimum wage shall be rounded off to the nearest $0.01.

* * *

Sec. 7. 21 V.S.A. § 385 is amended to read:

§ 385. ADMINISTRATION

The Commissioner and the Commissioner's authorized representatives have full power and authority for all the following:

* * *

~~(5) To recommend a suitable scale of rates for learners, apprentices, and persons with disabilities, which may be less than the regular minimum wage rate for experienced workers without disabilities.~~

* * * Notice of Potential Layoffs * * *

Sec. 8. [Deleted.]

* * * Unemployment Compensation * * *

Sec. 9. 21 V.S.A. § 1308 is amended to read:

§ 1308. ORGANIZATION

The Commissioner shall determine ~~his or her~~ the method of procedure in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. Notwithstanding any requirement in this chapter that the Commissioner mail notices and determinations, the Commissioner may provide claimants and employers with the option to authorize communications from the Commissioner to be delivered electronically.

Sec. 10. 21 V.S.A. § 1314 is amended to read:

§ 1314. REPORTS AND RECORDS; SEPARATION INFORMATION; DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY; FAILURE TO REPORT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION; DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO OTHER STATE AGENCIES TO INVESTIGATE MISCLASSIFICATION OR MISCODING

* * *

(c) If an employing unit fails to comply adequately with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section and section 1314a of this subchapter, the Commissioner shall determine the benefit rights of a claimant upon the available information. Prompt notice in writing of the determination shall be given to the employing unit. The employing unit may request or authorize the Commissioner to provide notice of the determination electronically. The determination shall be final with respect to a noncomplying employer as to any charges against its experience-rating record for benefits paid to the claimant before the week following the receipt of the employing unit's reply. The employing unit's experience rating record shall not be relieved of these charges, notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, unless the Commissioner determines that failure to comply was due to unavoidable accident or mistake.

* * *

Sec. 11. 21 V.S.A. § 1314a is amended to read:

§ 1314a. QUARTERLY WAGE REPORTING; MISCLASSIFICATION; PENALTIES

* * *

(d) Reports required by subsection (c) of this section shall be submitted to the Commissioner not later than 10 calendar days after the date the Commissioner's request was sent electronically or mailed to the employing unit.

(e) On request of the Commissioner, any employing unit or employer shall report, within 10 days after the mailing, electronic delivery, or personal delivery of the request, separation information for a claimant, any disqualifying income the claimant may have received, and any other information that the Commissioner may require to determine the claimant's eligibility for unemployment compensation. The Commissioner shall make a request when:

* * *

Sec. 12. 21 V.S.A. § 1330 is amended to read:

§ 1330. ASSESSMENT PROVIDED

When any employer fails to pay any contributions or payments required under this chapter, the Commissioner shall make an assessment of contributions against the employer together with applicable interest and penalty. After making the assessment, the Commissioner shall give notice to the employer electronically or by ordinary or certified mail, and the assessment shall be final unless the employer petitions for a hearing on the assessment pursuant to section 1331 of this subchapter.

Sec. 13. 21 V.S.A. § 1331 is amended to read:

§ 1331. NOTICE; HEARING

(a) Any employer against whom an assessment is made may, within 30 days after the date of the assessment, file with the Commissioner a petition for a hearing before a referee appointed for that purpose. The petition shall set forth specifically and in detail the grounds upon which it is claimed the assessment is erroneous.

(b) Hearing or hearings on the assessment shall be held by the referee at times and places provided by the rules of the Board and due notice of the time and place of the hearing or hearings shall be given electronically or by ordinary or certified mail to the petitioner.

(c) After the hearing the petitioner shall be promptly notified electronically or by ordinary or certified mail of the findings of fact, conclusions, and decision of the referee.

* * *

Sec. 14. 21 V.S.A. § 1332 is amended to read:

§ 1332. REVIEW BY BOARD; SUPREME COURT APPEAL

* * *

(d) The parties shall be promptly notified electronically or by ordinary or certified mail of the findings of fact, conclusions, and decision of the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final unless it is appealed to the Supreme Court.

Sec. 15. 21 V.S.A. § 1337a is amended to read:

§ 1337a. ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATION; HEARING ON

(a) Any employing unit aggrieved by an administrative determination affecting its rate of contributions, its rights to adjustment or refund on contributions paid, its coverage as an employer, or its termination of coverage may, within 30 days after the date of the determination, file with the Commissioner a petition for a hearing on the determination. The petition shall set forth specifically and in detail the grounds upon which it is claimed the administrative determination is erroneous. Hearing or hearings on the petition shall be held by a referee appointed for that purpose, at times and places as provided by rules of the Board. Notice of the time and place of the hearing or hearings shall be given electronically or by ordinary or certified mail to the petitioner.

(b) After a hearing pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the petitioner shall be promptly notified electronically or by ordinary or certified mail of the findings of fact, conclusions, and decision of the referee. The decision of the referee shall be final unless the employing unit or Commissioner makes application for review of the decision by the Board within 30 days after the date of the decision or unless the Board, on its own motion within the same period, initiates a review of the decision.

Sec. 16. 21 V.S.A. § 1357 is amended to read:

§ 1357. NOTICES; FORM AND SERVICE

Notices required under the provisions of this chapter, unless otherwise provided by the provisions of this chapter or by rules adopted by the Supreme Court, shall be deemed sufficient if given in writing and delivered to the person entitled to it by an agent of the Commissioner, or sent electronically or

by ordinary or certified mail to the last known address of the person appearing in the records of the Commissioner. The manner of service shall be certified by the agent of the Commissioner making the service. Regardless of the manner of service and unless otherwise provided, appeal periods shall commence to run from the date of the determination or decision rendered. If a person to whom a notice has been sent files with the Commissioner within 60 days after the date of the notice a sworn statement to the effect that the notice was not received, or if the Commissioner is satisfied that the addressee did not receive the notice, a new notice shall be sent to that person and the appeal period shall commence to run from the date on which the new notice is sent.

Sec. 17. 21 V.S.A. § 1325 is amended to read:

§ 1325. EMPLOYERS' EXPERIENCE-RATING RECORDS; DISCLOSURE TO SUCCESSOR ENTITY

* * *

(b)(1) Disclosure of contribution rate to successor entity. Any individual or employing unit who in any manner succeeds to or acquires the organization, trade, or business or substantially all of the assets of any employer who has been operating the business within two weeks prior to the acquisition, except any assets retained by the employer incident to the liquidation of the employer's obligations, and who thereafter continues the acquired business shall be considered to be a successor to the predecessor from whom the business was acquired and, if not already an employer before the acquisition, shall become an employer on the date of the acquisition. The Commissioner shall transfer the experience-rating record of the predecessor employer to the successor employer. If the successor was not an employer before the date of acquisition, the successor's rate of contribution for the remainder of the rate year shall be the rate applicable to the predecessor employers with respect to the period immediately preceding the date of acquisition if there was only one predecessor or there were only predecessors with identical rates. If the predecessors' rates were not identical, the Commissioner shall determine a rate based on the combined experience of all the predecessor employers. If the successor was an employer before the date of acquisition, the contribution rate that was assigned to the successor for the rate year in which the acquisition occurred will remain assigned to the successor for the remainder of the rate year, after which the experience-rating record of the predecessor shall be combined with the experience rating of the successor to form the single employer experience-rating record of the successor. At any time prior to the issuance of the certificate required by subsection 1322(b) of this chapter, an employing unit shall, upon request of a potential successor, disclose to the potential successor its current experience-rating record.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, an individual or employing unit who in any manner succeeds to or acquires the organization, trade, or business or substantially all of the assets of any employing unit who was an employer before the date of acquisition and whose currently assigned contribution rate is higher than that currently assigned to the acquiring individual or employing unit shall not be treated as a successor.

(3) If a successor, upon acquisition of an employer under subdivision (1) of this subsection, divides operation of the successor business between two or more corporate entities, the successor shall designate one of the corporate entities involved in successor's business operations as the filing successor for purposes of quarterly wage reporting and benefit rate assignment. The designated filing successor shall include all employees involved in carrying on the successor business in the designated filing successor's quarterly wage reporting and shall pay the full successor benefit tax on all business employees.

* * *

Sec. 18. 21 V.S.A. § 1326 is amended to read:

§ 1326. RATE BASED ON BENEFIT EXPERIENCE

* * *

(d) The Commissioner shall compute a current fund ratio, and a highest benefit cost rate, as follows:

(1) The current fund ratio shall be determined by dividing the available balance of the Unemployment Compensation Fund on December 31 of the preceding calendar year by the total wages paid for employment during that calendar year as reported by employers by the following March 31.

(2)(A) The highest benefit cost rate ~~shall be determined by dividing the highest amount of benefit payments made during a consecutive 12-month period that ended within the 10-year period ending on the preceding December 31, by the total wages paid during the four calendar quarter periods that ended within that 12-month period~~ is the highest annual ratio within the 10-year period ending on the preceding December 31 of benefits paid, including the State's share of extended benefits, for taxpaying employers divided by total wages paid in covered employment for taxpaying employers for the same period.

(B) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (A) of this subdivision (d)(2) to the contrary, when computing the tax rate schedule to become effective on July 1, 2021 and on each subsequent July 1, the

Commissioner shall calculate the highest benefit cost rate without consideration of benefit payments made in calendar year 2020.

* * *

Sec. 19. 21 V.S.A. § 1338a is amended to read:

§ 1338a. DISREGARDED EARNINGS

(a) An individual shall be deemed "partially unemployed" in any week of less than full-time work if the wages earned by the individual with respect to such week are less than the weekly benefit amount the individual would be entitled to receive if totally unemployed and eligible. As used in this section, "wages" in any one week includes only that amount of remuneration rounded down to the nearest dollar that is in excess of 50 percent of the individual's weekly wage.

* * *

Sec. 20. 21 V.S.A. § 1462 is amended to read:

§ 1462. PERIOD OF DORMANCY

On July 1, 2020, the Short-Time Compensation Program established pursuant to sections 1451–1461 of this subchapter ~~shall cease~~ ceased operation ~~and shall not resume operation unless directed to do so by enactment of the General Assembly or, if the General Assembly is not in session, by order of the Joint Fiscal Committee~~. ~~The Joint Fiscal Committee shall issue such order only upon finding that, due to a change in circumstances, resumption of the Short-Time Compensation Program would be the most effective way to assist employers in avoiding layoffs. Upon the effective date of such an enactment or order~~ Effective upon completion of the project to implement a modernized information technology system for the unemployment insurance program in 2026, the Short-Time Compensation Program shall resume operation pursuant to the provisions of sections 1451–1461 of this subchapter.

