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H.243

Introduced by Representatives McFaun of Barre Town, Brumsted of
Shelburne, Pajala of Londonderry, and Wood of Waterbury

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Human services; services for adults with autism; working group

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the
Working Group on Services for Adults with Autism.

An act relating to the Working Group on Services for Adults with Autism

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. WORKING GROUP ON SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM

(a) Creation. In recognition that Autism Spectrum Disorder represents a wide range of individuals with diverse and individual needs, there is created the Working Group on Services for Adults with Autism. The Working Group shall identify gaps within the existing Medicaid-funded, developmental services system and make recommendations for additional services and supports that are person-centered, affirm client dignity and civil rights, and ensure that the needs of adults with autism are met with the highest quality standards.

1 (b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following
2 members:

3 (1) the Commissioner of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living or
4 designee;

5 (2) the Director of the Developmental Disabilities Services Division of
6 the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living or designee;

7 (3) the Commissioner of Mental Health or designee;

8 (4) two current members of the House of Representatives, one serving
9 on the Committee on Human Services and one serving on the Committee on
10 Health Care, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

11 (5) two current members of the Senate, each serving on the Committee
12 on Health and Welfare, who shall be appointed by the Committee on
13 Committees;

14 (6) three employees of the designated agencies and specialized service
15 agencies, representing geographically diverse locations, who shall be
16 appointed by Vermont Care Partners;

17 (7) two family members of an adult with autism who shall be appointed
18 by the Vermont Family Network;

19 (8) two adults with autism who shall be appointed by the Vermont
20 Developmental Disabilities Council;

1 (9) an employee, who shall be appointed by the University of Vermont's
2 Center for Disability and Community Inclusion;

3 (10) a representative, who shall be appointed by Vermont Legal Aid;

4 (11) an employee, who shall be appointed by the Green Mountain Self
5 Advocates;

6 (12) a clinical professional with experience in Autism Spectrum
7 Disorders, who shall be appointed by the Development Services Program
8 Standing Committee, in consultation with the Commissioner of Disabilities,
9 Aging, or Independent Living; and

10 (13) a representative, who shall be appointed by the Developmental
11 Services State Standing Committee.

12 (c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall have the following
13 duties:

14 (1) identifying existing services for adults with autism in Vermont and
15 any gaps in services;

16 (2) collecting stakeholder input from adults with autism and their
17 families;

18 (3) reviewing services offered by other states and identifying if any of
19 these approaches adhere to the Vermont System of Care and would be
20 appropriate and feasible in Vermont;

1 (4) determining the appropriate education, training, and expertise for
2 persons who serve adults with autism and mechanisms to create targeted
3 training opportunities for these staff;

4 (5) making recommendations on the adaptation of existing supported
5 employment programs or the creation of new employment programs to better
6 serve the needs of adults with autism;

7 (6) making recommendations on funding structures to enable parents or
8 relative caregivers providing full-time care for an adult family member with
9 autism to receive pay;

10 (7) making recommendations on housing arrangements and
11 opportunities and respite options for adults with autism, including funding
12 mechanisms;

13 (8) developing capacity in the State to ensure that adults with autism and
14 their families receive advice and support in navigating decisions about services
15 and the service system; and

16 (9) exploring the need in the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and
17 Independent Living's Development Disabilities Division for additional staff to
18 support work for adults with autism across the State.

19 (d) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,
20 technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and
21 Independent Living.

1 (e) Report. On or before November 15, 2021, the Working Group shall
2 submit a written report to the House Committees on Health Care and on
3 Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare with its
4 findings and any recommendations for legislative action.

5 (f) Meetings.

6 (1) The Commissioner of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living or
7 designee shall call the first meeting of the Working Group to occur on or
8 before July 15, 2021.

9 (2) The Commissioner of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living or
10 designee shall be the chair.

11 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

12 (4) The Working Group shall cease to exist on December 1, 2021.

13 (g) Compensation and reimbursement.

14 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
15 Assembly, a legislative member of the Working Group serving in his or her
16 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
17 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than
18 12 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the
19 General Assembly.

20 (2) Other members of the Working Group shall be entitled to both per
21 diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under

1 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than 12 meetings. These payments shall be
2 made from monies appropriated to the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and
3 Independent Living.

4 (h) Appropriation. The sum of \$ 10,050.00 is appropriated to the
5 Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living from the General
6 Fund in fiscal year 2022 for per diem compensation and reimbursement of
7 expenses for members of the Working Group.

8 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

9 This act shall take effect on passage.