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H.708

Introduced by Representatives Gonzalez of Winooski, Burke of Brattleboro,
Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs, Clarkson of
Woodstock, Lanpher of Vergennes, Morris of Bennington, and
Stuart of Brattleboro

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Boards and commissions; appointments; gender equality

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to prohibit the
Governor's appointment of a person to a board, commission, or similar entity
when that appointment would result in a majority membership of one gender
on that entity.

An act relating to requiring gender equality on State boards, commissions,
and similar entities

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

Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) According to the Vermont Commission on Women's 2015 report
titled "Women in Leadership and Public Life 2015," in 2013 there were a total
of 178 Vermont boards and commissions. Of these, 51 percent had male

1 dominated membership as opposed to 17 percent with female dominated
2 membership.

3 (2) According to the same report, 64 Vermont boards and commissions
4 offered per diems. Of those boards and commissions offering per diems,
5 56 percent had male dominated membership as opposed to 13 percent with
6 female dominated membership.

7 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 216a is added to read:

8 § 216a. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS; GENDER EQUALITY

9 (a) The Governor shall not appoint or reappoint a person to any board,
10 commission, or similar entity if that appointment or reappointment would
11 cause the number of members of that entity of one gender to be greater than
12 one-half the membership of that entity plus one if the entity is composed of an
13 odd number of members. If the board, commission, or similar entity is
14 composed of an even number of members, not more than one-half of the
15 membership shall be of one gender.

16 (b) A person or organization shall consider the goal of gender equality
17 when making appointments to a State board, commission, or similar entity.

18 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

19 This act shall take effect on passage.