



## **VCDR 2021 Legislative “End of Session” Summary**

The Legislature reconvened on Wednesday January 6 of this year. This was the first year of the new biennium with newly elected Representatives and Senators along with those returning to the legislature, new leadership in the House and Senate, and a new Lt Governor.

The Legislature made a decision to meet remotely for the entire session, as they had since March of 2020. Although there certainly were some technology and access issues with meeting remotely, for the most part all legislative meetings could be accessed remotely. This included the respective caucuses, floor sessions of the House and Senate, legislative committees, and other special committees.

The work to combat the ongoing Coronavirus health and economic crisis continued to be the focus of this year’s session in addition to a number of significant long term investments of this year’s Federal stimulus dollars for everything from Education to Broadband. A number of social justice and equity bills were also passed.

The Legislature adjourned on Friday the 21<sup>st</sup> of May after coming to agreement on the FY 22 budget on Thursday morning. The Legislature and the Administration worked together on how to spend the American Rescue Plan Act Funds before the final agreement, and the Governor has signed the Budget bill into law.

The Governor did veto a number of bills and the Legislature reconvened in June to override the Governor’s veto on two of the three bills. Two of the bills were charter changes for Winooski and Montpelier to allow legal resident non-citizen community members vote on specific local elections.

The Legislature also succeeded in passing a housing and rental registry bill (S.79) that they have been working on for years. The bill had failed to pass during the regular session because opponents would not suspend the rules to move it through the process in time. The Governor has since vetoed this bill.

## **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) and the FISCAL YEAR 22 BUDGET**

Between two bills, **H.315 - An act relating to COVID-19 relief** and **H.439 - An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government**, the Legislature has spent approximately \$603 million of ARPA funds. However, the budget conference committee identified about \$100 million of ARPA dollars that will get swapped out with state general funds if there is enough surplus dollars are available at the close-out of FY21, one of the concessions to the Governor.

If that happens, then ARPA spending goes down to \$503 million which leaves about \$550 million to be budgeted next session. The budget contains a section on Community Engagement for the rest of the ARPA funds, as well as any other federal funds that come our way in the next several months.

### **H.315 (Act 9) - An act relating to COVID-19 relief**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT009/ACT009%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **H.439 (Act 74) - An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government – Committee of Conference Report passed by the House and Senate – Signed by the Governor.**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0439/H-0439%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf>

### **H.439 FY 2022 Budget - American Rescue Plan Act FY 2022**

<https://lifo.vermont.gov/assets/Uploads/031b197b8b/H.439-FY22-ARPA-Appropriations.pdf>

### **H.439 FY 2022 Budget - FY 2021 and FY 2022 General Fund One-time Uses**

<https://lifo.vermont.gov/assets/Uploads/24e72c1933/H.439-FY21-and-FY22-General-Fund-Onetime-Uses.pdf>

**The Committee of Conference also issued a “Statement of Multiyear Funding Priorities” for ARPA and other State and Federal funds for all Vermonters:**

Health, well-being, and recovery of Vermonters; workforce development; business supports.....	\$250,000,000
Housing Initiatives.....	\$250,000,000
Broadband Development .....	\$250,000,000
Climate Change Mitigation.....	\$250,000,000

Clean Water Initiatives..... \$225,000,000  
**Total Four-Year Expenditures..... \$1,225,000,000**

**ARPA - CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RELIEF HIGHLIGHTS**

**HOUSING**

Shelter capacity for homeless \$ 94,000,000  
 VHIP rental housing improvement \$ 5,000,000  
 FY21 VHCB low and moderate income \$ 40,000,000  
 GA Emergency Housing transition FY22 \$ 36,000,000  
 RU - Rental Assistance FY22 \$ 15,000,000

**HOUSING TOTAL.....\$190,000,000**

**BROADBAND .....\$ 150,000,000**

**CLIMATE ACTION**

OEO – CAPs - Weatherization 2 yrs..... \$ 4,000,000  
 VHFA – Weatherization..... \$ 9,000,000  
 Efficiency VT – Weatherization..... \$ 5,000,000  
 Efficiency VT – Weatherization Workforce \$ 2,000,000

**CAPs- Coach and Coordinate 3 years \$ 1,500,000**

**CAPs - MileageSmart \$ 500,000 GF**

**ECONOMY**

Department of Children and Families (DCF) – OEO  
 Micro-Business Development Program  
 CAPs “Additional” BASE Funding for MBDP.....\$200,000  
 MBDP in BASE - Ongoing.....\$493,339  
 CAPs DCF – OEO Micro-Business EMBRACE in H.439..... \$ 2,000,000  
 CAPs – OEO EMBRACE in H.315.....\$500,000  
 Total EMBRACE (2021 Legislation).....\$2,500,000

## Agency of Commerce and Community Development

ACCD - Technology grants.....	\$ 800,000
ACCD - Better Places .....	\$ 1,500,000
ACCD - BIPOC business development .....	\$ 150,000
Tourism and Marketing .....	\$ 2,000,000
ACCD- Working Communities Challenge .....	\$ 2,320,000

