

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Health and Welfare to which was referred Senate Bill
3 No. 239 entitled “An act relating to the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
4 Working Group” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and
5 recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting
6 clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING WORKING GROUP

8 (a) There is created the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Working
9 Group for the purpose of examining the existing statutes and the Department
10 for Children and Families’ rules and policies regarding mandatory reporting of
11 abuse and neglect of a child and recommending changes to modernize them
12 and reflect current best practices.

13 (b) The Working Group shall be composed of the following members:

14 (1) the Director of the Office of Professional Regulation or designee;

15 (2) the Executive Director of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim
16 Services or designee;

17 (3) a co-executive director of the Vermont Network Against Domestic
18 and Sexual Violence or designee;

19 (4) the Attorney General or designee;

20 (5) the Chief Administrative Judge or designee;

1 (6) two members from the Department for Children and Families’
2 Family Services Division, appointed by the Deputy Commissioner of the
3 Division;

4 (7) the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Vermont or designee;
5 and

6 (8) the Vermont Child, Youth, and Family Advocate.

7 (c) In conducting its work, the Working Group shall consult with
8 stakeholders, including:

9 (1) Vermont Children’s Alliance and representation from Child
10 Advocacy Centers;

11 (2) the Department of State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs;

12 (3) KidSafe Collaborative;

13 (4) Voices for Vermont’s Children;

14 (5) Vermont Parent Representation Center;

15 (6) Disability Rights Vermont;

16 (7) medical partners, such as the University of Vermont’s Child Safe
17 Program; and

18 (8) individuals with lived experience as child victims of abuse and
19 neglect.

20 (d) On or before January 15, 2027, the Working Group shall report its
21 findings and any recommended legislative proposal to the House Committee

1 on Human Services, Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and Senate and
2 House Committees on Judiciary.

3 (1) Any recommendations should remain consistent with federal
4 requirements under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA),
5 which establishes minimum standards related to state definitions of abuse and
6 neglect, including physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, and
7 emotional maltreatment.

8 (2) To promote efficiency and avoid duplicative work, the Working
9 Group shall leverage the work of the Children’s Justice Act Task Force and the
10 Vermont Citizens Advisory Board (VCAB), which serves as Vermont’s
11 CAPTA citizen review panel.

12 (3) The Working Group shall consider best practices from other states in
13 development of its recommendations.

14 (e) The Working Group shall have the administrative, technical, and legal
15 assistance of the Department for Children and Families.

16 (1) The Working Group shall convene its first meeting on or before
17 August 15, 2026.

18 (2) The Working Group shall elect a chair at its first meeting.

19 (3) Five members shall constitute a quorum for meeting purposes.

20 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

21 This act shall take effect on passage.

1 (Committee vote: _____)

2

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Senator _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE