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SENATE BILL NO. 1269

Offered January 10, 2001

Prefiled January 10, 2001

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 9 a chapter numbered 47.1, consisting of sections numbered 9-358.1 through 9-358.5, relating to the Virginia Council on Minority Affairs.

Patrons—Edwards, Byrne, Houck, Howell, Lambert, Lucas, Marsh, Marye, Maxwell, Puckett, Puller, Ticer and Whipple; Delegates: Deeds and Woodrum

Referred to Committee on General Laws

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 9 a chapter numbered 47.1, consisting of sections numbered 9-358.1 through 9-358.5, as follows:

CHAPTER 47.1.**VIRGINIA COUNCIL ON MINORITY AFFAIRS.**

§ 9-358.1. Virginia Council on Minority Affairs established; powers and duties.

There is hereby created in the legislative branch the Virginia Council on Minority Affairs, hereinafter referred to as the "Council." The Council shall determine the status and needs of Virginia's increasing culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse minority populations. In addition, the Council shall:

1. Identify the needs of Virginia's minority populations and develop a strategic plan for the overall implementation of recommendations and legislative initiatives that addresses those needs, and recommend ways to provide greater inclusion of minority populations into mainstream society; and

2. Provide appropriate and feasible solutions and alternatives that are designed to (i) assist and encourage Virginia's minority populations to reach their full potential, (ii) address health, mental health, mental retardation, substance abuse, and social problems and issues in their communities, (iii) increase their educational attainment, (iv) improve and expand employment opportunities in their communities, (v) facilitate and promote economic development, and (vi) assist and encourage them to become active participants in the prevention and resolution of criminal justice issues which affect their communities; and

3. Advise and recommend to the General Assembly priority issues facing Virginia's minority populations; and

4. Monitor legislative initiatives directed to and affecting Virginia's minority populations.

§ 9-358.2. Membership; terms; vacancies; chairman and vice-chairman; compensation.

A. The Council shall be composed of nine members as follows: four members of the House of Delegates and one citizen at-large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and three members of the Senate and one citizen at-large, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

B. The terms of office of the legislative members shall be coincident with their terms in the General Assembly. Citizen appointees shall serve for a term of four years. However, any vacancy shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. The Council shall elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among its members.

C. Legislative members of the Council shall receive such compensation as provided in § 30-19.12, and all members shall be reimbursed for their actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

§ 9-358.3. Staff; cooperation and assistance.

Staff assistance shall be provided to the Council by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies, authorities, and institutions of the Commonwealth shall cooperate and provide assistance to the Council as requested.

§ 9-358.4. Gifts, donations, grants and bequests.

The Council shall be authorized to apply for, receive and expend such funds as may become available, which may assist the Council in the performance of its duties.

§ 9-358.5. Annual report.

The Council shall submit an interim report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2001, and thereafter, the Council shall report its activities, findings, and recommendations, annually, to the Governor and the General Assembly.

INTRODUCED

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