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**HOUSE BILL NO. 1499**

House Amendments in [ ] - February 13, 2006

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 2.2-205.1, relating to Economic Crisis Strike Force.*

Patron Prior to Engrossment—Delegate Marshall, D.W.

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 a section numbered 2.2-205.1 as follows:****§ 2.2-205.1. Economic Crisis Strike Force.**

A. There is hereby established the *Economic Crisis Strike Force (Strike Force)* for the purpose of serving as a working group to respond as needed to economic disasters in Virginia communities by (i) immediately providing a single point of contact for citizens in affected communities to assist with accessing available government and private sector services and resources, (ii) assisting localities in developing short-term and long-term strategies for addressing the economic crisis, and (iii) identifying opportunities for workforce retraining, job creation, and new investment.

B. The Strike Force shall be chaired by the Secretary of Commerce and Trade and be deployed at the direction of the Governor. Membership shall include high level representatives designated by the Secretaries of Education and Health and Human Resources and by the respective heads of the following agencies: the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Business Assistance, the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Labor and Industry, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, the Department of Minority Business Enterprise, the Department of Social Services, the Virginia Community College System, the Virginia Employment Commission, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and the Virginia Tourism Authority. The Strike Force shall also include representatives from such other agencies as may be designated by the Governor to meet the needs of a particular affected community. In addition, the Governor may designate such citizens as he deems appropriate to advise the Strike Force.

C. Staff support for the Strike Force shall be provided by the Office of the Governor and the Secretary of Commerce and Trade. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Strike Force upon request.

D. On or before December 1 of each year, the Strike Force shall report to the Governor and the General Assembly on its activities.

[ E. For the purposes of this section, "economic disaster" means an employment loss of at least 5% during the immediately preceding six-month period, the closure or downsizing of a major regional employer in an economically distressed area, a natural disaster or act of terrorism for which the Governor has declared a state of emergency, or other economic crisis situations, which in the opinion of the Governor adversely affect the welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

**2. That an emergency exists and this act shall be in force upon its passage. ]**

ENGROSSED

HB1499E