## HUMAN SERVICES - In H.315and H.439

AHS Emergency Outreach to Peer Support \$300,000

AHS MH Urgent Case Management Services \$850,000

AHS MH frontline HC Workforce Wellness Training \$150,000

VSC Welcome Home & Dental \$2,400,000

AHS Recovery Centers \$240,000 VDH Recovery Centers \$300,000

AHS New Americans \$700,000

DCF Parent Child Centers \$3,700,000

AHS VT Food Bank diapers (FEMA maybe) \$1,458,000

DCF Food bank \$1,000,000

AHS VT Assoc. for the Blind \$100,000

AOE Local Foods \$500,000

AHS Reach up grants \$1,300,000

- The budget funds a 3 percent increase to mental health, developmental disabilities and Choice for Care providers and a \$1.50/day increase to ACCS rates to address increased wage and operating costs.
- **Adds \$2.7 million GF to increase the Reach Up benefit to the 2019 standard of need and to eliminate the inclusion of any SSI benefit in the calculation of the RU benefit. This is an average benefit increase of \$111/mo. bringing a 3-member household benefit to \$811/\$836 in Chittenden.**
- Funds Child Care Program increases included in H.171.
- Includes \$41 million to support the Homeless Transition plan developed by the work group.
- Provides the Vermont State College system with funding for the recommended transformation plan in Sec. G. 300 and adds \$5 million GF to the VSC base appropriation.

- Adds several special fund reviews triggered by projected structural deficits, this includes criminal justice fees& fines supported programs, the E-911 system and large fee generators in public health, transportation and natural resources.

## **HEALTHCARE**

The Senate President Pro Tem Rebecca Balint indicated that health care reform would be a major topic for her chamber during the 2022 legislative session. She also said that she wants to explore possible systemic changes in Vermont's all-payer model and any federal opportunities to expand Medicare eligibility.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARIES OF LEGISLATION**

### **VT Care Partners - Legislative Update for May 24, 2021**

<https://vermontcarepartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Legislative-Update-for-May-26-2021.pdf>

### **Voices for VT Children Legislative Update:**

<https://mailchi.mp/da61ee79fc89/reach-upa-critical-lifeline-for-kids-and-families-4750289?e=9399f4b384>

### **Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance**

[https://vecaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Agenda21\\_results\\_FINAL.pdf](https://vecaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Agenda21_results_FINAL.pdf)

## **SELECTED LEGISLATION of INTEREST (Passed)**

### **J.R.H.2 Eugenics Apology Resolution with Amendment**

J.R.H.2 Joint resolution sincerely apologizing and expressing sorrow and regret to all individual Vermonters and their families and descendants who were harmed as a result of State-sanctioned eugenics policies and practices.

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/RESOLUTN/JRH002/JRH002%20Senate%20proposal%20of%20amendment%20Official.pdf>

### **J.R.H.6 Declaring Racism a Public Health Emergency**

J.R.H 6 States: "this legislative body commits to coordinating work and participating in ongoing action, grounded in science and data, to eliminate race-based health disparities and eradicate systemic racism."

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/RESOLUTN/JRH006/JRH006%20As%20adopted%20by%20the%20House%20Official.pdf>

## Legislation Continued..

### **H.171 (Act 45) - An act relating to child care systems and financing**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0171/H-0171%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf>

### **H.360 (Act 71) - An act relating to accelerated community broadband deployment**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0360/H-0360%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf>

### **H.430 (Act 48) - An act relating to eligibility for Dr. Dynasaur-like coverage for all income-eligible children and pregnant individuals regardless of immigration status.**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT048/ACT048%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **H.210 (Act 33) An act relating to addressing disparities and promoting equity in the health care system and promotes equity in the health care system**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT033/ACT033%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **H.428 (Act 34) - An act relating to hate-motivated crimes and misconduct.**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT034/ACT034%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **S.16 (Act 35) which creates the Task Force on Equitable and Inclusive School Environments**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT035/ACT035%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **S.3 (Act 57) - An act relating to competency to stand trial and insanity as a defense**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/S.3>

### **S.128 (Act 18) An act relating to limiting criminal defenses based on victim identity.**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT018/ACT018%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **H.145 (act 27) An act relating to amending the standards for law enforcement use of force**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT027/ACT027%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

### **S.9 (Act 2) An act relating to extending certain workers' compensation amendments related to COVID-19**

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT002/ACT002%20Act%20Summary.pdf>

### **S.79 An act relating to improving rental housing health and safety – As passed by the House and Senate – Vetoed by the Governor July 2**

[HTTPS://LEGISLATURE.VERMONT.GOV/DOCUMENTS/2022/DOCS/BILLS/S-0079/S-0079%20AS%20PASSED%20BY%20BOTH%20HOUSE%20AND%20SENATE%20UNOFFICIAL.PDF](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0079/S-0079%20AS%20PASSED%20BY%20BOTH%20HOUSE%20AND%20SENATE%20UNOFFICIAL.PDF)