Sec. 21. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 52f is amended to read:

Sec. 52f. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION; ANNUAL REPORT; INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION

(a)(1) The Secretary of Digital Services and the Commissioner of Labor shall, to the greatest extent possible, plan and carry out the development and implementation of a modernized information technology system for the unemployment insurance program so that the modernized system is ready and able to implement on or before July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 the changes to the

unemployment insurance weekly benefit amount set forth in Secs. 52d and 52e of this act.

* * *

Sec. 21a. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 59 is amended to read:

Sec. 59. EFFECTIVE DATES

* * *

(b)(1) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, Sec. 52a (repeal of prior unemployment insurance supplemental benefit) shall take effect retroactively on October 7, 2021.

* * *

(4)(A) Sec. 52d (amendment of temporary increase in unemployment insurance maximum weekly benefit) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 or the date on which the Commissioner of Labor determines that the Department of Labor is able to implement the provisions of that section as set forth in Sec. 52f(b), whichever is earlier, and shall apply to benefit weeks beginning after that date.

(B) However, Sec. 52d shall not take effect at all if Sec. 52c takes effect before the conditions of subdivision (A) of this subdivision (b)(4) are satisfied.

(5)(A) Sec. 52e (increase in unemployment insurance weekly benefit amount) shall take effect on July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 and shall apply to benefit weeks beginning after that date.

(B) However, Sec. 52e shall not take effect at all if either

(i) Sec. 52d takes effect before July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026; or

(ii) Sec. 52c has not taken effect before July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026.

* * *

* * * Workers' Compensation * * *

Sec. 22. 21 V.S.A § 601 is amended to read:

§ 601. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(31) "Medical case management" means the planning and coordination of health care services appropriate to achieve the goal of medical rehabilitation.

(A) Medical case management may include medical case assessment, including a personal interview with the injured employee; assistance in developing, implementing, and coordinating a medical care plan with health care providers in consultation with the injured employee and the employees' family; and an evaluation of treatment results. The goal of medical case management is to provide the injured employee with reasonable treatment options to ensure that the injured employee can make an informed choice.

(B) Medical case managers shall not provide medical care or adjust claims.

(C) An injured employee shall be entitled to medical case management services if reasonably supported. Reasonable support includes a recommendation made by a health care provider or evidence demonstrating the injured employee's medical recovery would benefit from the services, or both.

Sec. 23. 21 V.S.A. § 602 is amended to read:

§ 602. PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

* * *

(d) When an injured employee does not speak English fluently, the employer shall pay for translation services to ensure the injured employee fully understands the employee's rights and can effectively participate in the employee's medical recovery and the workers' compensation claims process.

Sec. 24. 21 V.S.A. § 640b is amended to read:

§ 640b. REQUEST FOR PREAUTHORIZATION TO DETERMINE IF PROPOSED BENEFITS OR SERVICES ARE NECESSARY

(a) As used in this section~~,~~:

(1) ~~"benefits"~~ "Benefits" means medical treatment and surgical, medical, and nursing services and supplies, including prescription drugs and durable medical equipment.

(2) "Services" means medical case management services.

* * *

(e) Within 14 days after receiving a request for preauthorization of proposed medical case management services, the insurer shall do one of the following, in writing:

(1) Authorize the services and notify the injured employee, the Department, and the treating provider recommending the services, if applicable.

(2) Deny the services because the entire claim is disputed, and the Commissioner has not issued an interim order to pay benefits. The insurer shall notify the injured employee, the Department, and the treating provider recommending the services, if applicable, of the decision to deny benefits.

(3) Deny the request if there is not reasonable support for the requested services. The insurer shall notify the injured employee, the Department, and the treating provider recommending the services, if applicable, of the decision to deny benefits.

(4) Notify the injured employee, the Department, and the treating provider recommending the services, if applicable, that the insurer has scheduled an examination of the injured employee pursuant to section 655 of this title or ordered a medical record review pursuant to section 655a of this title. Based on the examination or review, the insurer shall notify the injured employee and the Department of the decision within 45 days after a request for preauthorization. The Commissioner may, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, grant a 10-day extension to the insurer to authorize or deny the services, and such an extension shall not be subject to appeal.

(f) If the insurer fails to authorize or deny the services pursuant to subsection (e) of this section within 14 days after receiving a request, the injured employee or the injured employee's treating provider, if applicable, may request that the Department issue an order authorizing services. After receipt of the request, the Department shall issue an interim order within five days after notice to the insurer, and five days in which to respond, absent evidence that the entire claim is disputed. Upon request of a party, the Commissioner shall notify the parties that the services have been authorized by operation of law.

(g) If the insurer denies the preauthorization of the services pursuant to subdivision (e)(2), (3), or (4) of this section, the Commissioner may, on the Commissioner's own initiative or upon a request by the injured worker, issue an order authorizing the services if the Commissioner finds that the evidence shows that the services are reasonably supported.

Sec. 25. 21 V.S.A. § 650 is amended to read:

§ 650. PAYMENT; AVERAGE WAGE; COMPUTATION

* * *

(f)(1)(A) When benefits have been awarded or are not in dispute as provided in subsection (e) of this section, the employer shall establish a weekday on which payment shall be mailed or deposited and notify the claimant and the Department of that day. The employer shall ensure that each weekly payment is mailed or deposited on or before the day established.

(B) Payment shall be made by direct deposit to a claimant who elects that payment method. The employer shall notify the claimant of the claimant's right to payment by direct deposit.

(2) If the benefit payment is not mailed or deposited on the day established, the employer shall pay to the claimant a late fee equal to the greater of $10.00 or:

(A) five percent of the benefit amount~~, whichever is greater,~~ for ~~each weekly~~ the first payment that is made after the established day;

(B) 10 percent of the benefit amount for the second payment that is made after the established day; and

(C) 15 percent of the benefit amount for the third and any subsequent payments that are made after the established day.

(3) As used in this subsection, "paid" means the payment is mailed to the claimant's mailing address or, in the case of direct deposit, transferred into the designated account. In the event of a dispute, proof of payment shall be established by affidavit.

Sec. 26. LATE PAYMENT OF AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES; PENALTY; REPORT

(a) The payment of any late fee pursuant to 21 V.S.A. § 650(f)(2) shall be reported to the Commissioner on a quarterly basis for one year, commencing on October 1, 2025. The employer shall attest to the reasons for the late payment and the steps being taken to avoid future late payments of benefit amounts. The Commissioner shall compile the information in a format of the Commissioner's choosing.

(b) An employer who fails to submit the report required by subsection (a) of this section may be assessed an administrative penalty of not more than $500.00.

(c) On or before January 15, 2027, the Commissioner shall submit a written report to the General Assembly with the Commissioner's findings on the frequency of late payments at each penalty level, the reasons given for the late payments, and the effectiveness of the late fee penalties in reducing the number of late payments. The report shall include the Commissioner's recommendation on whether to continue the reporting requirement and whether the penalties for late payments should be maintained, increased, or decreased based upon the reported data.

* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 27. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: "An act relating to wage and hour, unemployment compensation, and workers' compensation"

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

Appointments Confirmed

Under suspension of the rules (and particularly, Senate Rule 93), as moved by Senator Collamore, the following Gubernatorial appointments were confirmed together as a group by the Senate, without reports given by the Committees to which they were referred and without debate:

Aiken, Katie of Bennington - Member of the Parole Board - May 1, 2024 to February 28, 2026.

Boucher, Patricia of South Burlington - Member of the Parole Board - April 15, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Campion, Brian of Bennington - Member of the State Board of Education- March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

Drake, Samantha K. of Waterbury Center - Alternate Member of the Parole Board - May 28, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Lenes, Joan of Shelburne - Member of the Community High School of Vermont Board - May 29, 2024 to February 28, 2027.

Maulucci, Jason of Essex - Trustee of the University of VT and Agricultural College Board of Trustees - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2031.

Saarnijoki, Linda of Weston - Member of the Board of Libraries - March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2029.

Rules Suspended; Immediate Consideration; Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

H. 91.

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended and Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to the Vermont Homeless Emergency Assistance and Responsive Transition to Housing Program.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

Thereupon, on motion of Senator Baruth, the rules were suspended, and the bill carrying an appropriation and requiring the expenditure of funds, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations under Senate Rule 31.

Point of Privilege Journalized

During announcements, on a point of personal privilege, Senator Gulick addressed the Chair, and on motion of Senator Hardy, her remarks were entered into the Journal.

"Mr. President,

"Earlier in the session, the Senate Finance Committee heard testimony from the Executive Director of the Vermont Community Broadband Board and we asked to be kept informed of the federal funding landscape.

"Last Friday, the Executive Director shared that the Trump Administration shared with the Vermont Community Broadband Board that their Digital Equity Grant was being cancelled. This abrupt cancellation will result in a loss of $5.3 million plus another $5 million over the course of the next few years resulting in a total loss of $10 million in grants. Trump decided the Digital Equity Program was 'unconstitutional and grants issued pursuant to it were created with and administered using, impermissible and unconstitutional racial preferences.'

"The Digital Equity Act targeted rural, aging and low-income Vermonters, veterans, people with disabilities, those with language barriers, and members of racial and ethnic minorities, and over 95% of Vermonters fall into one or more of these populations.

"This funding was meant to allow Vermonters to participate in the economy and engage in education, telehealth, remote work and civic engagement through fiber optic infrastructure.

"I know we have asked to journalize many remarks this session, but it's important that future generations look back and see that there were some in the Vermont Senate who shined a light on the threats to our Democracy and the erosion of the principles of our Constitution."

Message from the House No. 63

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered Senate proposals of amendment to the following House bills:

H. 396. An act relating to the creation of the Mollie Beattie Distinguished Service Award.

H. 461. An act relating to expanding employee access to unpaid leave.

And has severally concurred therein.

The House has considered the report of the Committee of Conference upon the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on House bill of the following title:

H. 494. An act relating to capital construction and State bonding.

And has adopted the same on its part.

The Governor has informed the House that on May 15, 2025, he returned without signature and vetoed a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 219. An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program.

The House has adopted House concurrent resolutions of the following titles:

H.C.R. 141. House concurrent resolution in memory of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) engineer Edward M. Hathaway.

H.C.R. 142. House concurrent resolution honoring Steven D. Faccio of Strafford for his inspiring leadership as a conservation biologist.

H.C.R. 143. House concurrent resolution honoring former Pawlet First Constable David Ricard Sr. for his outstanding municipal public service.

H.C.R. 144. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps.

