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HOUSE BILL NO. 2151

Offered January 8, 2003

Prefiled January 8, 2003

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-97 of the Code of Virginia, relating to state and local appropriations of sufficient education funds.*

Patrons—Rust, Albo, Reese and Scott; Senators: Byrne, Howell, Puller and Ticer

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-97 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-97. Calculation and reporting of required local expenditures; procedure if locality fails to appropriate sufficient educational funds.

A. *The Department of Education shall collect annually the data necessary to make calculations and reports required by this subsection.*

At the beginning of each school year, the Department shall make calculations to ensure that each school division has appropriated sufficient funds to support its estimated required local expenditure for providing an educational program meeting the prescribed Standards of Quality, required by Article VIII of the Constitution of Virginia and Chapter 13.2 (§ 22.1-253.13:1 et seq.) of this title. At the conclusion of the school year, the Department shall make calculations to verify whether the locality has provided the required expenditure, based on average daily membership as of March 31 of the relevant school year.

The Department shall report annually to the House Committees on Education and Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Finance and Education and Health the results of such calculations and the degree to which each school division has met, failed to meet, or surpassed its required expenditure.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall report annually to the House Committees on Education and Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Finance and Education and Health the state expenditure provided each locality for an educational program meeting the Standards of Quality.

The Department and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall coordinate to ensure that their respective reports are based upon comparable data and are delivered together, or as closely following one another as practicable, to the appropriate standing committees.

B. Whenever such calculations indicate that the governing body of a county, city or town fails or refuses to appropriate funds sufficient to provide that portion of the cost apportioned to such county, city or town by law for maintaining an educational program meeting the ~~standards of quality for the several school divisions prescribed as provided by law~~ *Standards of Quality*, the Board of Education shall notify the Attorney General of such failure or refusal in writing signed by the president of the Board. Upon receipt of such notification, it shall be the duty of the Attorney General to file in the circuit court for the county, city or town a petition for a writ of mandamus directing and requiring such governing body to make forthwith such appropriation as is required by law.

The petition shall be in the name of the Board of Education, and the governing body shall be made a party defendant thereto. The court may, in its discretion, cause such other officers or persons to be made parties defendant as it may deem proper. The court may make such order as may be appropriate respecting the employment and compensation of an attorney or attorneys for any party defendant not otherwise represented by counsel. The petition shall be given first priority on the docket of such court and shall be heard expeditiously in accordance with the procedures prescribed in Article 2 (§ 8.01-644 et seq.) of Chapter 25 of Title 8.01 and the writ of mandamus shall be awarded or denied according to the law and facts of the case and with or without costs, as the court may determine. The order of the court shall be final upon entry. Any appeal therefrom shall be heard and disposed of promptly by the Supreme Court next after habeas corpus cases already on the docket.

INTRODUCED

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