

From: [Alex Weinhagen](#)
Subject: VPA Legislative Update - 5/3/2017

VPA,

The legislative session is winding down, which means the wrangling, procedural maneuvers, and deal-making is heating up. Frankly, everything happens too quickly in the last week or two of the session to give truly meaningful updates. In other words, the assessment on any particular legislation can change from one day to the next. With that said, here is some news - however ephemeral. After this update, I'm planning on waiting until the session ends, and then do a final legislative post-mortem. If you're interested in details during this crazy peak/end of the legislative sausage making process, feel free to contact me directly.

Our amazing legislative intern (Gianna Petito) wraps up her work for us on Friday (May 5) so she can start a new/permanent job. Big thanks to Gianna! She did an amazing job. My understanding of what is happening comes largely from the daily updates she provides.

Warning! If the session goes beyond this week, my information flow will be vastly reduced without Gianna's perspective.

S.135 - Economic Omnibus & TIF - Having passed the Senate some time ago, it looks like the TIF piece of this legislation will be substantially revised (i.e., gutted) by the House largely at the behest of Representative Janet Ancel who chairs the House Ways and Means committee. Should the revised version pass the House, it will then come down to what a House/Senate conference committee can work out. There is hope that the conference committee will lean closer to the Senate version. A lot of uncertainty on expansion of TIF at this point.

S.135 & S.100 - Economic Omnibus & Housing Bond Resurrection - The House may be trying to resurrect the \$35 Million Housing Bond that failed to make it into S.135 as passed by the Senate. The stumbling block in the Senate was the inability to raise \$1 million in new revenue needed to make the housing bond possible - principally due to the Governor's threat to veto any legislation that raised new taxes/fees. It appears the House may rob from the property transfer tax portion that is supposed to be going to the clean water fund in order to find the funds needed for the Housing bond. Complicated politics on that one, again with a lot of uncertainty.

H.411 - Energy Efficiency & Act 174 Revisions - Most of you probably got the VLCT alert about a possible amendment in the Senate to H.411 (Energy Efficiency bill already passed by the House) to revise the Act 174 provisions related to energy planning and PSB deference to municipal/regional plans. This amendment was voted down, so no changes to Act 174 energy planning provisions.

H.424 - Act 250 50th Anniversary Review Commission - This passed the House some time ago and passed the Senate yesterday, so it should be on its way to the Governor for signature shortly.

H.233 - Forest Fragmentation & Act 250 - This bill got through the House Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Committee, and is being debated by the full House. If passed by the House, it would be taken up by the Senate next year - i.e., no chance of becoming law this year.

As always, let me know if you have questions on particular bills. Previous legislative updates available to VPA members (you'll need to log in) on the website on the "Member Services" tab - <https://www.vermontplanners.org/members-services>

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