H.C.R. 145. House concurrent resolution celebrating the 35th anniversary of the installation of the first piece of art for the Art in State Buildings Program.

H.C.R. 146. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Bennington Fire Department's management of the annual Bennington Battle Day Weekend Parade and festivities.

H.C.R. 147. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Navy.

H.C.R. 148. House concurrent resolution in memory of distinguished Vermont attorney Richard T. Cassidy of Burlington.

H.C.R. 149. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 175th anniversary of the Bennington Fire Department.

H.C.R. 150. House concurrent resolution congratulating Bennington Lodge No. 567 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks on 125 years of community service and good fellowship.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

Text of Communication from Governor

The text of the communication to the House from His Excellency, the Governor, whereby he vetoed and returned unsigned **House Bill No. 219** is as follows:

"May 15, 2025

The Honorable BetsyAnn Wrask
Clerk of the Vermont House of Representatives
State House
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Ms. Wrask:

Pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution, I'm returning H.219, *An act relating to establishing the Department of Corrections' Family Support Program,* without my signature because of my objections described herein:

I have no objection to providing family support programs for incarcerated parents and guardians, however, this bill violates the constitutionally mandated, separation of powers by attempting to obligate the Governor to include funding in the annual budget submission to the Legislature.

The Vermont Constitution Chapter II, Section 20 is clear. The Legislature has no authority to direct the Governor on how to establish funding and policy priorities in the Governor's budget submission. For this reason, I cannot allow this bill to go into law.

I met with several lawmakers to notify them of my intent to veto the bill and provided assurances that, because this program was also included in the budget (H.493, Sec E.338.1), it will move forward in FY26 as planned. I would also welcome the Legislature to send me the bill again with the change, if preferred, or address it next session.

Sincerely,

/s/Philip B. Scott
Governor

PBS/kp"

House Concurrent Resolutions

The following joint concurrent resolutions having been placed on the consent calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no Senator having requested floor consideration as provided by the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, were severally adopted in concurrence:

Offered by Reps. Holcombe and Masland,

H.C.R. 141.

House concurrent resolution in memory of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) engineer Edward M. Hathaway.

Offered by Reps. Kimbell and others,

Offered by Senators Clarkson, Major and White,

H.C.R. 142.

House concurrent resolution honoring Steven D. Faccio of Strafford for his inspiring leadership as a conservation biologist.

Offered by Reps. Pritchard and McCoy,

Offered by Senators Collamore, Weeks and Williams,

H.C.R. 143.

House concurrent resolution honoring former Pawlet First Constable David Ricard Sr. for his outstanding municipal public service.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 144.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Offered by Reps. Emmons and others,

H.C.R. 145.

House concurrent resolution celebrating the 35th anniversary of the installation of the first piece of art for the Art in State Buildings Program.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 146.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Bennington Fire Department's management of the annual Bennington Battle Day Weekend Parade and festivities.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 147.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Navy.

Offered by Reps. LaLonde and others,

H.C.R. 148.

House concurrent resolution in memory of distinguished Vermont attorney Richard T. Cassidy of Burlington.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 149.

House concurrent resolution commemorating the 175th anniversary of the Bennington Fire Department.

Offered by Reps. Morrissey and others,

Offered by Sens. Bongartz and Plunkett,

H.C.R. 150.

House concurrent resolution congratulating Bennington Lodge No. 567 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks on 125 years of community service and good fellowship.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned, to reconvene on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at ten o'clock in the forenoon pursuant to J.R.S. 26.

TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025

The Senate was called to order by the President *pro tempore*.

Devotional Exercises

A moment of silence was observed in lieu of devotions.

Pledge of Allegiance

The President *pro tempore* then led the members of the Senate in the pledge of allegiance.

Message from the House No. 64

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. BetsyAnn Wrask, its Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has adopted joint resolution of the following title:

J.R.H. 5. Joint resolution authorizing limited remote joint committee voting through the remainder of calendar year 2025.

In the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The House has considered Senate proposal of amendment to the following House bill:

H. 481. An act relating to stormwater management.

And has concurred therein.

Bills Referred to Committee on Finance

House bills of the following titles, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and affecting the revenue of the state, under the rule were severally referred to the Committee on Finance:

H. 321. An act relating to miscellaneous cannabis amendments.

H. 397. An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the statutes governing emergency management and flood response.

Joint Senate Resolution Adopted on the Part of the Senate

J.R.S. 27.

Joint Senate resolution of the following title was offered, read and adopted on the part of the Senate, and is as follows:

Offered by Senator Baruth,

J.R.S. 27. Joint resolution relating to weekend adjournment on May 23, 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That when the two Houses adjourn on Friday, May 23, 2025, it be to meet again no later than Tuesday, May 27, 2025.

Joint Resolution Placed on Calendar

J.R.H. 5.

Joint resolution originating in the House of the following title was read the first time and is as follows:

Offered by Representatives Krowinski of Burlington, Dolan of Essex Junction, Houghton of Essex Junction, and McCoy of Poultney

Joint resolution authorizing limited remote joint committee voting through the remainder of calendar year 2025.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That through the remainder of calendar year 2025, each member of a joint committee is authorized to vote remotely in that committee for not more than three days, *and be it further*

Resolved: Such a member shall notify the committee chair or co-chairs, as applicable, and the committee clerk that the member is exercising this remote voting authority, and shall count toward a committee quorum, *and be it further*

Resolved: The committee clerk shall record any vote cast by the member as a remote vote, and shall track the number of days the member exercises this remote voting authority.

Thereupon, in the discretion of the Chair, under Rule 51, the joint resolution was placed on the Calendar for action the next legislative day.

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. 209. An act relating to intranasal epinephrine in schools.

H. 222. An act relating to civil orders of protection.

Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment

H. 482

House bill entitled:

An act relating to Green Mountain Care Board authority to adjust a hospital's reimbursement rates and to appoint a hospital observer.

Was taken up.

Thereupon, the bill was read the third time and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment on a division of the Senate, Yeas 16, Nays 12.

Third Reading Ordered

H. 504.

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

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the City of Rutland.

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. 238.

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

An act relating to the phaseout of consumer products containing added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

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:

* * * PFAS in Consumer Products * * *

Sec. 1. 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 12A is amended to read:

Subchapter 12A. PFAS in Consumer Products

§ 2494e. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Adult mattress" means a mattress other than a crib or toddler mattress.

(2) "Aftermarket stain and water resistant treatments" means treatments for textile and leather consumer products used in residential settings that have been treated during the manufacturing process for stain, oil, and water resistance, but excludes products marketed or sold exclusively for use at industrial facilities during the manufacture of a carpet, rug, clothing, or shoe.

(3) "Apparel" means any of the following:

(A) Clothing items intended for regular wear or formal occasions, including undergarments, shirts, pants, skirts, dresses, overalls, bodysuits, costumes, vests, dancewear, suits, saris, scarves, tops, leggings, school

uniforms, leisurewear, athletic wear, sports uniforms, everyday swimwear, formal wear, onesies, bibs, reusable diapers, footwear, and everyday uniforms for workwear. Clothing items intended for regular wear or formal occasions do not include clothing items for exclusive use by the U.S. Armed Forces, outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions, and personal protective equipment.

(B) Outdoor apparel.

(4) "Artificial turf" means a surface of synthetic fibers that is used in place of natural grass in recreational, residential, or commercial applications.

(5) "Cleaning product" means a compound intended for routine cleaning, including general purpose cleaners, bathroom cleaners, glass cleaners, carpet cleaners, floor care products, and hand soaps. "Cleaning product" does not mean an antimicrobial pesticide.

(6) "Cookware" means durable houseware items used to prepare, dispense, or store food, foodstuffs, or beverages and that are intended for direct food contact, including pots, pans, skillets, grills, baking sheets, baking molds, trays, bowls, and cooking utensils.

(7) "Dental floss" means a string-like device made of cotton or other fibers intended to remove plaque and food particles from between the teeth to reduce tooth decay. The fibers of the device may be coated with wax for easier use.

(8) "Fluorine treated container" means a fluorinated treated plastic container.

~~(6)~~(9) "Incontinency protection product" means a disposable, absorbent hygiene product designed to absorb bodily waste for use by individuals 12 years of age and older.

~~(7)~~(10) ~~"Intentionally added" means the addition of a chemical in a product that serves an intended function in the product component~~ "Intentionally added PFAS" means PFAS added to a product regulated under this subchapter or one of its product components to provide a specific characteristic, appearance, or quality or to perform a specific function. "Intentionally added PFAS" also includes any degradation byproducts of PFAS or PFAS that are intentional breakdown products of an added chemical. For the purposes of this chapter the use of PFAS as a processing agent, mold release agent, or intermediate is considered intentional introduction where PFAS are detected in the final covered product.

~~(8)~~(11) "Juvenile product" means a product designed or marketed for use by infants and children under 12 years of age:

(A) including a baby or toddler foam pillow; bassinet; bedside sleeper; booster seat; changing pad; infant bouncer; infant carrier; infant seat; infant sleep positioner; infant swing; infant travel bed; infant walker; nap cot; nursing pad; nursing pillow; pacifier; play mat; playpen; play yard; polyurethane foam mat, pad, or pillow; portable foam nap mat; portable infant sleeper; portable hook-in chair; soft-sided portable crib; stroller; toddler mattress; and disposable, single-use diaper; ~~and~~

(B) excluding a children's electronic product, such as a personal computer, audio and video equipment, calculator, wireless phone, game console, handheld device incorporating a video screen, or any associated peripheral such as a mouse, keyboard, power supply unit, or power cord; a medical device; or an adult mattress; and

(C) excluding children's all-terrain vehicles, as that term is defined under 23 V.S.A. § 3801.

~~(9)~~(12) "Manufacturer" means any person engaged in the business of making or assembling a consumer product directly or indirectly available to consumers. "Manufacturer" excludes a distributor or retailer, except when a consumer product is made or assembled outside the United States, in which case a "manufacturer" includes the importer or first domestic distributor of the consumer product.

~~(10)~~(13) "Medical device" has the same meaning given to "device" in 21 U.S.C. § 321.

~~(11)~~(14) "Outdoor apparel" means clothing items intended primarily for outdoor activities, including hiking, camping, skiing, climbing, bicycling, and fishing.

~~(12)~~(15) "Outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions" means outdoor apparel that are extreme and extended use products designed for outdoor sports experts for applications that provide protection against extended exposure to extreme rain conditions or against extended immersion in water or wet conditions, such as from snow, in order to protect the health and safety of the user and that are not marketed for general consumer use. Examples of extreme and extended use products include outerwear for offshore fishing, offshore sailing, whitewater kayaking, and mountaineering.

