

1 S.26

2 Introduced by Senators Hardy, Balint, Bray, Clarkson, Hooker, McCormack,  
3 Perchlik, Pollina and Ram

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Libraries, history, and information technology; public libraries;

7 Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont

8 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to:

9 (1) establish the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont  
10 to report on the current status of Vermont's libraries and recommend  
11 improvements to the public library system; and

12 (2) update and make technical corrections to certain statutes concerning  
13 the Vermont Department of Libraries.

14 An act relating to the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont  
15 and the Department of Libraries

16 \* \* \* Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont \* \* \*

17 Sec. 1. WORKING GROUP ON THE STATUS OF LIBRARIES IN  
18 VERMONT; REPORT

19 (a) Creation. There is created the Working Group on the Status of  
20 Libraries in Vermont to study and report on the statewide status of Vermont's

1 libraries. The Working Group is formed with the intent of strengthening and  
2 supporting libraries of all sizes and improving library services for the public.

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

5 (1) the State Librarian;

6 (2) the President of the Vermont Library Association or designee;

7 (3) the Executive Director of the Vermont Humanities Council or  
8 designee;

9 (4) three representatives of public libraries, who shall be from libraries  
10 of different sizes and from different regions of the State, appointed by the State  
11 Librarian;

12 (5) two representatives of public school libraries, who shall be from  
13 schools of different sizes and from different regions of the State, appointed by  
14 the Secretary of Education;

15 (6) two representatives of college and university libraries, appointed by  
16 the President of the College and Special Libraries Section of the Vermont  
17 Library Association; and

18 (7) one public library trustee, appointed by the President of the Friends  
19 and Trustees Section of the Vermont Library Association.

20 (c) Powers and Duties. The Working Group shall study:

1           (1) library services for specific segments of the Vermont population,  
2           including senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, youths and children,  
3           immigrant and migrant communities, and people living in poverty;

4           (2) the role that libraries play in emergency preparedness, cultural  
5           diversity and inclusion, public health and safety, community identity and  
6           resiliency, economic development, and access to public programs and services;

7           (3) the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on library operations and  
8           services; and

9           (4) the current overall status of Vermont libraries, which may include  
10          information related to programming, collections, facilities, technology, and  
11          staffing.

12           (A) Programming. The Working Group may study the types and  
13          frequency of library programs, attendance at library programs, and whether  
14          library programs are meeting community needs. The study of programming  
15          may include an assessment of public engagement and outreach surrounding  
16          library programming as well as the opportunities for nonlibrary programs and  
17          groups to access Vermont libraries.

18           (B) Collections. The Working Group may study the size and  
19          diversity of library holdings and assess the strengths and gaps in materials  
20          available to Vermonters. The study of collections may include an assessment  
21          of how libraries may best share resources across differing libraries and

1 communities, whether libraries offer community-specific resources, and  
2 whether libraries maintain special collections or historical artifacts.

3 (C) Facilities. The Working Group may study whether library  
4 facilities and buildings could be improved with regard to energy efficiency,  
5 accessibility, flexibility, human health and safety, historic preservation, and  
6 intergenerational needs.

7 (D) Technology. The Working Group may study whether Vermont  
8 libraries have sufficient access to basic technological resources, cyber-security  
9 resources, high-speed Internet, electronic catalogs, interlibrary loan and other  
10 interoperable systems, and appropriate hardware and software.

11 (E) Staff. The Working Group may study staffing levels at Vermont  
12 libraries, whether staffing levels are sufficient to meet community needs,  
13 whether library staff compensation and benefits are sufficient, how libraries  
14 rely on volunteers, and what resources are available for workforce  
15 development and training of library staff.

16 (d) Public Input. As part of the study and report, the Working Group shall  
17 solicit feedback from the general public and library users around the State.  
18 The Working Group may examine models for library management and  
19 organization in other states, including the formation of statewide service  
20 networks.

