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## SENATE BILL NO. 646

Senate Amendments in [ ] — February 3, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact § 30-19.9 of the Code of Virginia, relating to information on proposed constitutional amendments.

Patron—Whipple

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 30-19.9 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 30-19.9. Distribution of information on proposed constitutional amendments to voters.

When a proposed amendment is to be submitted to the people for their approval and ratification pursuant to Article XII, Section 1 of the Constitution of Virginia and § 30-19, the State Board of Elections shall cause to be printed and distributed to the general registrar of each county and city, not less than ninety days prior to the election, copies of an explanation of such amendment to be placed at each registration site in sufficient number to provide a copy to any interested person, and to election officials to be posted at the polling places on the day of the election. The State Board of Elections shall post the explanation on its site on the Internet. It also shall cause such explanation to be published by paid advertisement in each daily newspaper with an average daily circulation of more than 50,000 in Virginia, and published in Virginia or in a contiguous state or district, once during the week preceding the final day for registration and once during the week preceding the election at which the proposed amendment is to be presented to the people.

The explanation shall contain the ballot question, the full text of the proposed constitutional amendment, and a statement of not more than 500 words on the proposed amendment. The explanation shall be presented in plain English, shall be limited to a neutral explanation, and which may include a brief statement on the effect of a "yes" and "no" vote on the question and summarize arguments for and against the amendment, but shall not present include arguments submitted by either proponents or opponents of the proposal. The Division of Legislative Services, in consultation with such agencies of state government as may be appropriate, including the Office of Attorney General, shall prepare an explanation for any such proposal which is approved by the General Assembly on first reference and referred to the next regular session of the General Assembly following the general election of members of the House of Delegates. The explanation shall be approved for distribution as to form and content by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections of the house of introduction of the resolution proposing the amendment [ no later than the reconvened session following approval of the legislation to submit the question to the voters as soon as practicable after enactment of the ballot question. ]

Any failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall not affect the validity of the constitutional amendment.

ENGROSSED

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