~~(13)~~(16) "Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or "PFAS" means a class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom.

~~(14)~~(17) "Personal protective equipment" has the same meaning as in section 2494p of this title.

~~(15)~~(18) "Regulated perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or "regulated PFAS" means:

(A) PFAS that a manufacturer has intentionally added to a product and that have a functional or technical effect in the product, including PFAS components of intentionally added chemicals and PFAS that are intentional breakdown products of an added chemical that also have a functional or technical effect in the product; or

(B) the presence of PFAS in a product or product component at or above 100 parts per million, as measured in total organic fluorine.

~~(16)~~(19) "Rug or carpet" means a fabric marketed or intended for use as a floor covering.

~~(17)~~(20) "Ski wax" means a lubricant applied to the bottom of snow runners, including skis and snowboards, to improve their grip and glide properties.

~~(18)~~(21) "Textile" means any item made in whole or part from a natural, manmade, or synthetic fiber, yarn, or fabric, and includes leather, cotton, silk, jute, hemp, wool, viscose, nylon, or polyester. "Textile" does not include single-use paper hygiene products, including toilet paper, paper towels, tissues, or single-use absorbent hygiene products.

~~(19)~~(22) "Textile articles" means textile goods of a type customarily and ordinarily used in households and businesses, and includes apparel, accessories, handbags, backpacks, draperies, shower curtains, furnishings, upholstery, bedding, towels, napkins, and table cloths. "Textile articles" does not include:

(A) a vehicle, as defined in 1 U.S.C. § 4, or its component parts;

(B) a vessel, as defined in 1 U.S.C. § 3, or its component parts;

(C) an aircraft, as defined in 49 U.S.C. § 40102(a)(6), or its component parts;

(D) filtration media and filter products used in industrial applications, including chemical or pharmaceutical manufacturing and environmental control technologies;

(E) textile articles used for laboratory analysis and testing; and

(F) rugs or carpets.

§ 2494f. ~~AFTERMARKET STAIN AND WATER-RESISTANT TREATMENTS~~ PROHIBITION ON PFAS IN CONSUMER PRODUCTS

(a) ~~A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State aftermarket stain and water-resistant treatments for rugs or carpets to which PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.~~

~~(b) This section shall not apply to the sale or resale of used products.~~ A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in the State the following consumer products to which PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount:

(1) aftermarket stain and water-resistant treatments;

(2) artificial turf;

(3) cleaning products;

(4) cookware;

(5) dental floss;

(6) incontinency protection products;

(7) juvenile products;

(8) residential rugs and carpets; or

(9) ski wax.

(b) A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in the State textiles or textile articles to which regulated PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.

(c) The prohibitions under subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall not apply to the sale, offer for sale, distribution for sale, or distribution for use of any of the products listed under subsections (a) and (b) of this section that have been previously used by a consumer for the intended purpose of the product.

~~§ 2494g. ARTIFICIAL TURF~~

~~A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State artificial turf to which:~~

~~(1) PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount; or~~

~~(2) PFAS have entered the product from the manufacturing or processing of that product, the addition of which is known or reasonably ascertainable by the manufacturer.~~

~~§ 2494h. COOKWARE~~

~~(a) A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State cookware to which PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.~~

~~(b) This section shall not apply to the sale or resale of used products.~~

~~§ 2494i. INCONTINENCY PROTECTION PRODUCT~~

~~A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State an incontinency protection product to which PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.~~

~~§ 2494j. JUVENILE PRODUCTS~~

~~(a) A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State juvenile products to which PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.~~

~~(b) This section shall not apply to the sale or resale of used products.~~

~~§ 2494k. RUGS AND CARPETS~~

~~(a) A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State a residential rug or carpet to which PFAS have been added in any amount.~~

~~(b) This section shall not apply to the sale or resale of used products.~~

~~§ 2494l. SKI WAX~~

~~(a) A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State ski wax or related tuning products to which PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.~~

~~(b) This section shall not apply to the sale or resale of used products.~~

~~§ 2494m. TEXTILES~~

~~(a) A manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State a textile or textile article to which regulated PFAS have been intentionally added in any amount.~~

~~(b) This section shall not apply to the sale or resale of used products.~~

§ 2494g. FLUORINE TREATED CONTAINERS

(a) A manufacturer shall not sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in the State a product listed under subdivisions 2494f(a)(1)–(9) of this title that does not contain intentionally added PFAS but that is sold, offered for sale, distributed for sale, or distributed for use in the State in a fluorine treated container.

(b) The prohibition under subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to the sale, offer for sale, distribution for sale, or distribution for use of a product that has been previously used by a consumer for the intended purpose of the product.

(c) Beginning on January 1, 2032, a manufacturer shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in the State a fluorine treated container or any consumer product in a fluorine treated container.

§ ~~2494n~~ 2494h. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

(a) The Attorney General may request a certificate of compliance from a manufacturer of a consumer product regulated under this subchapter. Within 60 days after receipt of the Attorney General's request for a certificate of compliance, the manufacturer shall:

(1) provide the Attorney General with a certificate attesting that the manufacturer's product or products comply with the requirements of this subchapter; or

(2) notify persons who are selling a product of the manufacturer's in this State that the sale is prohibited because the product does not comply with this subchapter and submit to the Attorney General a list of the names and addresses of those persons notified.

(b) A manufacturer required to submit a certificate of compliance pursuant to this section may rely upon a certificate of compliance provided to the manufacturer by a supplier for the purpose of determining the manufacturer's reporting obligations. A certificate of compliance provided by a supplier in accordance with this subsection shall be used solely for the purpose of determining a manufacturer's compliance with this section.

§ ~~2494o~~ 2494i. VIOLATIONS

(a) A violation of this subchapter is deemed to be a violation of section 2453 of this title.

(b) The Attorney General has the same authority to make rules, conduct civil investigations, enter into assurances of discontinuance, and bring civil actions, and private parties have the same rights and remedies, as provided under subchapter 1 of this chapter.

Sec. 2. 9 V.S.A. § 2494e(19) is amended to read:

(19) "Regulated perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or "regulated PFAS" means:

(A) PFAS that a manufacturer has intentionally added to a product and that have a functional or technical effect in the product, including PFAS components of intentionally added chemicals and PFAS that are intentional breakdown products of an added chemical that also have a functional or technical effect in the product; or

(B) the presence of PFAS in a product or product component at or above ~~100~~ 50 parts per million, as measured in total organic fluorine.

Sec. 3. 9 V.S.A. § 2494e(3) is amended to read:

(3) "Apparel" means any of the following:

(A) Clothing items intended for regular wear or formal occasions, including undergarments, shirts, pants, skirts, dresses, overalls, bodysuits, costumes, vests, dancewear, suits, saris, scarves, tops, leggings, school uniforms, leisurewear, athletic wear, sports uniforms, everyday swimwear, formal wear, onesies, bibs, reusable diapers, footwear, and everyday uniforms for workwear. Clothing items intended for regular wear or formal occasions do not include clothing items for exclusive use by the U.S. Armed Forces~~, outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions,~~ and personal protective equipment.

(B) Outdoor apparel.

(C) Outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions.

Sec. 4. ANR REPORT ON PFAS REGULATION

(a) As used in this section, "perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or "PFAS" means a class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom.

(b) On or before January 15, 2027, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall submit to the House Committees on Environment and on Human Services and the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Energy and on Health and Welfare a report regarding the regulation by other states of PFAS in consumer products. The report shall include:

(1) a summary of programs in other states that regulate PFAS in consumer products, including whether other states have implemented a regulatory program based on the definition of PFAS used in this section;

(2) if other states have implemented regulatory programs for PFAS, a summary of the effectiveness of the programs, including any obstacles or difficulties these states may have faced in implementing a program, the staffing required for a program, and the time frame under which each state implemented the program;

(3) a recommendation, based on review of regulatory programs in other states, on whether Vermont should establish a regulatory program for PFAS in consumer products, including the State agency in which such a program should be located, the staffing required, and a time frame for implementation;

(4) whether other states have prohibited or restricted the use of fluorine treated containers, including a summary of how fluorine treated containers are used or allowed for use in other states;

(5) any other information that the Secretary determines is necessary for the purpose of informing the General Assembly whether to enact a regulatory program for PFAS in consumer products; and

(6) a summary of PFAS data in industrial processes, to the extent available, and whether any other state has restricted the use of PFAS-contaminated water in manufacturing.

Sec. 5. REPORTS; PFAS IN COMPLEX DURABLE GOODS; FOOD

(a)(1) On or before January 15, 2033, the Secretary of Natural Resources shall provide a recommendation to the House Committees on Human Services and on Environment and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Natural Resources and Energy on how to address PFAS in complex durable goods.

(2) As used in this subsection, "complex durable goods" means a consumer product that is a manufactured good composed of 100 or more manufactured components, with an intended useful life of five or more years, where the product is typically not consumed, destroyed, or discarded after a single use. This includes replacement parts for complex durable goods not subject to a phaseout under this chapter.

(b)(1) On or before January 15, 2033, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall provide a recommendation to the House Committees on Human Services and on Environment and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Natural Resources and Energy on how to address PFAS in food.

(2) As used in this subsection, "food" has the same meaning as in 18 V.S.A. § 4051.

(c) The Secretary of Natural Resources shall update the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House Committee on Environment, and the Secretary of Natural Resources on the status of the regulation of PFAS in complex durable goods and in food in other states. The first status report shall be submitted on or before January 15, 2027, as part of the report required

under Sec. 4 of this act or as testimony. The second update shall be provided as testimony to the committees on or before January 15, 2029.

Sec. 6. REPEALS

(a) 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 131, Sec. 4 (prospective definition for outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions) is repealed.

(b) 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 131, Sec. 5 (prospective definition of regulated PFAS) is repealed.

Sec. 7. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 131, Sec. 13 is amended to read:

Sec. 13. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024, except that:

(1) Sec. 1 (chemicals in cosmetic and menstrual products), ~~Sec. 3 (PFAS in consumer products),~~ Sec. 6 (PFAS in firefighting agents and equipment), and Sec. 7 (chemicals of concern in food packaging) shall take effect on January 1, 2026; and

(2) Sec. 2 (9 V.S.A. § 2494b) ~~and Sec. 5 (9 V.S.A. § 2494e(15))~~ shall take effect on July 1, 2027~~; and~~

~~(3) Sec. 4 (9 V.S.A. § 2494e(3)) shall take effect on July 1, 2028~~.

