

VBA Legislative Update – Week 17 May 10, 2025

The End is Near

On Friday afternoon, the FY26 Budget Conference Committee finished their work and signed off on their agreement (we will provide a complete final budget report next week). In a usual year, the close of the Budget Conference Committee means the end of the session is about two days away. Not this year!

Included in the final budget agreement was **\$1.5 million for five additional weeks of State House operation this year!** This additional funding will allow the legislature to meet into the first week of June, return on June 16th and 17th for a veto session, and possibly come back in the fall to respond to federal budget cuts.

Lawmakers still have to finish work on the education transformation bill ([H.454](#)), the housing bills ([S.127](#) and [H.479](#)), and the transportation budget bill ([H.488](#)) – at a minimum. Adjournment date is now predicted to be sometime between **May 30 – June 7**. Stay tuned...

To Go Drinks

On Friday, the Senate gave final approval to [H.339](#), the bill that repeals the sunset on the COVID-era law that allows restaurants to sell drinks to-go with a food order. Once the bill is signed by the Governor, the law will be permanently on the books.

→ Local Headlines of Note

- [Financial struggles have pushed Vermont's largest health insurer to the brink](#)
- [Trump takes Vermont's climate superfund law to court](#)
- [Vermont House passes tax credit bill after compromise on military pensions](#)
- [Final Reading: A year into Vermont's wake boat regulations, Senate Natural Resources revisits the rules](#)
- [Health Care Leaders Are Scrambling to Prevent Another Major Insurance Hike](#)
- [Lawmakers Debate Bills They Hope Will Make Immigrants Safe](#)
- [At a cost of nearly \\$120M, lawmakers hold property tax increases to 1%](#)
- [Vermont agriculture secretary says dairy farmers are concerned about migrant farmworker arrests](#)
- [Vermont could combat climate change ... by hosting the Olympics](#)

→ VBA Bill Report

| VBA BILL REPORT – WEEK 17 May 10, 2025 | | | |
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| Bill | Sponsors | Description | Status |

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| <u>H 24</u> | Rep. Anne Donahue | <p>An Act Relating to Requiring Retail Businesses to Accept Cash</p> <p>This bill proposes to prohibit a retail business from refusing to accept cash payment.</p> | <p>Committees: House Commerce and Economic Development</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development (01/09/25)</p> |
| <u>H 45</u> | Rep. Mary-Katherine Stone; Rep. Tiffany Bluemle; Rep. Abbey Duke; Rep. Barbara Rachelson; Rep. Bram Kleppner; Rep. Kate Logan; Rep. Robert Hooper; Rep. Troy Headrick | <p>An Act Relating to Prohibiting Possession of Firearms on Premises Where Alcohol Is Licensed To Be Served</p> <p>This bill proposes to prohibit possession of firearms on premises where alcohol is licensed to be served and to require that notice of the prohibition be posted at each premises.</p> | <p>Committees: House Judiciary</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Judiciary (01/21/25)</p> |
| <u>H 51</u> | Rep. Lucy Boyden; Rep. Matthew Birong | <p>An Act Relating to Miscellaneous Amendments to The Statutes Governing Alcoholic Beverages</p> <p>This bill proposes to: (1) authorize the holder of a fourth-class license to sell its products to not more than eight additional manufacturers or rectifiers; and (2) authorize manufacturers of malt beverages to acquire a retail shipping license and ship malt beverages to first- and second-class licensees.</p> | <p>Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/21/25)</p> |
| <u>H 110</u> | Rep. Lucy Boyden | <p>An Act Relating to A Reciprocity Requirement for Out-of-state Consumer Shipping Licenses</p> <p>This bill proposes to limit the issuance of out-of-state malt beverage consumer shipping licenses to breweries that are located in states that allow Vermont brewers to acquire consumer shipping licenses.</p> | <p>Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/28/25)</p> |
| <u>H 119</u> | Rep. Carolyn Branagan | <p>An Act Relating to The Beverage Container Redemption System</p> <p>This bill proposes to expand the scope of the beverage container redemption system to include cider, hard kombucha, noncarbonated water, and noncarbonated soft drinks. The bill also would increase</p> | <p>Committees: House Environment</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Environment (01/29/25)</p> |

