

CONFIDENTIAL

LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2016

Bill Number: H. 249 **Name of Bill:** An act relating to intermunicipal services

Agency/Dept: Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Department of Housing and Community Development

Authors of Bill Review: Chris Cochran, John Adams

Date of Bill Review: 4/29/2016

Related Bills and Key Players: No related bills, VTrans, ANR, VLCT, Regional Planning Commissions

Status of Bill: (check one): ☐ Upon Introduction ☐ As passed by 1st body ☒ As passed by both

Recommended Position:

☒ Support ☐ Oppose ☐ Remain Neutral ☐ Support with modifications identified in #8 below

Analysis of Bill

1. Summary of bill and issue is addresses. *Describe what the bill is intended to accomplish and why.*
Vermont's cities and towns face ongoing budget challenges as state and federal aid continues decline. Stricter compliance standards and regulations (roads, clean water, contracting, etc.) are on the rise and many communities suffer from a lack of qualified citizens with an interest in participating on boards and committees and limited budgets to hire staff.

The bill enables Regional Planning Commissions, at the direction of their municipalities, to enter into Service Agreements to provide services for one or more towns. In order to provide these services, an RPC much draft bylaws that outline the process for entering into these service agreements, hold public hearings on the draft bylaws and must be adopted by vote of at least 67% of the RPC's commissioners. Once adopted, RPCs may promote, coordinate, implement and administer service agreements among municipalities. Any agreements with municipalities are voluntary and need the action of the legislative body. RPCs will not have the powers of essential legislative functions; taxing authority or eminent domain. They cannot use other property transfer tax funds through ACCD for developing this work without explicit written authorization from the agency.

2. Is there a need for this bill? *Please explain why or why not.* Unclear. Towns currently have existing statutory authority to share services and few towns are requesting this service. Currently Vermont's most successful regionalization efforts have grown from the bottom-up, using existing tools and laws that support local government collaboration. Regional Planning Commissions say this bill anticipates a need to share services and makes municipal collaboration easier and more efficient. They feel the authority will make it easier for municipalities to enter into arrangements to provide services and have a third party helping to navigate the issues for communities instead of one having the services and another community feeling like they have no power/options.

3. What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department? No fiscal implications are expected. Programmatically, over time this could shift political and financial power from the state to the regions.

4. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? Agency's like VTrans and ANR support the bill and believe it will enhance their ability to help rural towns that have few staff, small populations and tight budgets implement new clean water requirements. It helps set the stage for increased cooperation on regional issues like transportation and flood resilience.

5. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? *(for example, public, municipalities, organizations, business, regulated entities, etc.)*
The bill has the potential to save municipalities money and promote cooperation.

6. Other Stakeholders:

6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why? RPCs have been spearheading this effort.

6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why? VLCT opposed early drafts of the bill but supports the language that passed both chambers.

7. Rationale for recommendation: Support.

8. Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill: *Not meant to rewrite bill, but rather, an opportunity to identify simple modifications that would change recommended position.*
None

9. Gubernatorial appointments to board or commission?

Secretary/Commissioner has reviewed this document: ____Noelle MacKay__ Date__5.3.2016____

Please return this bill review as a Microsoft Word document to laura.gray@state.vt.us and Jessica.mishaan@state.vt.us