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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 159

Offered January 11, 2006

Proposing an amendment to Section 14 of Article IV of the Constitution of Virginia, relating to powers of the General Assembly; limitations on powers including incorporation of churches.

Patrons—McQuigg; Senator: Mims

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

WHEREAS, a proposed amendment to the Constitution of Virginia, hereinafter set forth, was agreed to by a majority of the members elected to each of the two houses of the General Assembly at the regular session of 2005 and referred to this, the next regular session held after the 2005 general election of members of the House of Delegates, as required by the Constitution of Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the following amendment to the Constitution of Virginia be, and the same hereby is, proposed in conformity with the provisions of Section 1 of Article XII of the Constitution of Virginia, namely:

Amend Section 14 of Article IV of the Constitution of Virginia as follows:

ARTICLE IV**LEGISLATURE**

Section 14. Powers of General Assembly; limitations.

The authority of the General Assembly shall extend to all subjects of legislation not herein forbidden or restricted; and a specific grant of authority in this Constitution upon a subject shall not work a restriction of its authority upon the same or any other subject. The omission in this Constitution of specific grants of authority heretofore conferred shall not be construed to deprive the General Assembly of such authority, or to indicate a change of policy in reference thereto, unless such purpose plainly appear.

The General Assembly shall confer on the courts power to grant divorces, change the names of persons, and direct the sales of estates belonging to infants and other persons under legal disabilities, and shall not, by special legislation, grant relief in these or other cases of which the courts or other tribunals may have jurisdiction.

The General Assembly may regulate the exercise by courts of the right to punish for contempt.

The General Assembly's power to define the accrual date for a civil action based on an intentional tort committed by a natural person against a person who, at the time of the intentional tort, was a minor shall include the power to provide for the retroactive application of a change in the accrual date. No natural person shall have a constitutionally protected property right to bar a cause of action based on intentional torts as described herein on the ground that a change in the accrual date for the action has been applied retroactively or that a statute of limitations or statute of repose has expired.

The General Assembly shall not enact any local, special, or private law in the following cases:

(1) For the punishment of crime.

(2) Providing a change of venue in civil or criminal cases.

(3) Regulating the practice in, or the jurisdiction of, or changing the rules of evidence in any judicial proceedings or inquiry before the courts or other tribunals, or providing or changing the methods of collecting debts or enforcing judgments or prescribing the effect of judicial sales of real estate.

(4) Changing or locating county seats.

(5) For the assessment and collection of taxes, except as to animals which the General Assembly may deem dangerous to the farming interests.

(6) Extending the time for the assessment or collection of taxes.

(7) Exempting property from taxation.

(8) Remitting, releasing, postponing, or diminishing any obligation or liability of any person, corporation, or association to the Commonwealth or to any political subdivision thereof.

(9) Refunding money lawfully paid into the treasury of the Commonwealth or the treasury of any political subdivision thereof.

(10) Granting from the treasury of the Commonwealth, or granting or authorizing to be granted from the treasury of any political subdivision thereof, any extra compensation to any public officer, servant, agent, or contractor.

(11) For registering voters, conducting elections, or designating the places of voting.

(12) Regulating labor, trade, mining, or manufacturing, or the rate of interest on money.

(13) Granting any pension.

(14) Creating, increasing, or decreasing, or authorizing to be created, increased, or decreased, the

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59 salaries, fees, percentages, or allowances of public officers during the term for which they are elected or
60 appointed.

61 (15) Declaring streams navigable, or authorizing the construction of booms or dams therein, or the
62 removal of obstructions therefrom.

63 (16) Affecting or regulating fencing or the boundaries of land, or the running at large of stock.

64 (17) Creating private corporations, or amending, renewing, or extending the charters thereof.

65 (18) Granting to any private corporation, association, or individual any special or exclusive right,
66 privilege, or immunity.

67 (19) Naming or changing the name of any private corporation or association.

68 (20) Remitting the forfeiture of the charter of any private corporation, except upon the condition that
69 such corporation shall thereafter hold its charter subject to the provisions of this Constitution and the
70 laws passed in pursuance thereof.

71 ~~The General Assembly shall not grant a charter of incorporation to any church or religious~~
72 ~~denomination, but may secure the title to church property to an extent to be limited by law.~~