

Journal of the House

Friday, January 16, 2026

At nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rep. Brenda Steady of Milton.

Rules Suspended, House Bills Introduced

Pending first reading of House bills, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the rules were suspended and the bills were read the first time by number and referred to committee as follows:

H. 705

By Reps. Priestley of Bradford and Sibilia of Dover,
House bill, entitled

An act relating to the creation of the Student Secular Bill of Rights
To the Committee on Education.

H. 706

By Rep. Priestley of Bradford,
House bill, entitled

An act relating to internet browsers and data selling
To the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

H. 707

By Reps. Kimbell of Woodstock and Branagan of Georgia,
House bill, entitled

An act relating to certified public accountant licensure
To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 708

By Rep. Kimbell of Woodstock,
House bill, entitled

An act relating to the creation of the State Flag Task Force

To the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs.

H. 709

By Reps. Greer of Bennington, Hango of Berkshire, Headrick of Burlington, and Logan of Burlington,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to limiting overtime for medical interns, resident physicians, and physicians

To the Committee on General and Housing.

H. 710

By Reps. Campbell of St. Johnsbury and James of Manchester,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to defining electricity generating facilities

To the Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure.

H. 711

By Reps. Burt of Cabot, Branagan of Georgia, Dobrovich of Williamstown, Hooper of Burlington, Labor of Morgan, Morgan, L. of Milton, Pritchard of Pawlet, and Tagliavia of Corinth,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to a sales tax exemption for precious metals purchased for investment

To the Committee on Ways and Means.

H. 712

By Reps. Burt of Cabot, Dobrovich of Williamstown, Lipsky of Stowe, Nelson of Derby, North of Ferrisburgh, and O'Brien of Tunbridge,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the Uniform Capacity Tax and Farm Security Special Fund

To the Committee on Ways and Means.

H. 713

By Reps. Greer of Bennington, Cina of Burlington, and Headrick of Burlington,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to raising the minimum wage for employees working for a national fast food chain

To the Committee on General and Housing.

H. 714

By Reps. Casey of Montpelier and Priestley of Bradford,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to automated employment decision making and State employees

To the Committee on General and Housing.

H. 715

By Reps. Greer of Bennington, Cina of Burlington, Harple of Glover, Headrick of Burlington, Kleppner of Burlington, Logan of Burlington, and McGill of Bridport,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the provision of menstrual products in postsecondary schools located in Vermont

To the Committee on Education.

H. 716

By Rep. Morrow of Weston,

House bill, entitled

An act relating to the net metering formula

To the Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure.

Ceremonial Reading

H.C.R. 159

Offered by Representatives Steady of Milton, Micklus of Milton, Morgan, L. of Milton, Morgan, M. of Milton, and Taylor of Milton

Offered by Senator Mattos

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2025 Milton High School Yellowjackets Division II championship boys' soccer team

Whereas, the sixth-seeded Yellowjackets reached the Division II championship game after a semifinal-round overtime victory over the second-ranked Harwood Highlanders, and

Whereas, Milton faced the top-seeded Mt. Abraham Eagles for the Division II title in a contest played at the D.G. Weaver Athletic Complex in Burlington, and

Whereas, the Yellowjackets dominated the first half and the Eagles the second, resulting in an end-of-regulation play tie, just over two minutes into overtime, the scenario-experienced Milton squad was prepared to execute a successful penalty kick, securing a 1–0 game victory and the Division II title, and

Whereas, the triumphant Yellowjackets were Brody Allard, Alexander Harlow, Jack Tomasi, Sam King, Colton Foss, Dante Matott, Cameron FitzGerald, Maxton Greenfield, Killian Choquette, Mason Martel, Matthew Shedd, Andrew Preuss, Brady Stevens, Matthew Cusson, Joshua Rhoades, Chase Renaud, Wyatt Wright, Wyatt Wooten, Matias Ocampo Herrero, Noah Hecker, Brock Bushey, and Brandon Metcalf, and

Whereas, Head Coach Jack Hubbard and assistant coaches Eric Rhoades, Braden Ripley, and Corey Lombard were essential guides for the team's success, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the 2025 Milton High School Yellowjackets Division II championship boys' soccer team, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Milton High School.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, January 16, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

Announcement of Consent Calendar Error

The Speaker announced that House Concurrent Resolution 163 was included on the Consent Calendar in error and therefore was removed from the Consent Calendar and could not be adopted.