* * * PFAS in Firefighting Agents and Equipment * * *

Sec. 8. 9 V.S.A. § 2494p(2) is amended to read:

(2) ~~"Intentionally added" means the addition of a chemical in a product that serves an intended function in the product component~~. "Intentionally added PFAS" means PFAS added to a product regulated under this subchapter or one of its product components to provide a specific characteristic, appearance, or quality or to perform a specific function. "Intentionally added PFAS" also includes any degradation byproducts of PFAS or PFAS that are intentional breakdown products of an added chemical. For the purposes of this chapter the use of PFAS as a processing agent, mold release agent, or intermediate is considered intentional introduction where PFAS are detected in the final covered product.

Sec. 9. 9 V.S.A. § 2494s is amended to read:

(a) A manufacturer or other person that sells firefighting equipment to any person, municipality, or State agency shall ~~provide written notice to the purchaser at the time of sale, citing to this subchapter, if the personal protective equipment or station wear contains PFAS. The written notice shall include a statement that the personal protective equipment or station wear contains PFAS and the reason PFAS are added to the equipment~~ not sell, offer

for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State any personal protective equipment to which PFAS have been intentionally added.

(b) ~~The manufacturer or person selling personal protective equipment or station wear and the purchaser of the personal protective equipment or station wear shall retain the notice for at least three years from the date of the transaction.~~ The prohibitions under subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to personal protective equipment that is a respirator or respirator protection equipment, provided that a manufacturer of a respirator or respirator protection equipment shall provide written notice to the purchaser at the time of sale, citing to this subchapter if the respirator or respirator protection equipment contains PFAS. The written notice shall include a statement that the respirator or respirator protection equipment contains PFAS and the reason PFAS are added to the equipment. The manufacturer or person selling respirator or respirator protection equipment and the purchaser of the respirator or respirator protection equipment shall retain the notice for at least three years from the date of the transaction.

Sec. 10. 9 V.S.A. § 2494s is amended to read:

§ 2494s. PROHIBITED SALE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT CONTAINING PFAS

(a) A manufacturer or other person that sells firefighting equipment to any person, municipality, or State agency shall not sell, offer for sale, distribute for sale, or distribute for use in this State any personal protective equipment to which PFAS have been intentionally added.

(b) ~~The prohibitions under subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to personal protective equipment that is a respirator or respirator protection equipment, provided that a manufacturer of a respirator or respirator protection equipment shall provide written notice to the purchaser at the time of sale, citing to this subchapter if the respirator or respirator protection equipment contains PFAS. The written notice shall include a statement that the respirator or respirator protection equipment contains PFAS and the reason PFAS are added to the equipment. The manufacturer or person selling respirator or respirator protection equipment and the purchaser of the respirator or respirator protection equipment shall retain the notice for at least three years from the date of the transaction.~~ [Repealed.]

Sec. 11. NOTICE OF PRESENCE OF PFAS IN STATION WEAR PRIOR TO PROHIBITION OF PFAS IN APPAREL

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or "PFAS" has the same meaning as in 9 V.S.A. § 2494p.

(2) "Station wear" means uniform shirts and pants worn by firefighting personnel in the performance of their duties, often underneath personal protective equipment.

(b) Prior to the limitation of PFAS in textile articles under 9 V.S.A. chapter 63, subchapter 12A beginning on July 1, 2026 under 9 V.S.A. § 2494f, a manufacturer or other person that sells station wear to any person, municipality, or State agency shall provide written notice to the purchaser at the time of sale, citing to this subchapter, if the station wear contains PFAS. The written notice shall include a statement that station wear contains PFAS and the reason PFAS are added to the station wear. The manufacturer or person selling station wear and the purchaser of station wear shall retain the notice for at least three years from the date of the transaction.

Sec. 12. ANR REPORT ON AVAILABILITY OF PFAS-FREE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or "PFAS" means a class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom.

(2) "Personal protective equipment" means clothing designed, intended, or marketed to be worn by firefighting personnel in the performance of their duties, designed with the intent for use in fire and rescue activities, and includes jackets, pants, shoes, gloves, helmets, and respiratory equipment.

(b) On or before December 15, 2028, the Agency of Natural Resources, after consultation with the Department of Public Safety, shall report to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committees on Human Service and on Environment regarding the availability of personal protective equipment that does not include PFAS. The report shall include:

(1) a summary of the general availability in the State of personal protective equipment that does not include PFAS, including whether respirators that do not include PFAS are generally available to firefighting personnel in Vermont; and

(2) a summary of the cost of personal protective equipment that does not include PFAS, including whether the personal protective equipment that does not include PFAS is available at comparable costs to personal protective equipment that includes PFAS.

(c) The Agency of Natural Resources shall submit a copy of the report required under this section to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to make available to municipal firefighting departments.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 13. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 4 and 5 (reports to the General Assembly), Sec. 11 (notice of PFAS in station wear), and Sec. 12 (availability of PFAS-free personal protective equipment) shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(b)(1) Sec. 1 (PFAS in consumer products) shall take effect on January 1, 2026, except that:

(A) 9 V.S.A. § 2494e(10) (definition of intentionally added) shall take effect on July 1, 2027;

(B) 9 V.S.A. § 2494f(a)(3) (cleaning products) and (a)(5) (dental floss) and 9 V.S.A. § 2494g (fluorine treated containers) shall take effect on July 1, 2027; and

(C) 9 V.S.A. § 2494f(a)(4) (cookware) shall take effect July 1, 2028.

(2) Sec. 1 and this section shall supersede those provisions of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 131, Sec. 3 that conflict with the provisions of this act.

(c) Sec. 2 (definition of regulated PFAS) shall take effect on July 1, 2027.

(d) Sec. 3 (definition of outdoor apparel) shall take effect on July 1, 2028.

(e) Secs. 6 (repeal of Act 131 provisions) and 7 (amended Act 131 effective dates) shall take effect on January 1, 2026.

(f) Sec. 8 (definition of intentionally added; PPE containing PFAS) shall take effect January 1, 2026 and shall supersede those provisions of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 131, Sec. 6 that conflict with the provisions of this act.

(g) Sec. 9 (prohibition on sale of PPE containing PFAS) shall take effect on July 1, 2029.

(h) Sec. 10 (prohibition on sale of respirators containing PFAS) shall take effect on July 1, 2032.

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.

Message from the House No. 65

A message was received from the House of Representatives by Ms. Courtney Reckord, its Second Assistant Clerk, as follows:

Mr. President:

I am directed to inform the Senate that:

The House has considered a bill originating in the Senate of the following title:

S. 12. An act relating to sealing criminal history records.

And has passed the same in concurrence with proposal of amendment in the adoption of which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The Governor has informed the House that on May 19, 2025, he approved and signed bills originating in the House of the following titles:

H. 137. An act relating to the regulation of insurance products and services.

H. 491. An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate.

House Proposal of Amendment Concurred In

S. 63.

House proposal of amendment to Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to modifying the regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board.

Was taken up.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill as follows:

First: By striking out Sec. 7, 18 V.S.A. § 9456, in its entirety and inserting a new Sec. 7 to read as follows:

Sec. 7. 18 V.S.A. § 9456 is amended to read:

§ 9456. BUDGET REVIEW

(a) The Board shall conduct reviews of each hospital's proposed budget based on the information provided pursuant to this subchapter and in accordance with a schedule established by the Board. Notwithstanding any provision of 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to the contrary, the Board's review, establishment, and enforcement of hospital budgets under this section shall not be construed to be a contested case. Any person aggrieved by a final Board

action, order, or determination under this section may appeal as set forth in section 9381 of this title.

* * *

(d)(1)(A) Annually, the Board shall establish a budget for each general hospital, as defined in section 1902 of this title, on or before September 15, followed by a written decision ~~by~~ on or before October 1.

(B) Annually, the Board shall establish a budget for each psychiatric hospital, as defined in section 1902 of this title but excluding those conducted, maintained, or operated by the State of Vermont, on or before December 15, followed by a written decision on or before December 31.

(C) Each hospital shall operate within the budget established under this section.

* * *

(h)(1) If a hospital violates a provision of this section, the Board may maintain an action in the Superior Court of the county in which the hospital is located to enjoin, restrain, or prevent such violation.

(2)(A) After notice and an opportunity for hearing, the Board may impose on a person who knowingly violates a provision of this subchapter, or a rule adopted pursuant to this subchapter, a civil administrative penalty of ~~no~~ not more than $40,000.00, or in the case of a continuing violation, a civil administrative penalty of ~~no~~ not more than $100,000.00 or one-tenth of one percent of the gross annual revenues of the hospital, whichever is greater. This subdivision shall not apply to violations of subsection (d) of this section caused by exceptional or unforeseen circumstances.

(B)(i) The Board may order a hospital to:

* * *

(ii) Orders issued under this subdivision (2)(B) shall be issued after notice and an opportunity to be heard, except where the Board finds that a hospital's financial or other emergency circumstances pose an immediate threat of harm to the public or to the financial condition of the hospital. Where there is an immediate threat, the Board may issue orders under this subdivision (2)(B) without written or oral notice to the hospital. Where an order is issued without notice, the hospital shall be notified of the right to a hearing at the time the order is issued. The hearing shall be held within 30 days after receipt of the hospital's request for a hearing, and a decision shall be issued within 30 days after conclusion of the hearing. The Board may increase the time to hold the hearing or to render the decision for good cause shown. ~~Hospitals may appeal any decision in this subsection to Superior Court.~~

~~Appeal shall be on the record as developed by the Board in the administrative proceeding and the standard of review shall be as provided in 8 V.S.A. § 16.~~

Second: By striking out Sec. 10, effective dates, in its entirety and inserting a new Sec. 10 to read as follows:

Sec. 10. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) In Sec. 5, (18 V.S.A. § 9382), subsection (a) shall take effect on January 1, 2027 and subsections (b)–(g) shall take effect on January 1, 2026.

(b) Secs. 6 (18 V.S.A. § 9454) and 7 (18 V.S.A. § 9456) and this section shall take effect on passage.

(c) The remaining sections shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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

Rules Suspended; Immediate Consideration; House Proposal of Amendment Not Concurred In; Committee of Conference Requested

S. 12.

Pending entry on the Calendar for notice, on motion of Senator Hashim, the rules were suspended and Senate bill entitled:

An act relating to sealing criminal history records.

Was taken up for immediate consideration.

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. 13 V.S.A. chapter 230 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 230. EXPUNGEMENT AND SEALING OF CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS

§ 7601. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Court" means the Criminal Division of the Superior Court.

