



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE  
**Joint Fiscal Office**

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## Fiscal Note

March 16, 2026

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### **H.718 – An act relating to building energy efficiency**

**As recommended by the House Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure<sup>1,i</sup>**

#### **Bill Summary**

**T**his bill would make various changes to the development, enforcement, and administration of residential and commercial building energy standards.

Section 3 would establish the Residential Contractor Registry Task Force to study strategies for improving the existing residential contractor registry, expediting the creation of certain voluntary professional certifications, and assessing potential changes to the regulation of residential contractors. Task Force members would be eligible for per diem compensation and expense reimbursement for a minimum of 11 meetings in fiscal year 2027.

Section 13 would make General Fund appropriations to the Department of Public Service (PSD) to assist municipalities that elect to adopt and enforce the Residential and Commercial Building Energy Standards, and to the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) to support the Task Force and implement its recommendations.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

The bill would appropriate a total of \$400,000 from the General Fund in fiscal year 2027, consisting of a \$200,000 appropriation to OPR and a \$200,000 appropriation to PSD.

Task Force members would be eligible for per diem compensation and expense reimbursement for a minimum of 11 meetings in fiscal year 2027 and six meetings in fiscal years 2028 and 2029. Payments to Task Force members would cost up to \$19,000 in fiscal year 2027 and would be made from funds appropriated to OPR.

#### **Background and Details**

The following sections would have a fiscal impact.

##### **Section 3: Residential Contractor Registry Task Force; Reports**

Section 3 would establish the Residential Contractor Registry Task Force to advise OPR on improvements to the residential contractor registry. The Task Force would also examine strategies to expedite the creation of voluntary professional certifications related to residential and commercial energy codes. The Task Force would

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<sup>1</sup> *The Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) is a nonpartisan legislative office dedicated to producing unbiased fiscal analysis – this fiscal note is meant to provide information for legislative consideration, not to provide policy recommendations.*

submit annual reports to OPR and the legislative committees of jurisdiction beginning on or before November 1, 2026, detailing its findings and recommendations for legislative action. The Task Force would receive administrative, technical, and legal assistance from OPR, as well as informational and technical assistance from the Department of Public Safety's Division of Fire Safety and the PSD.

The Task Force would consist of fifteen members and would convene its first meeting on or before August 1, 2026. It would then be required to meet at least monthly through July 2027 and at least every other month thereafter until June 30, 2029, at which time the Task Force would cease to exist. Task Force members who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed for their attendance would be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses, as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010, for a minimum of 11 meetings in fiscal year 2027. Assuming 11 meetings, per diem and expense reimbursement would cost up to \$19,000 in fiscal year 2027. Payments to Task Force members would be made from monies appropriated to OPR.

OPR, PSD, and the Division of Fire Safety may incur additional staffing demands associated with providing administrative, technical, and legal assistance to the Task Force.

### **Section 13: Appropriations**

Section 13 would appropriate a total of \$400,000 from the General Fund to OPR and PSD in fiscal year 2027.

This amount consists of two \$200,000 appropriations:

- \$200,000 to OPR to support the Residential Contractor Registry Task Force and implement its recommendations pertaining to public outreach and the development of voluntary certifications; and
- \$200,000 to PSD to provide technical support to municipalities that elect to adopt and enforce the Residential and Commercial Building Energy Standards.

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<sup>i</sup> The full fiscal note history is available on the fiscal tab of the bill page on the General Assembly website and can be accessed through a bill number search on the JFO page.