

H. 542: FY 2020 Budget – Conference Committee Highlights

JFO: May 23, 2020

KEY ELEMENTS: BUDGET SUMMARY

Addresses Climate Change

- Spread between several bills, the Legislature has made available approx. \$17M to Weatherization Programs with \$2.3M in the budget bill. The budget maintains \$600K in base, adds \$390K for fuel tax base clarification changes, and \$1.3M* of one-time funds.
 - The Budget adds \$2.9 million for EVs and charging stations; \$1.7M* for Electric Vehicles and emissions incentive for low and moderate income individuals, adds funds for charging stations, including \$300K TF for statewide charging stations in AOT; \$500K* in BGS, including purchase of EVs for State fleet; and \$400K in ANR from VW mitigation funds.
 - Provides \$500K* for acquisition and conservation of forestlands that are important for carbon absorption and provides a legacy for future generations of Vermonters.
 - Extends the agreement between BGS and EVT for energy efficiency programs in State buildings.
- **Promotes Workforce and Economic Development**
- Adds \$7.4M, including \$5.8M base and \$1.6M* one-time funds, for Childcare to support families and providers, including system investments* and workforce incentive pilots*.
 - Reserves \$2M* for economic development and \$1.54M* of funding for broadband investments, both determined in concurrent bills.
 - Restores \$1M to VHCB base funding.
 - Funds a variety of forest and agriculture development programs including: Grant writing assistance \$75K*, Working lands \$1M* with half for the Dairy industry, Farm-to-School \$50K, VOREC \$100K*, and logger safety and value-added forest products \$120K*.
 - Vermont State Colleges supported with increase of \$2.5M in base and \$500K* one-time funds, 2+2 scholarship \$18K, and \$200K* associate degree pilot. Provides opportunities for students following alternative paths with Advancement Grants of 500K* through VSAC and adds \$150K for DOL Summer Youth Employment Program.
 - Adds \$100K* micro-business development, \$5K* for Arts Council, and \$25K* for USS VT.
 - Adds \$70K to provide services to New Americans through the Department of Labor.
- **Addresses the Needs of Children, Families, and Vulnerable Vermonters**
- Expands Medicaid dental coverage for adults beginning Jan. 1, 2020 to allow for two annual cleaning visits and a \$1,000 annual cap on dental services. \$1.08M total funding.
 - \$1.4M investment in the child welfare system addresses caseload pressures including new social workers and other positions in addition to a rate increase for foster care.
 - Adds \$1.3M for Parent Child Center master grant funding for the services they provide to young families.
 - Mental Health: Provides \$1.5M (all funds) to place complex mental health patients in appropriate community placements, reducing the stress on hospitals. Funds operation of 12 new acute beds at the Brattleboro Retreat to come online in late 2020. Funds statewide peer support program \$60K*.
 - Adds \$2.5M to provide a benefit increase in the Reach Up Program.

- Provides Families with a disabled parent an additional \$38 a month.
- Adds \$250K for nursing home residents to increase the personal needs allowance \$25 a month, starting Jan. 1, 2020.
- Maintains school support program for LGBTQ youth with \$60K and provides funding for the Ethnic and Social Equity and Campus Sexual Harm bills.
- Adds \$50K for fentanyl testing strips.
- Provides \$85K for Human Right Commission outreach position, \$89K for Deaf and Deaf/Blind services position, \$25K for VT Legal Aid caseloads, \$94,000 to address caseload pressures in public defense, and \$85K for Court Interpreters in the Judiciary.

- **Shores Up Critical Provider Systems**
 - Designated Agencies: Provides a \$5.2M increase across entire system of mental health and developmental services and \$1.5M* to begin the development of an electronic medical records system.
 - Provides \$2.1M for a 2% increase for home and community service providers in the Choices for Care program. Adds funds for the SASH program to transition administration to the ACO as more Medicare lives are attributed.
 - Provides \$375K* to the Department of Mental Health for emergency room security in small hospitals.
 - Funds \$445K for Court Diversion.
 - Provides \$1M* for infrastructure improvements at the Parent Child Centers with report language.
 - Provides 5% increase for court security services.
 - Provides \$243K for a rate increase to local ambulance (EMS) service providers.

- **Maintains Basic Government Functions**
 - Funds Retirement/OPEB obligations for State employees and teachers of approx. \$200M in general funds.
 - Adds \$500K* for statewide IT network upgrades and security investment through ADS.
 - Adds \$948K* to support known State match requirements for past emergencies, floods, etc.
 - Adds \$50K* Funds for mosquito control for total funding of \$135K.
 - Funds Dual Enrollment program 50% from EF and 50% from the GF. Adjusts State-Placed Student line item to reflect funding needs in FY19 and FY20.

***One-time funded investments noted with an asterisk**

Total Appropriations	FY15	FY19	FY20	1 yr %	5 yr %
General fund	1,406.4	1,596.4	1,645.6	3.1%	3.2%
Total State Funds (exclude Net EF)	2,268.4	2,262.4	2,325.8	2.8%	0.5%
Education fund	1,514.3	1,655.2	1,726.8	4.3%	2.7%
Total State Funds (include Net EF)	3,486.9	3,917.7	4,052.5	3.4%	3.1%
Total Federal Funds	1,981.2	2,026.6	2,045.1	0.9%	0.6%
Grand Total Unduplicated	5,468.1	5,944.2	6,097.7	2.6%	2.2%