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H.287

Introduced by Representatives Hooper of Montpelier, Bartholomew of
Hartland, Berry of Manchester, Burke of Brattleboro, Carr of
Brandon, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs, Christie
of Hartford, Cole of Burlington, Dakin of Chester, Deen of
Westminster, Donovan of Burlington, Ellis of Waterbury, Feltus
of Lyndon, Frank of Underhill, French of Randolph, Head of
South Burlington, Kitzmiller of Montpelier, Krowinski of
Burlington, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lenes of Shelburne, Lewis
of Berlin, Macaig of Williston, Masland of Thetford,
McCormack of Burlington, McCullough of Williston, McFaun
of Barre Town, Miller of Shaftsbury, Mrowicki of Putney,
O’Sullivan of Burlington, Partridge of Windham, Patt of
Worcester, Pearson of Burlington, Poirier of Barre City,
Ryerson of Randolph, Stevens of Waterbury, Stuart of
Brattleboro, Sullivan of Burlington, Till of Jericho, Toleno of
Brattleboro, Townsend of South Burlington, Troiano of
Stannard, Walz of Barre City, and Yantachka of Charlotte

Referred to Committee on
Date:

1 Subject: Energy; public service; human services; low-income weatherization;
2 thermal energy efficiency

3 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to increase
4 delivery of weatherization and thermal energy efficiency services to Vermont
5 consumers through two mechanisms that each last for a three-year period.

6 First, it increases the fuel gross receipts tax that funds low-income
7 weatherization, with a cap in case the price of fuel rises. Second, it transfers
8 funds from the energy efficiency's electric efficiency budgets to its thermal
9 efficiency budgets.

10 An act relating to increasing delivery of weatherization and thermal energy
11 efficiency services to Vermonters

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

13 Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 2503 is amended to read:

14 § 2503. FUEL GROSS RECEIPTS TAX

15 (a) There is imposed a gross receipts tax of 0.5 percent on the retail sale of
16 the following types of fuel:

17 (1) heating oil, propane, kerosene, and other dyed diesel fuel delivered
18 to a residence or business;

19 (2) natural gas;

20 (3) electricity;

1 (4) coal.

2 (b) The tax shall be levied upon and collected quarterly from the seller.

3 Fuel sellers may include the following message on their bills to customers:

4 “The amount of this bill includes a 0.5% gross receipts tax, ~~enacted in 1990,~~
5 for support of Vermont’s Low Income Home Weatherization Program.”

6 (c) The tax shall be administered by the Commissioner of Taxes, and all
7 receipts shall be deposited by the Commissioner in the Home Weatherization
8 Assistance Trust Fund. All provisions of law relating to the collection,
9 administration, and enforcement of the sales and use tax imposed by 32 V.S.A.
10 chapter 233 shall apply to the tax imposed by this chapter.

11 * * *

12 ~~(g) No tax under this section shall be imposed for any quarter ending after~~
13 ~~June 30, 2016. Monies from the escrow account shall be issued for rebates~~
14 ~~pursuant to subsection (f) of this section until March 1, 2017. Each fiscal year,~~
15 ~~commencing on July 1, 2015, the tax percentage stated in subsection (a) of this~~
16 ~~section shall increase by an additional 0.5 percent in each subsequent fiscal~~
17 ~~year until reaching two percent, subject to each of the following:~~

18 (1) The additional percentages required by this subsection shall not
19 apply to the retail sale of electricity.

20 (2) There shall be a ceiling on the additional amount of tax imposed by
21 this section, in accordance with the following:

1 (A) “Efficiency services” includes the establishment of a statewide
2 information clearinghouse under subsection (g) of this section.

3 (B) “Regulated fuels” means electricity and natural gas delivered by
4 a regulated utility.

5 (C) “Unregulated fuels” means fuels used by thermal energy and
6 process fuel customers other than electricity and natural gas delivered by a
7 regulated utility.

8 (4) Notwithstanding any contrary provision of this section or of a Board
9 decision or order:

10 (A) The following amounts to be raised from an energy efficiency
11 charge on electric customers under subsection (d) of this section are transferred
12 from the energy efficiency utility electric budgets to the energy efficiency
13 utility thermal efficiency and process fuel budgets:

14 (i) \$2 million during calendar year 2015;

15 (ii) \$3 million during calendar year 2016; and

16 (iii) \$4 million during calendar year 2017.

17 (B) In this subdivision (4):

18 (i) “Energy efficiency utility electric budgets” refers to the
19 budgets approved by the Board in paragraph one of its order of July 9, 2014, in
20 Docket EEU-2013-01, pages 76–77.

1 (ii) “Energy efficiency utility thermal efficiency and process fuel
2 budgets” refers to the budgets approved by the Board in paragraph three of its
3 order of July 9, 2014, in Docket EEU-2013-01, page 77.

4 (C) The amounts transferred under this subdivision (4) shall be added
5 to the energy efficiency utility thermal efficiency and process fuel budgets and
6 shall be for the delivery of thermal energy efficiency services on a whole
7 building basis to Vermont consumers of unregulated fuels, regardless of
8 income level, at properties that have not previously received thermal energy
9 efficiency services under this section or 33 V.S.A. chapter 25 (home
10 weatherization assistance).

11 (D) The amounts transferred under this subdivision (4) shall reduce
12 the energy efficiency utility electric budgets. The Board shall not increase an
13 energy efficiency charge in order to replace these amounts in those electric
14 budgets.

15 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

16 This act shall take effect on passage.