(2) "Criminal history record" means all information documenting an individual's contact with the criminal justice system, including data regarding identification, arrest or citation, arraignment, judicial disposition, custody, and supervision.

(3) ~~"Predicate offense" means a criminal offense that can be used to enhance a sentence levied for a later conviction and includes operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other substance in violation of~~

~~23 V.S.A. § 1201, domestic assault in violation of section 1042 of this title, and stalking in violation of section 1062 of this title. "Predicate offense" shall not include misdemeanor possession of cannabis, a disorderly conduct offense under section 1026 of this title, or possession of a controlled substance in violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a), 4231(a), 4232(a), 4233(a), 4234(a), 4234a(a), 4234b(a), 4235(b), or 4235a(a)~~ "Criminal justice purposes" means the investigation, apprehension, detention, adjudication, or correction of persons suspected, charged, or convicted of criminal offenses. "Criminal justice purposes" also includes criminal identification activities; the collection, storage, and dissemination of criminal history records; and screening for criminal justice employment.

(4) "Qualifying crime" means:

~~(A) a misdemeanor offense that is not:~~

~~(i) a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;~~

~~(ii) an offense involving sexual exploitation of children in violation of chapter 64 of this title;~~

~~(iii) an offense involving violation of a protection order in violation of section 1030 of this title;~~

~~(iv) prostitution as defined in section 2632 of this title, or prohibited conduct under section 2601a of this title; or~~

~~(v) a predicate offense;~~

~~(B) a violation of subsection 3701(a) of this title related to criminal mischief;~~

~~(C) a violation of section 2501 of this title related to grand larceny;~~

~~(D) a violation of section 1201 of this title related to burglary, excluding any burglary into an occupied dwelling, as defined in subdivision 1201(b)(2) of this title;~~

~~(E) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4223 related to fraud or deceit;~~

~~(F) a violation of section 1802 of this title related to uttering a forged or counterfeited instrument;~~

~~(G) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a) related to possession and cultivation of cannabis;~~

~~(H) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4231(a) related to possession of cocaine;~~

~~(I) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4232(a) related to possession of LSD;~~

~~(J) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4233(a) related to possession of heroin;~~

~~(K) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234(a) related to possession of depressant, stimulant, and narcotic drugs;~~

~~(L) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234a(a) related to possession of methamphetamine;~~

~~(M) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234b(a) related to possession of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine;~~

~~(N) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235(b) related to possession of hallucinogenic drugs;~~

~~(O) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235a(a) related to possession of ecstasy; or~~

~~(P) any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.~~

(A) all misdemeanor offenses except:

(i) a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;

(ii) a violation of chapter 64 of this title relating to sexual exploitation of children;

(iii) a violation of section 1030 of this title relating to a violation of an abuse prevention order, an order against stalking or sexual assault, or a protective order concerning contact with a child;

(iv) a violation of chapter 28 of this title related to abuse, neglect, and exploitation of a vulnerable adult;

(v) a violation of subsection 2605(b) or (c) of this title related to voyeurism;

(vi) a violation of subdivisions 352(1)–(10) of this title related to cruelty to animals;

(vii) a violation of section 5409 of this title related to failure to comply with sex offender registry requirements;

(viii) a violation of section 1455 of this title related to hate motivated crimes;

(ix) a violation of subsection 1304(a) of this title related to cruelty to a child;

(x) a violation of section 1305 of this title related to cruelty by person having custody of another;

(xi) a violation of section 1306 of this title related to mistreatment of persons with impaired cognitive function;

(xii) a violation of section 3151 of this title related to female genital mutilation;

(xiii) a violation of subsection 3258(b) of this title related to sexual exploitation of a minor;

(xiv) a violation of subdivision 4058(b)(1) of this title related to violation of an extreme risk protection order;

(xv) an offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4 by a person who is the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39; and

(xvi) any offense that would require registration as a sex offender pursuant to chapter 167, subchapter 3 of this title; and

(B) the following felonies:

(i) a violation of section 1201 of this title related to burglary, excluding any burglary into an occupied dwelling, unless the person was 25 years of age or younger at the time of the offense and did not carry a dangerous or deadly weapon during the commission of the offense;

(ii) designated felony property offenses as defined in subdivision (5) of this section;

(iii) offenses relating to possessing, cultivating, selling, dispensing, or transporting regulated drugs, including violations of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a) and (b), 4231(a) and (b), 4232(a) and (b), 4233(a) and (b), 4233a(a), 4234(a) and (b), 4234a(a) and (b), 4234b(a) and (b), 4235(b) and (c), or 4235a(a) and (b); and

(iv) any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.

(5) "Designated felony property offense" means:

(A) section 1801 of this title related to forgery and counterfeiting;

(B) section 1802 of this title related to uttering a forged or counterfeited instrument;

(C) section 1804 of this title related to counterfeiting paper money;

(D) section 1816 of this title related to possession or use of credit card skimming devices;

(E) section 2001 of this title related to false personation;

(F) section 2002 of this title related to false pretenses or tokens;

(G) section 2029 of this title related to home improvement fraud;

(H) section 2030 of this title related to identity theft;

(I) section 2501 of this title related to grand larceny;

(J) section 2531 of this title related to embezzlement;

(K) section 2532 of this title related to embezzlement by officers or servants of an incorporated bank;

(L) section 2533 of this title related to embezzlement by a receiver or trustee;

(M) section 2561 of this title related to receiving stolen property;

(N) section 2575 of this title related to retail theft;

(O) section 2582 of this title related to theft of services;

(P) section 2591 of this title related to theft of rented property;

(Q) section 2592 of this title related to failure to return a rented or leased motor vehicle;

(R) section 3016 of this title related to false claims;

(S) section 3701 of this title related to unlawful mischief;

(T) section 3705 of this title related to unlawful trespass;

(U) section 3733 of this title related to mills, dams, or bridges;

(V) section 3761 of this title related to unauthorized removal of human remains;

(W) section 3766 of this title related to grave markers and ornaments;

(X) chapter 87 of this title related to computer crimes; and

(Y) 18 V.S.A. § 4223 related to fraud or deceit in obtaining a regulated drug.

§ 7602. EXPUNGEMENT AND SEALING OF RECORD, POSTCONVICTION; PROCEDURE

~~(a)(1) A person may file a petition with the court requesting expungement or sealing of the criminal history record related to the conviction if:~~

~~(A) the person was convicted of a qualifying crime or qualifying crimes arising out of the same incident or occurrence;~~

~~(B) the person was convicted of an offense for which the underlying conduct is no longer prohibited by law or designated as a criminal offense;~~

~~(C) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (g) of this section, the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) or § 1091 related to operating under the influence of alcohol or other substance, excluding a violation of those sections resulting in serious bodily injury or death to any person other than the operator, or related to operating a school bus with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.02 or more or operating a commercial vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.04 or more; or~~

~~(D) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (h) of this section, the person was convicted under 1201(c)(3)(A) of a violation of subdivision 1201(a) of this title related to burglary when the person was 25 years of age or younger, and the person did not carry a dangerous or deadly weapon during commission of the offense.~~

~~(2) The State's Attorney or Attorney General shall be the respondent in the matter.~~

~~(3) The court shall grant the petition without hearing if the petitioner and the respondent stipulate to the granting of the petition. The respondent shall file the stipulation with the court, and the court shall issue the petitioner an order of expungement and provide notice of the order in accordance with this section.~~

~~(4) This section shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39 seeking to seal or expunge a record of a conviction for a felony offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4.~~

~~(b)(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged pursuant to section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(A) At least five years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or if the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least five years previously.~~

~~(B) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted for the qualifying crime.~~

~~(C) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

~~(D) The court finds that expungement of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.~~

~~(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), and (C) of this subsection are met and the court finds that:~~

~~(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of justice than expungement; and~~

~~(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years of age.~~

~~(c)(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged pursuant to section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(A) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction.~~

~~(B) The person has not been convicted of a felony arising out of a new incident or occurrence in the last seven years.~~

~~(C) The person has not been convicted of a misdemeanor during the past five years.~~

~~(D) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

~~(E) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense, the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.~~

~~(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), (C), and (D) of this subsection are met and the court finds that:~~

~~(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of justice than expungement; and~~

~~(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years of age.~~

~~(d) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section, unless the court finds that expungement would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged in accordance with section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(1) The petitioner has completed any sentence or supervision for the offense.~~

~~(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

~~(e) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section for a conviction for possession of a regulated drug under 18 V.S.A. chapter 84, subchapter 1 in an amount that is no longer prohibited by law or for which criminal sanctions have been removed:~~

~~(1) The petitioner shall bear the burden of establishing that his or her conviction was based on possessing an amount of regulated drug that is no longer prohibited by law or for which criminal sanctions have been removed.~~

~~(2) There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the amount of the regulated drug specified in the affidavit of probable cause associated with the petitioner's conviction was the amount possessed by the petitioner.~~

~~(f) Prior to granting an expungement or sealing under this section for petitions filed pursuant to subdivision 7601(4)(D) of this title, the court shall make a finding that the conduct underlying the conviction under section 1201 of this title did not constitute a burglary into an occupied dwelling, as defined in subdivision 1201(b)(2) of this title. The petitioner shall bear the burden of establishing this fact.~~

~~(g) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section, only petitions to seal may be considered or granted by the court. This subsection shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39. Unless the court finds that sealing would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed in accordance with section 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(1) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or if the person has successfully completed the terms and~~

~~conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 10 years previously.~~

~~(2) At the time of the filing of the petition:~~

~~(A) the person has only one conviction of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201, which shall be construed in accordance with 23 V.S.A. § 1211; and~~

~~(B) the person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a).~~

~~(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.~~

~~(4) The court finds that sealing of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.~~

~~(h) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(D) of this section, unless the court finds that expungement or sealing would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged or sealed in accordance with section 7606 or 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:~~

~~(1) At least 15 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 15 years previously.~~

~~(2) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted of a violation of subdivision 1201(c)(3)(A) of this title.~~

~~(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.~~

~~(4) The court finds that expungement or sealing of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.~~

(a) Petition.

(1) A person may file a petition with the court requesting expungement of a criminal history record related to a conviction if the person was convicted of an offense for which the underlying conduct is no longer prohibited by law or designated as a criminal offense.

(2) A person may file a petition with the court requesting sealing of a criminal history record related to a conviction if the person was convicted of a qualifying crime or qualifying crimes arising out of the same incident or occurrence.

(3) Whichever office prosecuted the offense resulting in the conviction, the State's Attorney or Attorney General, shall be the respondent in the matter unless the prosecuting office authorizes the other to act as the respondent.

