

## VBA Legislative Update – Week 7 February 22, 2025

### Reform Efforts Creeping Along

We are one week away from the legislature's Town Meeting week break (March 3-7), and two legislative weeks away from the March 14 Crossover deadline (the date by which a bill must move out of its committee of jurisdiction if it is going to be considered by the other body this session), and major reform efforts are struggling to take shape.

One major reform effort proposed by Governor Scott is a [massive restructuring](#) of K-12 education in Vermont. House and Senate committees have spent many hours taking testimony from state education officials, finance experts and the consultants who helped to design the Governor's plan, but several fundamental questions remain unanswered. In addition, lawmakers have yet to receive proposed statutory language (i.e. a bill) from the Administration that would codify the wholesale restructuring of Vermont's education system. Without statutory language it is difficult, if not impossible for lawmakers to dig into the necessary, nitty-gritty details. It's possible that these delays could push the session into overtime – something nobody wants.

Other major reform proposals coming from the Scott Administration, including efforts related to public safety, housing and energy have also been slow to crystalize.

### Headlines of Note

[Education Proposal Is Latest Attempt to Address Long-standing Challenges](#)

[Scott's plan to repeal emissions mandates draws scorn from advocates.](#)

[How the DOGE effect is being felt in Vermont.](#)

[Final Reading: Amid fraying relations, Canada's top New England diplomat visits Montpelier](#)

[Vermont Conversation: 'An attempted coup' — Rep. Becca Balint on Trump's power grab](#)

[Final Reading: Vermont officials are trying to navigate Trump's executive actions](#)

[Democrats race to refine education reform package](#)

[Gov. Phil Scott's plan to cut free school meals for all gets bipartisan pushback](#)

### Hearing to Consider whether to repeal the scheduled sunset on to-go drinks.

On Friday afternoon, [House Government Operations and Military Affairs](#) voted to approve [legislation](#) that would repeal the sunset of the pandemic-era law authorizing to-go drinks ([7 VSA §230](#)).

Under current law, first- and third-class licensees may sell malt beverages, vinous beverages, and spirits-based prepared drinks for off-premises consumption when accompanied by a food order and when otherwise in compliance with the provisions of [7 VSA §230](#). The law was

enacted during the pandemic and is scheduled to sunset on July 1, 2025. The bill that was approved would repeal the sunset of this law resulting in the authority for to-go drink to be a permanent feature of Vermont law.

The bill will next be considered by the full House before it goes to the Senate.

### **No Miscellaneous Alcohol Bill to be considered this year by the House**

Last week, the [House Government Operations and Military Affairs](#) Chair, Matt Birong, announced that his committee would not be considering any new alcohol-related legislation this session.

### **VBA Bill Report**

<b>VBA Bill Report – Week 6 2/15/25</b>			
<b>Bill</b>	<b>Sponsors</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
<a href="#">H 24</a>	Rep. Anne Donahue	An Act Relating To Requiring Retail Businesses To Accept Cash  This bill proposes to prohibit a retail business from refusing to accept cash payment.	Committees: House Commerce and Economic Development  Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development (01/09/25)
<a href="#">H 45</a>	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	An Act Relating To Prohibiting Possession Of Firearms On Premises Where Alcohol Is Licensed To Be Served  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.	Committees: House Judiciary  Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Judiciary (01/21/25)
<a href="#">H 51</a>	Rep. Lucy Boyden; Rep. Matthew Birong	An Act Relating To Miscellaneous Amendments To The Statutes Governing Alcoholic Beverages  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	Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs  Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/21/25)

		beverages to acquire a retail shipping license and ship malt beverages to first- and second-class licensees.	
<a href="#">H 110</a>	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>
<a href="#">H 119</a>	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 the deposit for a container from five cents to 10 cents.</p>	<p>Committees: House Environment</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Environment (01/29/25)</p>
<a href="#">H 144</a>	Rep. Brian Minier; Bridget Burkhardt; Rep. Emilie Krasnow; Rep. Kate Logan; Rep. Laura Sibilie; 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>
<a href="#">H 260</a>	Rep. Esme Cole; Rep. Monique Priestley; Rep. Ela Chapin; Herb Olson; Rep. Jubilee McGill; Rep. Kate	An Act Relating To Prohibiting Certain Substances In Food Manufactured, Sold, Or Distributed In Vermont	<p>Committees: House Human Services</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Human Services (02/19/25)</p>

	McCann; Rep. Kate Nugent; Rep. Mary Howard; Robert "Rob" North; VL Coffin	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.	
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