1       (e) Data to be used. The data used in the analysis of library services and  
2       operations may be from 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Post-  
3       pandemic data may also be used to assess the status of library services and  
4       operations.

5       (f) Consultation with the Board of Libraries. The Working Group may  
6       solicit feedback from the Board of Libraries.

7       (g) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,  
8       technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Libraries.

9       (h) Report. On or before November 1, 2023, the Working Group shall  
10       submit a report to the House and Senate Committees on Education. The report  
11       shall contain:

12           (1) specific and detailed findings and proposals concerning the issues set  
13           forth in subsection (c) of this section;

14           (2) recommendations for updating the statutes, rules, standards, and the  
15           governance structures of Vermont libraries to ensure equitable access for  
16           Vermont residents, efficient use of resources, and quality in the provision of  
17           services;

18           (3) recommendations related to the funding needs of Vermont libraries,  
19           including capital, ongoing, and special funding; and

20           (4) any other information or recommendations that the Working Group  
21           may deem necessary.



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Sec. 3. 12 V.S.A. § 1699 is amended to read:

§ 1699. FOREIGN LAWS AND DECISIONS; DETERMINATION BY  
COURT

The statutes, laws, and decisions of another state may be evidenced, prima facie, in the courts of this State by a printed copy thereof, which purports to be published by the authority of ~~such~~ the other state, or which is kept in the State Library ~~at Montpelier~~. The determination of ~~such~~ the laws shall be made by the court and not by the jury, and shall be reviewable.

Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 212 is amended to read:

§ 212. SECRETARY'S DUTIES GENERALLY

The Secretary shall execute those policies adopted by the State Board in the legal exercise of its powers and shall:

\* \* \*

(7) Arrange conferences and summer schools for superintendents and teachers and employ suitable speakers, lecturers, and instructors for the same; fix the amount of tuition for the instruction; provide for educational gatherings, institutes, summer schools, and other supplementary educational activities; and provide for cooperation with the Board of Libraries established by 22 V.S.A.

§ 602 or the State Librarian.

\* \* \*





1 all materials in its custody and provide for their safekeeping and shall rebind  
2 books as needed. The Department shall provide service to other libraries in the  
3 State, schools, and individuals and may provide service by mail or book wagon  
4 or otherwise.

5 \* \* \*

6 Sec. 6. 29 V.S.A. § 1108 is amended to read:

7 § 1108. ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS; CONDITIONS OF  
8 CONTRACTS

9 The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services may require  
10 satisfactory bonds from bidders and contractors, ~~and shall specify in each~~  
11 ~~contract for printing that, in case the matter contracted for is not delivered to~~  
12 ~~the State Librarian or in accordance with his or her written order to such other~~  
13 ~~person as may be specified in the contract, on or before the date specified in~~  
14 ~~the contract for such delivery, \$25.00 of the contract price shall be deducted~~  
15 ~~for every day such delivery is delayed, and, in case the delay exceeds 10 days,~~  
16 ~~there shall be deducted in addition to the above amount \$10.00 for each day's~~  
17 ~~delay over 10 days; and he or she shall also specify in each contract that all~~  
18 ~~public documents and printed matter shall be delivered to the State Librarian at~~  
19 ~~the State Library unless otherwise directed in writing by him or her or the State~~  
20 ~~Librarian. The provisions of this section and section 1107 of this title relating~~

1 ~~to advertising and bids shall not apply to a contract for printing where the~~  
2 ~~amount of the contract does not exceed \$50.00.~~

3 \* \* \*

4 \* \* \* Repeals \* \* \*

5 Sec. 7. REPEALS

6 The following are repealed:

7 (1) 4 V.S.A. § 16 (briefs and other papers kept in State Library);

8 (2) 29 V.S.A. § 1156 (distribution of documents by State Librarian); and

9 (3) 29 V.S.A. § 1161 (distribution of documents to schools).

10 \* \* \* Effective Date \* \* \*

11 Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

12 This act shall take effect on passage.