House Rules Committee Appointment

Pursuant to the provisions of House Rule 25, the Speaker announced that **Rep. Higley of Lowell**, as the newly-designated Assistant Minority Leader following the resignation of Rep. Toof of St. Albans Town, is an ex officio member of the Committee on Rules.

Joint Legislative Management Committee Appointment

Pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 41 due to the vacancy caused by the resignation of Rep. Toof of St. Albans Town, the Speaker appointed **Rep. McCoy of Poultney** to the Joint Legislative Management Committee.

Third Reading; Bill Passed**H. 649**

House bill, entitled

An act relating to captive insurance companies

Was taken up, read the third time, and passed.

Third Reading;**Bill Passed in Concurrence with Proposal of Amendment****S. 60**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to establishing the Farm Security Special Fund to provide grants for farm losses due to weather conditions

Was taken up, read the third time, and passed in concurrence with proposal of amendment.

Second Reading; Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered**H. 534**

Rep. Noyes of Wolcott, for the Committee on Human Services, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to community action agencies

Reported in favor of its passage when amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. chapter 59 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 59. COMMUNITY ~~SERVICES~~ ACTION AGENCIES**§ 3901. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE**

(a) Recognizing that the economic well-being and social equity of every Vermonter has long been a fundamental concern of the State, it remains evident that ~~poverty continues to be the lot of~~ a substantial number of Vermont's population continues to experience poverty. It is the policy of ~~this~~ the State to help develop the full potential of each of its citizens so they can contribute to the fullest extent possible to the life of our communities and the State as a whole.

(b) It is the purpose of this chapter to strengthen, supplement, and coordinate efforts that further this policy through:

(1) the strengthening of community capabilities for planning, coordinating, and managing federal, State, and other sources of assistance related to the problem of poverty;

(2) the better organization and utilization of a range of services related to the needs of ~~the poor~~ individuals with low income; and

(3) the broadening of the resource base of programs to secure a more active role in assisting ~~the poor~~ individuals with low income from business, labor, and other groups from the private sector.

§ 3902. OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

(a) The Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity is hereby authorized to allocate available financial assistance for community ~~services~~ action agencies and programs in accordance with State and federal law and regulation.

(b) The Director may provide financial assistance to community ~~services~~ action agencies for the planning, conduct, administration, and evaluation of community ~~service~~ action programs to provide a range of services and activities having a measurable and potentially major impact on causes of poverty in the community or in areas of the community where poverty is a particularly acute problem. Components of those services and activities may involve, without limitation of other activities and supporting facilities designed to assist ~~low-income~~ participants with low income:

(1) to secure and retain meaningful employment;

(2) to obtain adequate education;

(3) to make better use of available income;

(4) to ~~provide and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment~~ have access to safe, secure, and permanent housing;

(5) to obtain prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services for ~~the prevention of narcotics addiction, alcoholism, and for the rehabilitation of narcotic addicts and alcoholics~~ individuals with substance use disorder;

(6) to obtain emergency assistance through loans and grants to meet immediate and urgent individual and family needs, including the need for health services, nutritious food, housing, and unemployment-related assistance;

(7) to remove obstacles and solve personal and family problems that block achievement of self-sufficiency;

(8) to achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community;

(9) to make more frequent and effective use of other programs related to the purposes of this chapter; and

(10) to coordinate and establish linkages between governmental and other social service programs to ensure the effective delivery of such services to ~~low-income~~ persons; with low income and to encourage the use of entities in the private sector of the community in efforts to ameliorate poverty in the community.

(c) The Director is authorized to adopt rules pursuant to chapter 25 of this title appropriate to the carrying out of this chapter and its purposes thereof.

§ 3903. DESIGNATION OF AGENCIES TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND
ACTIVITIES TO AMELIORATE OR ELIMINATE POVERTY

The Director shall designate private nonprofit ~~community-based~~ community-based organizations ~~who that~~ have demonstrated or ~~who that~~ can demonstrate the ability to provide services and activities as defined in subsection 3902(b) of this title as community ~~services~~ action agencies.