## **BILLS OF INTEREST (Introduced but not passed)**

**H.243 - An act relating to the Working Group on Services for Adults with Autism**  
<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0243/H-0243%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

**H.266 - An act relating to an incremental approach to health insurance coverage for hearing aids**  
<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0266/H-0266%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

## **ARTICLES OF INTEREST:**

**State's commitment to people doesn't end with COVID Public Assets Institute Blog**  
<https://publicassets.org/blog/states-commitment-to-people-doesnt-end-with-covid/>

**Scott vetoes housing bill with rental registry, statewide inspection system**  
By **Xander Landen** Jul 2 2021 <https://vtdigger.org/2021/07/02/scott-vetoes-housing-bill-with-rental-registry-statewide-inspection-system/>

**Monica White to lead the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living** By **Sophia McDermott-Hughes** Jul 1 2021  
<https://vtdigger.org/2021/07/01/monica-white-to-lead-the-department-of-disabilities-aging-and-independent-living/>

**Legal Aid sues state to stop emergency housing restrictions from taking effect**  
By **Xander Landen** Jun 29 2021, 6:44 PM <https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/29/legal-aid-sues-state-to-stop-emergency-housing-restrictions-from-taking-effect/>

**As July approaches, homeless Vermonters prepare to leave hotels and motels**  
By **Xander Landen** Jun 27 2021 <https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/27/as-july-approaches-homeless-vermonters-prepare-to-leave-hotels-and-motels/>

**Vermont Senate overrides vetoes of noncitizen voting measures, approves housing bill** By **Xander Landen** and **Kit Norton** Jun 24 2021  
<https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/24/vermont-senate-overrides-vetoes-of-noncitizen-voting-measures-approves-housing-bill/>

**The Deeper Dig: Ending the Covid emergency** By **Mike Dougherty** and **Xander Landen** Jun 16 2021 [https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/16/the-deeper-dig-ending-the-covid-emergency/?utm\\_source=VTDigger+Subscribers+and+Donors&utm\\_campaign=cd8075a627-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2021\\_06\\_19\\_06\\_16&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_dc3c5486db-cd8075a627-405716713](https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/16/the-deeper-dig-ending-the-covid-emergency/?utm_source=VTDigger+Subscribers+and+Donors&utm_campaign=cd8075a627-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_06_19_06_16&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_dc3c5486db-cd8075a627-405716713)

**'Flip of the switch': How the end of Vermont's emergency order could affect evictions, social services** By **Xander Landen** Jun 14 2021  
[https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/14/flip-of-the-switch-how-the-end-of-vermonts-emergency-order-could-affect-evictions-social-services/?utm\\_source=VTDigger+Subscribers+and+Donors&utm\\_campaign=cd8075a627-](https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/14/flip-of-the-switch-how-the-end-of-vermonts-emergency-order-could-affect-evictions-social-services/?utm_source=VTDigger+Subscribers+and+Donors&utm_campaign=cd8075a627-)

[EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2021\\_06\\_19\\_06\\_16&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_dc3c5486db-cd8075a627-405716713](mailto:EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_06_19_06_16&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_dc3c5486db-cd8075a627-405716713)

**130 organizations urge Scott to delay reopening, citing food, housing issues**

By **Emma Cotton** Jun 10 2021, 10:25 AM

<https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/10/130-organizations-urge-scott-to-delay-reopening-citing-food-housing-issues/>

**Vermont businesses and organizations urge Gov. Scott to delay lifting emergency order** **Elizabeth Murray** Burlington Free Press June 10, 2021

[https://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/story/news/local/2021/06/10/vermont-state-emergency-orgs-say-lifting-order-hurts-vulnerable/7635627002/?utm\\_source=burlingtonfreepress-Daily%20Briefing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=daily\\_briefing&utm\\_term=list\\_article\\_thumb&utm\\_content=1010FP-E-NLETTER65](https://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/story/news/local/2021/06/10/vermont-state-emergency-orgs-say-lifting-order-hurts-vulnerable/7635627002/?utm_source=burlingtonfreepress-Daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=list_article_thumb&utm_content=1010FP-E-NLETTER65)

**Vermont Conversation: Becca Balint recaps the historic 'Covid session'** 6/4/21

<https://vtdigger.org/2021/06/04/vermont-conversation-becca-balint-recaps-the-historic-covid-session/>

**Vermont legislative leaders highlight session's accomplishments** 6/2/21

<https://www.wcax.com/app/2021/06/02/vermont-legislative-leaders-highlight-sessions-accomplishments/>

**You Can Quote Me with Becca Balint and Jill Krowinski**

<https://www.wcax.com/app/2021/05/31/ycqm-may-30-2021/>

**Legislature adjourns, ending a historic and remote session - VTDigger** 5/21/21

<https://vtdigger.org/2021/05/21/legislature-adjourns-ending-a-historic-and-remote-session/>