

1 S.219

2 Introduced by Senator Cummings

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Human services; housing; substance abuse; sober housing

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a
7 voluntary regulatory system for sober houses operating in the State
8 of Vermont.

9 An act relating to sober houses

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

11 Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 709 is added to read:

12 § 709. REGULATION OF SOBER HOUSES

13 (a) As used in this section, “sober house” means a residential property that
14 is operated as a cooperative living arrangement to provide an alcohol- and
15 drug-free environment for persons recovering from alcohol or drug abuse,
16 or both.

17 (b) Any sober house that receives direct funding from the Agency of
18 Human Services, or any department or division of the Agency, shall ensure
19 compliance with the following:

20 (1) Residents shall not use alcohol or drugs.

1 (2) Residents shall participate actively in evidence-based programming
2 for their addictions, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.

3 (3) Residents shall not have an outstanding criminal warrant.

4 (4) Smoking shall not be permitted in the sober house, and the sober
5 house shall have working smoke detectors on all floors, including
6 the basement.

7 (5) A curfew shall be enforced among the residents of the sober house.

8 (6) Owners, staff, and residents shall notify appropriate State
9 authorities of:

10 (A) serious bodily injuries, as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1021, to
11 residents or staff;

12 (B) criminal activity on the property; and

13 (C) property damage that would render the house uninhabitable.

14 (7) Owners and managers shall participate in training regarding housing
15 laws, substance abuse treatment, and management.

16 (c)(1) Any sober house, regardless of whether it receives funding from the
17 Agency of Human Services, may be listed in the Vermont Alcohol and Drug
18 Information Clearinghouse (VADIC) if it voluntarily complies with all of the
19 provisions set forth in subsection (b) of this section, or has a valid charter from
20 Oxford House, Inc.

1 (2) Parole officers and substance abuse counselors shall only make
2 referrals to sober houses listed in the VADIC.

3 (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to waive any privilege or
4 protection or interfere with the Fair Housing Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 3601–3619, or
5 the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101–12213.

6 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

7 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.