§ 3904. COMMUNITY ~~SERVICES~~ ACTION AGENCY ASSESSMENT
AND PLAN

Each designated community ~~services~~ action agency shall determine the need for activities and services within the area served by the agency ~~and shall thereafter prepare a community services plan that describes the method by which the agency will provide those services every three years, complete an assessment, and incorporate that information into an annual community action plan.~~ The plan shall include a schedule for the anticipated provision of new or additional ongoing services and shall specify the resources that are needed by and available to the agency to implement the plan. ~~The community services plan shall be updated annually.~~

§ 3905. COMMUNITY ~~SERVICES~~ ACTION AGENCIES;
ADMINISTRATION

(a) Each community ~~services~~ action agency shall administer its programs as set out in the community ~~services~~ action plan and as approved by its board of directors.

(b) Each board of a nonprofit ~~community-based~~ community-based organization that is designated a community ~~services~~ action agency under section 3903 of this chapter shall have an executive committee of not more

than seven members who shall be representative of the composition of the board and the board shall be so constituted that:

(1) ~~one-third of the members of the board are elected public officials currently holding office, or their designees, except that if the number of elected officials reasonably available and willing to serve is less than one-third of the membership of the board, membership on the board of appointive public officials may be counted in meeting such one-third requirement;~~

(2) a minimum of one-third of the members of the board are persons chosen in accordance with election procedures adequate to ensure that they are representative of the poor individuals with low income in the area served; and

(2) one-third of the members of the board are elected public officials currently holding office, or their designees, except that if the number of elected officials reasonably available and willing to serve is less than one-third of the membership of the board, membership on the board of appointive public officials may be counted in meeting such one-third requirement; and

(3) the remainder of the members of the board are officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, welfare, education, or other major groups and interests in the community.

(c) ~~Each member of the a board selected to represent a specific geographic area within a community shall reside in the area he or she the member represents. No person selected under subdivision (b)(2) or (3) of this section as a member of a board shall serve on such board for more than five consecutive years, or more than a total of 10 years~~ Each board shall adopt term limits to govern its members.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, the report of the Committee on Human Services agreed to, and third reading ordered.

Favorable Report; Second Reading; Third Reading Ordered

H. 84

Rep. Berbeco of Winooski, for the Committee on Health Care, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to allowing telehealth appointments to be recorded with patient and provider consent

Reported in favor of its passage. The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, and third reading ordered.

Message from the Senate No. 5

A message was received from the Senate by Ms. Gradel, its Assistant Secretary, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has on its part adopted concurrent resolutions originating in the House of the following titles:

H.C.R. 164. House concurrent resolution congratulating the St. Albans Town Fire Department on 50 years of remarkable community service.

H.C.R. 165. House concurrent resolution honoring Micheline Lemay of Stowe for her outstanding outdoor recreation and mindfulness leadership.

H.C.R. 166. House concurrent resolution congratulating The Pick and Shovel in Newport City on its golden anniversary.

H.C.R. 167. House concurrent resolution recognizing January 2026 as Mentoring Month in Vermont.

H.C.R. 168. House concurrent resolution congratulating the members of Troop 60336 of Milton on earning the Girl Scout Bronze Award.

H.C.R. 169. House concurrent resolution recognizing the unique role of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the Vermont health care system.

Adjournment

At ten o'clock and ten minutes in the forenoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, pursuant to the provisions of J.R.S. 32.

Concurrent Resolutions Adopted

The following concurrent resolutions, having been placed on the Consent Calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no member having requested floor consideration as provided by Rule 16b of the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, are hereby adopted on the part of the House:

H.C.R. 164

House concurrent resolution congratulating the St. Albans Town Fire Department on 50 years of remarkable community service

H.C.R. 165

House concurrent resolution honoring Micheline Lemay of Stowe for her outstanding outdoor recreation and mindfulness leadership

H.C.R. 166

House concurrent resolution congratulating The Pick and Shovel in Newport City on its golden anniversary

H.C.R. 167

House concurrent resolution recognizing January 2026 as Mentoring Month in Vermont

H.C.R. 168

House concurrent resolution congratulating the members of Troop 60336 of Milton on earning the Girl Scout Bronze Award

H.C.R. 169

House concurrent resolution recognizing the unique role of certified registered nurse anesthetists in the Vermont health care system

[The full text of the concurrent resolutions appeared in the House Calendar Addendum on the preceding legislative day and will appear in the Public Acts and Resolves of the 2026 Adjourned Session.]