

1 H.961

2 Senators Baruth, Hardy, Ingram, McNeil, Parent, and Perchlik move that
3 the Senate propose to the House that the bill as amended by the Committee on
4 Appropriations be further amended by striking out Sec. A.10 [RESERVED], in
5 its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

6 Sec. A.10. SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF THE VERMONT
7 STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM; REPORTS

8 (a) Creation. There is created the Select Committee on the Future of the
9 Vermont State College System (Committee) to assist the State of Vermont and
10 the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) in developing a vision and plan for a high-
11 quality, affordable, sustainable future, a future that is workforce-connected and
12 robust in its online capacities.

13 (b) Membership.

14 (1) The Committee shall be composed of up to the following 15
15 members:

16 (A) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall
17 be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

18 (B) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the
19 Committee on Committees;

20 (C) the President of the University of Vermont or designee and a
21 representative of the UVM Board of Trustees, appointed by the President;

1 (D) the Interim Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) or
2 designee, and a representative of each of the VSC Board of Trustees, VSC
3 campus administration, VSC faculty, VSC students, and VSC alumni or donor
4 community, each appointed by the Interim Chancellor;

5 (E) the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or
6 designee;

7 (F) the Commissioner of Labor or designee;

8 (G) two representatives of the business community, appointed by the
9 Steering Group created under subsection (c) of this section; and

10 (H) the President of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation or
11 designee.

12 (2) A Committee member may be appointed to fill more than one role as
13 identified in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

14 (3) Appointers of members of the Committee shall seek to ensure that
15 the geographical areas of the State hosting VSC campuses are represented on
16 the Committee.

17 (c) Steering Group. On or before June 29, 2020, the Speaker of the House
18 and the President Pro Tempore shall jointly appoint three members of the
19 Committee, and the Governor shall appoint two members of the Committee, to
20 serve as members of a Steering Group. The Steering Group shall provide
21 leadership to the Committee and shall work with a consulting firm to analyze

1 the issues, challenges, and opportunities facing VSC, as well as create a formal
2 action plan to drive change and innovation in the VSC system. The Steering
3 Group may form one or more subcommittees of the Committee to address key
4 topic areas in greater depth.

5 (d) Collaboration. The Committee shall seek input from and collaborate
6 with key stakeholders, as directed by the Steering Group.

7 (e) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study the structure of the
8 current VSC system and build on previous studies and white papers in this
9 area, including the ongoing work and work products of the VSCS Forward
10 Task Force, the NVU Strong Advisory Committee, and the VTC Transition
11 Advisory Task Force. The Select Committee shall also offer
12 recommendations on how to increase affordability for students, access,
13 retention, attainment, relevance, and fiscal sustainability, including the
14 following issues:

15 (1) the financial sustainability of the VSC system and its impact on
16 institutional capacity to innovate and meet State goals and learners' needs,
17 including a comparison of higher education programs, delivery models, tuition,
18 tuition-reduction, and tuition-free programs, and structures in other states;

19 (2) the current organizational structure of VSC and its ability to promote
20 student success;

1 (3) the alignment of the VSC system and workforce development goals,
2 policy frameworks, and partnerships between businesses and institutions of
3 higher education that are designed to meet the needs of employers and promote
4 the public value of education; and

5 (4) potential collaboration or partnership, or both, with The University
6 of Vermont.

7 (f) Consultant. The Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office, in
8 collaboration with the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE),
9 shall issue a request for proposal to hire a consultant to assist the Committee
10 with responses due from interested parties on or before July 17, 2020. On or
11 before July 31, 2020, the Steering Group shall select the consultant.

12 (g) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative and technical
13 assistance of the Agency of Education. NEBHE shall provide project
14 management support to the Committee.

15 (h) Reports. Recognizing the need for short-term solutions on system
16 structure, governance, funding, and sustainability, the Committee, through its
17 Steering Group, shall use a phased approach to reporting. The first interim
18 report shall be due on or before December 20, 2020 and shall focus on the
19 topics described in subdivision (e)(1) of this section; the second interim report
20 shall be due on or before June 15, 2021 and shall focus on the topics described
21 in subdivisions (e)(2), (3), and (4) of this section; and the final report, which

1 shall collate findings relative to subsection (e) of this section and include the
2 action plan, shall be due on or before December 15, 2021. All reports shall be
3 in writing and be delivered to the General Assembly and the Governor.

4 (i) Meetings.

5 (1) The Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or
6 designee shall call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before
7 August 28, 2020.

8 (2) The Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore shall
9 jointly select the Committee chair.

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

11 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 31, 2022.

12 (j) Compensation and reimbursement.

13 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
14 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee serving in his or her
15 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
16 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406.

17 (2) Other members of the Committee, who are not employees of the
18 State of Vermont, shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
19 reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010.

20 (3) Compensation and reimbursement under this subsection shall be, in
21 each fiscal year 2021 and 2022, for a maximum of:

- 1 (A) six in-person meetings of the Committee;
2 (B) eight in-person meetings of the Steering Group; and
3 (C) four remote meetings of up to four subcommittees, assuming
4 compensation and reimbursement for up to five members of each
5 subcommittee.

6 (k) Appropriations.

7 (1) The sum of \$20,500.00 is appropriated to the Agency of Education
8 from the General Fund in fiscal year 2021 for per diem compensation and
9 reimbursement of expenses for members of the Committee, Steering Group,
10 and subcommittees.

11 (2) The Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office is authorized to transfer
12 funds identified in Sec. A.3(b) of this act to carry out the actions required
13 under this section.