

2004 SESSION

INTRODUCED

047258456

HOUSE BILL NO. 798

Offered January 14, 2004

Prefiled January 14, 2004

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 15 of Title 56 an article numbered 5.2, consisting of sections numbered 56-484.7:5, 56-484.7:6 and 56-484.7:7, relating to telephonic reading services.

Patrons—Petersen, Albo, Ebbin, Eisenberg, Hull, Nutter and Shannon

Referred to Committee on Commerce and Labor

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 15 of Title 56 an article numbered 5.2, consisting of sections numbered 56-484.7:5, 56-484.7:6 and 56-484.7:7, as follows:

Article 5.2.

Telephonic Reading Services.

§ 56-484.7:5. Definitions.

As used in this article:

"Department" means the Department for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

"Operation" means those functions reasonably and directly necessary for the provision of telephonic reading services, including contract procurement and administration, and public education and information regarding such service.

"Telephone company" means a certificated local exchange telephone company that owns, manages, or controls any plant or equipment or any part of a plant or equipment within the Commonwealth for the conveyance of telephone messages, either directly or indirectly.

"Telephonic reading services" means audio information provided by telephone to the blind and visually impaired through a nationally available, multi-state service center to registered readers in all parts of the Commonwealth, including the interstate acquisition and distribution of daily newspapers and other information.

§ 56-484.7:6. Provision of service.

The Department, with the assistance of the Commission, shall be responsible for the provision and operation of telephonic reading services for each telephone line in each residential household within the Commonwealth in which resides at least one individual who is blind or visually impaired.

§ 56-484.7:7. Funding.

A. All costs associated with the establishment and operation of telephonic reading services, including but not limited to personnel costs incurred by the Department for administering the service, shall be funded through assessments received for the telecommunications relay service pursuant to § 56-484.6.

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HB798