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| | | the deposit for a container from five cents to 10 cents. | |
| H 144 | Rep. Brian Minier; Bridget Burkhardt; Rep. Emilie Krasnow; Rep. Kate Logan; Rep. Laura Sibilia; Rep. Leonora Dodge; Rep. Lisa Hango; Rep. Michelle Bos-Lun | <p>An Act Relating to Enhancing Food Allergen Awareness in Food Service Establishments</p> <p>This bill proposes to require owners and operators of food service establishments to designate employees to complete a food allergen training program. It further proposes to require food service establishments to post signage regarding food allergens.</p> | <p>Committees: House Human Services</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Human Services (02/05/25)</p> |
| H 260 | Rep. Esme Cole; Rep. Monique Priestley; Rep. Ela Chapin; Herb Olson; Rep. Jubilee McGill; Rep. Kate McCann; Rep. Kate Nugent; Rep. Mary Howard; Robert "Rob" North; VL Coffin | <p>An Act Relating to Prohibiting Certain Substances in Food Manufactured, Sold, Or Distributed in Vermont</p> <p>This bill proposes to prohibit the manufacture, sale, delivery, or distribution in commerce of food containing brominated vegetable oil, potassium bromate, propylparaben, or red dye no. 3.</p> | <p>Committees: House Human Services</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Human Services (02/19/25)</p> |
| H 339 | House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs | <p>An Act Relating to Removing the Repeal Of 7 VSA § 230</p> <p>This bill proposes to remove the repeal of 7 V.S.A. § 230 (sale of alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption).</p> | <p>Status: Passed by House and Senate Awaiting delivery to Governor</p> |
| H 376 | Rep. Kate Nugent; Rep. Brian Cina; Rep. Carol Ode; Rep. Jubilee McGill; Rep. Mari Cordes; Rep. Michelle Bos-Lun; Rep. Monique Priestley; Rep. Phil Pouech; Rep. Troy Headrick | <p>An Act Relating to The Creation Of The Treatment And Recovery Fund And The Labeling And Taxation of Alcoholic Beverages</p> <p>This bill proposes to (1) require all alcoholic beverages sold in the State to bear a label containing a statement of the alcohol content in U.S. Standard Drinks; (2) increase the gallonage taxes on malt beverages and vinous beverages; (3) increase the excise tax on spirits; (4) create the Treatment and Recovery Fund, dedicate the proceeds of the gallonage tax to the Fund, and establish the purposes for which monies from the Fund may be disbursed; and (5) require the Division of Liquor Control t...</p> | <p>Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (02/26/25)</p> <p>No action scheduled.</p> |

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| <u>H 377</u> | Rep. Barbara Rachelson; Rep. Chea Waters Evans | An Act Relating to The Local Media Advertising Tax Credit This bill proposes to create an income tax credit for small businesses that purchase advertising in local media outlets. | Committees: House Ways and Means Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means (02/26/25) |
| <u>S 88</u> | Sen. Wendy Harrison; Sen. Alison Clarkson; Sen. Anne Watson; Joseph "Joe" Major; Sen. Randolph Brock; Sen. Rebecca White; Robert "Rob" Plunkett | An Act Relating to Creating an Enhanced Growth Incentive For Employee-owned Businesses This bill proposes to create a new enhanced incentive for locally owned and controlled employee-owned businesses within the Vermont Employment Growth Incentive Program (VEGI). | Committees: Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs Status: Read 1st time & referred to Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs (02/25/25) |
| <u>S.131</u> | Sen. Phil Baruth | An act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington relating to the possession of firearms This bill proposes to approve an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington to prohibit the possession of firearms in any building or on any real property or parking area under the ownership or control of an establishment licensed to serve alcohol for on- premises consumption. | Committee: House Government Operation and Military Affairs Status: <u>Passed the Senate</u> |