(4) The court shall grant the petition without hearing if the petitioner and the respondent stipulate to the granting of the petition. The respondent shall file the stipulation with the court, and the court shall issue the petitioner an order of sealing and provide notice of the order to all Vermont State entities provided by the petitioner and all entities required to receive notice pursuant to subsection 7607(a) of this title.

(5) This section shall not apply to an individual who is the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39 seeking to seal a record of a conviction for a misdemeanor or felony offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4.

(b) Offenses that are no longer prohibited by law. For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged if the following conditions are met:

(1) The petitioner has completed any sentence or supervision for the offense.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(c) Qualifying misdemeanors. For petitions filed to seal a qualifying misdemeanor pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(1) At least three years have elapsed since the date on which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(3) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(d) Qualifying felony offenses. For petitions filed to seal a qualifying felony pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(1) At least seven years have elapsed since the date on which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(3) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(e) Qualifying DUI misdemeanor. For petitions filed to seal a qualifying DUI misdemeanor pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(1) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence.

(2) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(3) The person is not the holder of a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39.

(4) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(f) Fish and Wildlife Offenses. Sealing a criminal history record related to a fish and wildlife offense shall not void any fish and wildlife license suspension or revocation imposed pursuant to the accumulation of points related to the sealed offense. Points accumulated by a person shall remain on the person's license and, if applicable, completion of the remedial course shall be required as set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 4502.

§ 7603. ~~EXPUNGEMENT AND~~ SEALING OF RECORD, NO CONVICTION; PROCEDURE

(a) Unless either party objects in the interests of justice, the court shall issue an order sealing the criminal history record related to the citation or arrest of a person:

(1) within 60 days after the final disposition of the case if:

(A) the court does not make a determination of probable cause at the time of arraignment; ~~or~~

(B) the charge is dismissed before trial with or without prejudice; or

(C) the defendant is acquitted of the charges; or

(2) at any time if the prosecuting attorney and the defendant stipulate that the court may grant the petition to seal the record.

(b) If a party objects to sealing ~~or expunging~~ a record pursuant to this section, the court shall schedule a hearing to determine if sealing ~~or expunging~~ the record serves the interests of justice. The defendant and the prosecuting attorney shall be the only parties in the matter.

(c), (d) [Repealed.]

(e) ~~Unless either party objects in the interests of justice, the court shall issue an order expunging a criminal history record related to the citation or arrest of a person:~~

~~(1) within 60 days after the final disposition of the case if:~~

~~(A) the defendant is acquitted of the charges; or~~

~~(B) the charge is dismissed with prejudice;~~

~~(2) at any time if the prosecuting attorney and the defendant stipulate that the court may grant the petition to expunge the record.~~ [Repealed.]

(f) ~~Unless either party objects in the interests of justice, the court shall issue an order to expunge a record sealed pursuant to subsection (a) or (g) of this section eight years after the date on which the record was sealed.~~ [Repealed.]

(g) A person may file a petition with the court requesting sealing ~~or expungement~~ of a criminal history record related to the citation or arrest of the person at any time. The court shall grant the petition and issue an order sealing ~~or expunging~~ the record if it finds that sealing ~~or expunging~~ the record serves the interests of justice~~,~~ or if the parties stipulate to sealing ~~or expungement~~ of the record.

(h) ~~The court may expunge any records that were sealed pursuant to this section prior to July 1, 2018 unless the State's Attorney's office that prosecuted the case objects. Thirty days prior to expunging a record pursuant to this subsection, the court shall provide to the State's Attorney's office that prosecuted the case written notice of its intent to expunge the record.~~ [Repealed.]

§ 7604. NEW CHARGE

If a person ~~is charged with a criminal offense after he or she has filed a petition for expungement pursuant to this chapter~~ has a criminal charge

pending at the time the petition for sealing or expungement is before the court, the court shall not act on the petition until disposition of the new charge.

§ 7605. DENIAL OF PETITION

If a petition for expungement or sealing is denied by the court pursuant to this chapter, no further petition shall be brought for at least two years, unless a shorter duration is authorized by the court.

§ 7606. EFFECT OF EXPUNGEMENT

(a) Order and notice. Upon finding that the requirements for expungement have been met, the court shall issue an order that shall include provisions that its effect is to annul the record of the arrest, conviction, and sentence and that such person shall be treated in all respects as if the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense. The court shall provide notice of the expungement to the respondent, Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, the Restitution Unit of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, and any other entity that may have a record related to the order to expunge. The VCIC shall provide notice of the expungement to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center.

(b) Effect.

(1) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if ~~he or she~~ the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense.

(2) In any application for employment, license, or civil right or privilege or in an appearance as a witness in any proceeding or hearing, a person may be required to answer questions about a previous criminal history record only with respect to arrests or convictions that have not been expunged. A State entity that inquires about a person's criminal history record shall advise the person of the person's right not to disclose expunged records pursuant to this subdivision.

(3) The response to an inquiry from any person regarding an expunged record shall be that "NO CRIMINAL RECORD EXISTS."

(4) Nothing in this section shall affect any right of the person whose record has been expunged to rely on it as a bar to any subsequent proceedings for the same offense.

(c) Process.

(1) The court shall remove the expunged offense from any accessible database that it maintains.

(2) Until all charges on a docket are expunged, the case file shall remain publicly accessible.

(3) When all charges on a docket have been expunged, the case file shall be destroyed pursuant to policies established by the Court Administrator.

(d) Special index.

(1) The court shall keep a special index of cases that have been expunged together with the expungement order. The index shall list only the name of the person convicted of the offense, ~~his or her~~ the person's date of birth, the docket number, and the criminal offense that was the subject of the expungement.

(2) The special index and related documents specified in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be confidential and shall be physically and electronically segregated in a manner that ensures confidentiality and that limits access to authorized persons.

(3) Inspection of the expungement order may be permitted only upon petition by the person who is the subject of the case. The Chief Superior Judge may permit special access to the index and the documents for research purposes pursuant to the rules for public access to court records.

(4) ~~[Repealed].~~ [Repealed.]

(5) The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this subsection.

§ 7607. EFFECT OF SEALING

(a) Order and notice. Upon entry of an order to seal, the ~~order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is sealed shall be treated in all respects as if the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense and that its effect is to annul the record of arrest, conviction, and sentence. The~~ court shall ~~provide notice of the sealing to the respondent, Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, the Restitution Unit of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, and any other entity that may have a record related to the order to seal. The VCIC shall provide notice of the sealing to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center~~ send a copy of any order sealing a criminal history record to all of the parties and attorneys representing the parties, including to the prosecuting agency that prosecuted the offense, the Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, and any other Vermont State entity identified by the petitioner that may have a record subject

to the sealing order. VCIC shall provide notice of the sealing order to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center.

(b) Effect.

(1) Except as provided in ~~subdivision~~ subsection (c) of this section, upon entry of a sealing order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is sealed shall be treated in all respects as if ~~he or she~~ the person had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense.

(2) In any application for employment, license, or civil right or privilege or in an appearance as a witness in any proceeding or hearing, a person may be required to answer questions about a previous criminal history record only with respect to arrests or convictions that have not been sealed. A State entity that inquires about a person's criminal history record shall advise the person of the person's right not to disclose sealed records pursuant to this subdivision.

(3) The response to an inquiry from any member of the public regarding a sealed record shall be that "NO CRIMINAL RECORD EXISTS."

(4) Nothing in this section shall affect any right of the person whose record has been sealed to rely on it as a bar to any subsequent proceeding for the same offense.

(c) Exceptions. A party seeking to use a sealed criminal history record, pursuant to the exceptions established in this subsection, in a court proceeding shall, prior to any use of or reference to the record in open court or in a public filing, notify the court of the party's intent to do so. The court shall thereafter determine whether the record may be used prior to its disclosure in the proceeding. If a party submits a filing that contains a sealed record or a reference to a sealed record, that filing shall be filed under seal and remain under seal unless the court permits the use of the sealed record. This shall not apply to the use of a sealed record pursuant to subdivision (8) of this subsection. Use of a sealed record pursuant to an exception shall not change the effect of sealing under subsection (b) of this section. Notwithstanding any other provision of law or a sealing order:

(1) An entity or person that possesses a sealed record, or an attorney for such entity or person, may continue to use ~~it~~ the record for any litigation or claim arising out of the same incident or occurrence ~~or involving the same defendant~~, including use of the record in reasonable anticipation of litigation.

(2) A criminal justice agency as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2056a and the Attorney General may use the criminal history record sealed in accordance with section 7602 or 7603 of this title ~~without limitation~~ for criminal justice purposes as defined in ~~20 V.S.A. § 2056a~~ section 7601 of this title.

(3) A defendant may use a sealed criminal history record in the defendant's criminal proceeding.

(4) A sealed record of a prior violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) shall be admissible as a predicate offense for the purpose of imposing an enhanced penalty for a subsequent violation of that section, in accordance with the provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 1210.

(5) A person or a court in possession of an order issued by a court regarding a matter that was subsequently sealed may file or cite to that decision in any subsequent proceeding. The party or court filing or citing to that decision shall ensure that information regarding the identity of the defendant in the sealed record is redacted.

(6) The Vermont Crime Information Center and Criminal Justice Information Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall have access to sealed criminal history records without limitation for the purpose of responding to queries to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System regarding firearms transfers and attempted transfers.

(7) The State's Attorney, the Attorney General, the person who is the subject of a sealed record, and the attorney for the person who is the subject of the record shall disclose information contained in a sealed criminal history record when required to meet discovery obligations.

(8) The person whose criminal history records have been sealed pursuant to this chapter and the person's attorney may access and use the sealed records.

(9) A law enforcement agency may inspect and receive copies of the sealed criminal history records of any applicant who applies to the agency to be a law enforcement officer or a current employee for the purpose of internal investigation.

(10) Persons or entities conducting research shall have access to a sealed criminal history record to carry out research pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 2056b.

(11) Information and materials gathered by the Department for Children and Families during a joint investigation with law enforcement, including law enforcement affidavits and related references to such information and materials, are not criminal history records as defined in subdivision 7601(2) of this title and are considered Department records that shall be maintained and may be utilized as statutorily prescribed by 33 V.S.A. chapter 49 and produced in response to a court order.

(12) Information and materials gathered by Adult Protective Services during a joint investigation with law enforcement, including law enforcement

affidavits and other investigative materials, are not criminal history records as defined in subdivision 7601(2) of this title and are considered records of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, which shall be maintained and may be utilized as authorized by 33 V.S.A. chapter 69 and produced in response to a court order.

