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H.702

Introduced by Representatives Lanpher of Vergennes, Brumsted of Shelburne,
Burke of Brattleboro, Cina of Burlington, Connor of Fairfield,
Dunn of Essex, Gardner of Richmond, McFaun of Barre Town,
Mrowicki of Putney, Pugh of South Burlington, Savage of
Swanton, Till of Jericho, Townsend of South Burlington,
Troiano of Stannard, Webb of Shelburne, Willhoit of St.
Johnsbury, and Wood of Waterbury

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Human services; child poverty; advisory council

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish the
Child Poverty Advisory Council.

An act relating to the Child Poverty Advisory Council

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

Sec. 1. CHILD POVERTY ADVISORY COUNCIL

(a) Creation. There is created the Child Poverty Advisory Council to
examine structural issues in Vermont that create conditions that prevent
families from moving out of poverty. The Advisory Council shall provide

1 guidance and recommend legislation to the General Assembly that either
2 reduces or mitigates the effects of childhood poverty.

3 (b)(1) Voting membership. The Advisory Council shall be composed of
4 the following 13 voting members:

5 (A) the President Pro Tempore of the Senate or designee;

6 (B) the Speaker of the House or designee;

7 (C) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education or designee;

8 (D) the Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare or
9 designee;

10 (E) the Chair of the House Committee on Education or designee;

11 (F) the Chair of the House Committee on Human Services or
12 designee;

13 (G) a member appointed by Voices for Vermont's Children;

14 (H) a member appointed by the Vermont Low Income Advocacy
15 Council;

16 (I) a member appointed by Vermont Legal Aid;

17 (J) a member appointed by the Vermont Coalition for Disability

18 Rights;

19 (K) a member appointed by the Vermont Affordable Housing
20 Coalition;

1 (L) a nongovernmental designee of the Child and Family Trauma
2 Work Group who does not otherwise represent an organization with
3 membership on this Council; and

4 (M) an employee of the prekindergarten through grade 12 public
5 education delivery system in Vermont appointed jointly by the Executive
6 Directors of the Vermont Superintendents Association, the Vermont Principals'
7 Association, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Coordinators.

8 (2) Nonvoting membership. The Advisory Council shall be composed
9 of the following five nonvoting members or designees:

10 (A) the Secretary of Education;

11 (B) the Secretary of Human Services;

12 (C) the Commissioner for Children and Families;

13 (D) the Commissioner of Health; and

14 (E) the Commissioner of Labor.

15 (c) Powers and duties. The Advisory Council shall examine structural
16 issues in Vermont that create conditions that prevent families from moving out
17 of poverty and shall provide related guidance and recommendations to the
18 General Assembly. It shall serve as an educational forum for both its members
19 and the public. The Council shall use data to understand better existing and
20 emerging challenges to children and families living in poverty.

1 (d) Assistance. The Advisory Council shall have the administrative,
2 technical, and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council.

3 (e) Work products.

4 (1) Recommendations. On or before January 1 of each year, the
5 Advisory Council may submit a list of recommendations and legislative
6 priorities from the previous calendar year to the General Assembly that are
7 aimed at reducing or mitigating the effects of childhood poverty.

8 (2) Legislation. On or before November 15 of each year, the Advisory
9 Council may prepare legislation for introduction by one or more of its
10 legislative members that contains any of the Advisory Council's
11 recommendations for reducing or mitigating the effects of childhood poverty.

12 (3) Compilation of minutes. On or before January 1 of each year, the
13 Advisory Council shall submit to the General Assembly a compilation of its
14 meeting minutes from the previous calendar year, which summarizes the
15 Advisory Council's activities and decisions.

16 (f) Meetings.

17 (1) The Speaker of the House or designee shall call the first meeting of
18 the Advisory Council to occur on or before July 1 of each year.

19 (2) Each year the Council shall select a chair from among its legislative
20 members at the first meeting. The Council may select a vice chair from among
21 its legislative members.

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

2 (4)(A) The Advisory Council shall cease to exist on July 1, 2028.

3 (B) Five years prior, in 2023, the Advisory Council shall conduct a
4 midterm review of its achievements and effectiveness using results-based
5 accountability. Among any other benchmarks that the Advisory Council
6 chooses to measure pursuant to subdivision (C) of this subdivision (4), it shall
7 review, as compared to 2016:

8 (i) the number and percentage of children living in families at
9 50 percent, 100 percent, and 200 percent of the federal poverty level; and

10 (ii) the number and percentage of children living in families
11 paying more than 30 percent of their cash income for housing and related
12 expenses.

13 (C) On or before January 1, 2019, the Advisory Council shall identify
14 any additional benchmarks it plans to measure during its 2023 midterm review.

15 (g) Compensation and reimbursement.

16 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
17 Assembly, a legislative member of the Advisory Council serving in his or her
18 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
19 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for not more than six
20 meetings.

1 (2) Other members of the Advisory Council who are not employees of
2 the State of Vermont and who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed
3 for their attendance shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
4 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than six
5 meetings.

6 (3) Payments to members of the Advisory Council authorized under this
7 subsection shall be made from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

8 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

9 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.