

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The Committee on General and Housing to which was referred House Bill No. 861 entitled “An act relating to establishing an Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends 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. chapter 45 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 45. ADMINISTRATION

* * *

Subchapter 7. Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator

§ 2331. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COORDINATOR

(a) There is created the permanent, exempt position of the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator within the Agency of Administration for the purpose of coordinating, across State government and in collaboration with agency partners, all State programs, services, and activities, accessible to and available for individuals with disabilities.

(b) The Coordinator shall be an individual with the lived experience of a disability and shall have completed a recognized Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator certificate program. The Coordinator shall have comprehensive knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101-12213., section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §

1 794, and any related federal and State disability rights law. The Coordinator
2 shall be familiar with the structure, programs, services, and personnel of State
3 government and with alternative communication formats and assistive
4 technologies.

5 (c) In hiring for the Coordinator position, the Secretary of Administration
6 shall consult with the following entities:

- 7 (1) the Human Rights Commission;
8 (2) the Office of the Attorney General;
9 (3) the Agency of Human Services;
10 (4) the Agency of Education;
11 (5) the Department of Health;
12 (6) the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living,
13 including its Developmental Disabilities Services Division;
14 (7) Disability Rights Vermont;
15 (8) the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights;
16 (9) Vermont Legal Aid's Disability Law Project;
17 (10) the Vermont Communication Support Project;
18 (11) the Vermont Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation;
19 (12) the Vermont Center for Independent Living; and
20 (13) the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

1 (d) The Coordinator shall:

2 (1) serve as the primary contact for individuals with questions about
3 disability discrimination or requests for auxiliary aids or services;

4 (2) work directly with State agencies and departments to advance,
5 coordinate, and monitor statewide compliance efforts;

6 (3) serve as the primary contact for accessibility inquiries and requests
7 for auxiliary aids and services;

8 (4) act as a consultant for State employees, boards, and executive,
9 legislative, and judicial leadership;

10 (5) ensure communications with individuals with disabilities are as
11 effective as those without disabilities, giving primary consideration to the
12 individual's preferred method of communication;

13 (6) educate State employees on their legal obligations and disability
14 access requirements;

15 (7) audit programs, facilities, and activities for ongoing compliance;

16 (8) oversee self-evaluation processes throughout State government to
17 identify and correct violations;

18 (9) monitor federally required transition plans to ensure timely
19 completion of structural accessibility and improvement;

1 (10) provide federally required public notice of rights under the
2 Americans with Disabilities Act and provide contact information for a
3 governmental entity’s coordinator;

4 (11) develop, publish, and oversee a complaint procedure to provide
5 prompt and equitable resolution of complaints;

6 (12) receive and address complaints and issue written explanations of
7 the State’s position; and

8 (13) maintain collaborative relationships with disability advocacy
9 organizations and stakeholders.

10 (e) The Coordinator shall have the administrative, legal, and technical
11 support of the Agency of Administration.

12 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION; AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
13 COORDINATOR

14 In fiscal year 2027, \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to
15 establish the Americans with Disabilities Coordinator position established in 3
16 V.S.A. § 2331.

17 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

18 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.
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21

1 (Committee vote: _____)

2 _____

3 Representative _____

4 FOR THE COMMITTEE