(d) Process.

(1) The court shall bar viewing of the sealed offense in any accessible database that it maintains.

(2) Until all charges on a docket have been sealed, the case file shall remain publicly accessible.

(3) When all charges on a docket have been sealed, the case file shall become exempt from public access.

(4) When a sealing order is issued by the court, any person or entity, except the court, that possesses criminal history records and has been provided notice of the order shall:

(A) bar viewing of the sealed offense in any accessible database that it maintains or remove information pertaining to the sealed records from any publicly accessible database that the person or entity maintains; and

(B) clearly label the criminal history record as "SEALED" to ensure compliance with this section.

(e) Special index.

(1) The court shall keep a special index of cases that have been sealed together with the sealing order. The index shall list only the name of the person convicted of the offense, ~~his or her~~ the person's date of birth, the docket number, and the criminal offense that was the subject of the sealing.

(2) The special index and related documents specified in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be confidential and shall be physically and electronically segregated in a manner that ensures confidentiality and that limits access to authorized persons.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, inspection of the sealing order may be permitted only upon petition by the person who is the subject of the case. The Chief Superior Judge may permit special access to the index and the documents for research purposes pursuant to the rules for public access to court records.

~~(4) The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this subsection.~~

(f) Victims Compensation Program. Upon request, the ~~Victim's~~ Victims Compensation Program shall be provided with a copy, redacted of all information identifying the offender, of the affidavit for the sole purpose of verifying the expenses in a victim's compensation application submitted pursuant to section 5353 of this title.

(g) Restitution. The sealing of a criminal record shall not affect the authority of the Restitution Unit to enforce a restitution order in the same manner as a civil judgment pursuant to subdivision 5362(c)(2) of this title.

§ 7608. VICTIMS

(a) At the time a petition is filed pursuant to this chapter, the respondent shall give notice of the petition to any victim of the offense who is known to the respondent. The victim shall have the right to offer the respondent a statement prior to any stipulation or to offer the court a statement. The disposition of the petition shall not be unnecessarily delayed pending receipt of a victim's statement. The respondent's inability to locate a victim after a reasonable effort has been made shall not be a bar to granting a petition.

(b) As used in this section, "reasonable effort" means attempting to contact the victim by first-class mail at the victim's last known address ~~and,~~ by telephone at the victim's last known phone number, and by email at the victim's last known email address.

§ 7609. ~~EXPUNGEMENT OF~~ SEALING CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS OF ~~AN INDIVIDUAL~~ A PERSON 18–21 YEARS OF AGE

(a) ~~Procedure~~ Petition. ~~Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the record of the criminal proceedings for an individual who was 18–21 years of age at the time the individual committed a qualifying crime shall be expunged within 30 days after the date on which the individual successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction of the qualifying crime, absent a finding of good cause by the court. The court shall issue an order to expunge all records and files related to the arrest, citation, investigation, charge, adjudication of guilt, criminal proceedings, and probation related to the sentence. A copy of the order shall be sent to each agency, department, or official named in the order. Thereafter, the court, law enforcement officers, agencies, and departments shall reply to any request for information that no record exists with respect to such individual. Notwithstanding this subsection, the record shall not be expunged until restitution and surcharges have been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.~~

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person who was 18–21 years of age at the time the person committed a qualifying crime may file a petition with the court requesting sealing of the criminal history record related to the qualifying crime after 30 days have elapsed since the person completed the terms and conditions for the sentence for the qualifying crime. The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed if the following conditions are met:

(A) Any restitution and surcharges ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full, provided that payment of surcharges shall not be required if the surcharges have been waived by the court pursuant to section 7282 of this title.

(B) The respondent has failed to show that sealing would be contrary to the interests of justice.

(2) Order, notice, and effect of sealing shall comply with the provisions of subsections 7607(a) and (b) of this title.

(b) Exceptions.

(1) A criminal history record that includes both qualifying and nonqualifying offenses shall not be eligible for ~~expungement~~ sealing pursuant to this section.

(2) ~~The Vermont Crime Information Center shall retain a special index of sentences for sex offenses that require registration pursuant to chapter 167, subchapter 3 of this title. This index shall only list the name and date of birth of the subject of the expunged files and records, the offense for which the subject was convicted, and the docket number of the proceeding that was the subject of the expungement. The special index shall be confidential and shall be accessed only by the Director of the Vermont Crime Information Center and an individual designated for the purpose of providing information to the Department of Corrections in the preparation of a presentence investigation in accordance with 28 V.S.A. §§ 204 and 204a.~~ [Repealed.]

(c) ~~Petitions. An individual who was 18–21 years of age at the time the individual committed a qualifying crime may file a petition with the court requesting expungement of the criminal history record related to the qualifying crime after 30 days have elapsed since the individual completed the terms and conditions for the sentence for the qualifying crime. The court shall grant the petition and issue an order sealing or expunging the record if it finds that sealing or expunging the record serves the interests of justice.~~ [Repealed.]

§ 7610. CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD SEALING SPECIAL FUND

There is established the Criminal History Record Sealing Special Fund, which shall be managed in accordance with 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5. Fees collected pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1431(e) for the filing of a petition to seal a criminal history record of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) shall be deposited into and credited to this Fund. This Fund shall be available to the Office of the Court Administrator, the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Vermont Crime Information Center to offset the administrative costs of sealing such records. Balances in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward and remain in the Fund.

§ 7611. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE

A State or municipal employee or contractor or any agent of the court, including an attorney and an employee or contractor of the attorney, or a law enforcement officer as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2351a who knowingly accesses or discloses sealed criminal history record information without authorization shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than $1,000.00. Each unauthorized disclosure shall constitute a separate civil violation.

Sec. 2. RIGHT TO NOT DISCLOSE EXPUNGED OR SEALED CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS

(a) The Secretary of Administration shall notify all State administrative entities of the obligation to notify persons of the right not to disclose an expunged record pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 7606(b)(2) or a sealed record pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 7607(b)(2).

(b) The Court Administrator shall notify the Judicial Branch of the obligation to notify persons of the right not to disclose an expunged record pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 7606(b)(2) or a sealed record pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 7607(b)(2).

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 7041 is amended to read:

§ 7041. DEFERRED SENTENCE

(a) Upon an adjudication of guilt and after the filing of a presentence investigation report, the court may defer sentencing and place the respondent on probation upon such terms and conditions as it may require if a written agreement concerning the deferring of sentence is entered into between the State's Attorney and the respondent and filed with the clerk of the court.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the court may defer sentencing and place the respondent on probation without a written agreement between the State's Attorney and the respondent if the following conditions are met:

(1) [Repealed.]

(2) the crime for which the respondent is being sentenced is not a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;

(3) the court orders a presentence investigation in accordance with the procedures set forth in V.R.C.P. Rule 32, unless the State's Attorney agrees to waive the presentence investigation;

(4) the court permits the victim to submit a written or oral statement concerning the consideration of deferment of sentence;

(5) the court reviews the presentence investigation and the victim's impact statement with the parties; and

(6) the court determines that deferring sentence is in the interests of justice.

(c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the court may not defer a sentence for a violation of section 3253a (aggravated sexual assault of a child), section 2602 (lewd and lascivious conduct with a child unless the victim and the defendant were within five years of age and the act was consensual), 3252(c) (sexual assault of a child under 16 unless the victim and the defendant were within five years of age and the act was consensual), 3252(d) or (e) (sexual assault of a child), 3253(a)(8) (aggravated sexual assault), or 3253a (aggravated sexual assault of a child) of this title.

(d) Entry of deferment of sentence shall constitute an appealable judgment for purposes of appeal in accordance with 12 V.S.A. § 2383 and V.R.A.P. Rule 3. Except as otherwise provided, entry of deferment of sentence shall constitute imposition of sentence solely for the purpose of sentence review in accordance with section 7042 of this title. The court may impose sentence at any time if the respondent violates the conditions of the deferred sentence during the period of deferment.

(e) Upon violation of the terms of probation or of the deferred sentence agreement, the court shall impose sentence. Upon fulfillment of the terms of probation and of the deferred sentence agreement, the court shall strike the adjudication of guilt and discharge the respondent. Except as provided in subsection (h) of this section, the record of the criminal proceedings shall be ~~expunged~~ sealed upon the discharge of the respondent from probation, absent a finding of good cause by the court. The court shall issue an order to ~~expunge~~ seal all records and files related to the arrest, citation, investigation, charge, adjudication of guilt, criminal proceedings, and probation related to the deferred sentence. Copies of the order shall be sent to each agency, department, or official named therein. Thereafter, the court, law enforcement officers, agencies, and departments shall reply to any request for information

that no record exists with respect to such person upon inquiry in the matter. Notwithstanding this subsection, the record shall not be ~~expunged~~ sealed until restitution has been paid in full.

(f) A deferred sentence imposed under subsection (a) or (b) of this section may include a restitution order issued pursuant to section 7043 of this title. Nonpayment of restitution shall not constitute grounds for imposition of the underlying sentence.

(g) [Repealed.]

(h) The Vermont Crime Information Center shall retain a special index of deferred sentences for sex offenses that require registration pursuant to subchapter 3 of chapter 167 of this title. This index shall only list the name and date of birth of the subject of the ~~expunged~~ sealed files and records, the offense for which the subject was convicted, and the docket number of the proceeding that was the subject of the ~~expungement~~ sealing. The special index shall be confidential and may be accessed only by the director of the Vermont Crime Information Center and a designated clerical staffperson for the purpose of providing information to the Department of Corrections in the preparation of a presentence investigation in accordance with 28 V.S.A. §§ 204 and 204a.

Sec. 4. APPLICATION TO DEFERRED SENTENCES

Sec. 3 of this act shall apply prospectively to sentences issued on or after July 1, 2025.

Sec. 5. 24 V.S.A. § 2296b is added to read:

§ 2296b. EXPUNGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL VIOLATION RECORDS

(a) Expungement. Two years following the satisfaction of a judgment resulting from an adjudication of a municipal violation, the Judicial Bureau shall make an entry of "expunged" and notify the municipality of such action, provided the person has not been adjudicated for any subsequent municipal violations during that time. The data transfer to the municipality shall include the name, date of birth, ticket number, and offense. Violations of offenses adopted pursuant to chapter 117 of this title shall not be eligible for expungement under this section.

(b) Effect of expungement.

(1) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the individual whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if the individual had never been adjudicated of the violation.

(2) Upon an entry of expunged, the case will be accessible only by the Clerk of the Court for the Judicial Bureau or the Clerk's designee.