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SENATE BILL NO. 1103

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee for Rehabilitation and Social Services
on February 2, 2007)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Puller)

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 19.2-169.1, 19.2-169.2, and 19.2-169.3 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the disposition of incompetent defendants.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 19.2-169.1, 19.2-169.2, and 19.2-169.3 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 19.2-169.1. Raising question of competency to stand trial or plead; evaluation and determination of competency.

A. Raising competency issue; appointment of evaluators. - If, at any time after the attorney for the defendant has been retained or appointed and before the end of trial, the court finds, upon hearing evidence or representations of counsel for the defendant or the attorney for the Commonwealth, that there is probable cause to believe that the defendant, whether a juvenile transferred pursuant to § 16.1-269.1 or adult, lacks substantial capacity to understand the proceedings against him or to assist his attorney in his own defense, the court shall order that a competency evaluation be performed by at least one psychiatrist, or clinical psychologist or master's level psychologist who is qualified by training and experience in forensic evaluation.

B. Location of evaluation. - The evaluation shall be performed on an outpatient basis at a mental health facility or in jail unless the court specifically finds that outpatient evaluation services are unavailable or unless the results of outpatient evaluation indicate that hospitalization of the defendant for evaluation on competency is necessary. If ~~either finding is made~~ the court finds that hospitalization is necessary, the court, under authority of this subsection, may order the defendant sent to a hospital designated by the Commissioner of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services as appropriate for evaluations of persons under criminal charge. The defendant shall be hospitalized for such time as the director of the hospital deems necessary to perform an adequate evaluation of the defendant's competency, but not to exceed ~~thirty~~ 30 days from the date of admission to the hospital.

C. Provision of information to evaluators. - The court shall require the attorney for the Commonwealth to provide to the evaluators appointed under subsection A any information relevant to the evaluation, including, but not limited to (i) a copy of the warrant or indictment; (ii) the names and addresses of the attorney for the Commonwealth, the attorney for the defendant, and the judge ordering the evaluation; (iii) information about the alleged crime; and (iv) a summary of the reasons for the evaluation request. The court shall require the attorney for the defendant to provide any available psychiatric records and other information that is deemed relevant. *The court shall require that information be provided to the evaluator within 96 hours of the issuance of the court order pursuant to this section.*

D. The competency report. - Upon completion of the evaluation, the evaluators shall promptly submit a report in writing to the court and the attorneys of record concerning (i) the defendant's capacity to understand the proceedings against him; (ii) his ability to assist his attorney; and (iii) his need for treatment in the event he is found incompetent *but restorable, or incompetent for the foreseeable future.* No statements of the defendant relating to the time period of the alleged offense shall be included in the report.

E. The competency determination. - After receiving the report described in subsection D, the court shall promptly determine whether the defendant is competent to stand trial. A hearing on the defendant's competency is not required unless one is requested by the attorney for the Commonwealth or the attorney for the defendant, or unless the court has reasonable cause to believe the defendant will be hospitalized under § 19.2-169.2. If a hearing is held, the party alleging that the defendant is incompetent shall bear the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence the defendant's incompetency. The defendant shall have the right to notice of the hearing, the right to counsel at the hearing and the right to personally participate in and introduce evidence at the hearing.

The fact that the defendant claims to be unable to remember the time period surrounding the alleged offense shall not, by itself, bar a finding of competency if the defendant otherwise understands the charges against him and can assist in his defense. Nor shall the fact that the defendant is under the influence of medication bar a finding of competency if the defendant is able to understand the charges against him and assist in his defense while medicated.

§ 19.2-169.2. Disposition when defendant found incompetent.

A. Upon finding pursuant to subsection E of § 19.2-169.1 that the defendant, including a juvenile

60 transferred pursuant to § 16.1-269.1, is incompetent, the court shall order that the defendant receive
61 treatment to restore his competency on an outpatient basis or, if the court specifically finds that the
62 defendant requires inpatient hospital treatment, at a hospital designated by the Commissioner of Mental
63 Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services as appropriate for treatment of persons under
64 criminal charge. Any reports submitted pursuant to subsection D of § 19.2-169.1 shall be made available
65 *to the director of the community services board or behavioral health authority or his designee or to the*
66 *director of the treating inpatient facility or his designee.*

67 B. If, at any time after the defendant is ordered to undergo treatment under subsection A of this
68 section, the director of the *community services board or behavioral health authority or his designee or*
69 *the director of the treatment treating inpatient facility or his designee* believes the defendant's
70 competency is restored, the director *or his designee* shall immediately send a report to the court as
71 prescribed in subsection D of § 19.2-169.1. The court shall make a ruling on the defendant's competency
72 according to the procedures specified in subsection E of § 19.2-169.1.

73 § 19.2-169.3. Disposition of the unrestorably incompetent defendant; capital murder charge; referral
74 to Commitment Review Committee.

75 A. If, at any time after the defendant is ordered to undergo treatment pursuant to subsection A of
76 § 19.2-169.2, *the director of the community services board or behavioral health authority or his*
77 *designee or the director of the treating inpatient facility or his designee* concludes that the defendant is
78 likely to remain incompetent for the foreseeable future, he shall send a report to the court so stating.
79 The report shall also indicate whether, in the *board, authority, or inpatient facility* director's *or his*
80 *designee's* opinion, the defendant should be released, committed pursuant to Article 5 (§ 37.2-814 et
81 seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 37.2, committed pursuant to Chapter 9 (§ 37.2-900 et seq.) of Title 37.2, or
82 certified pursuant to § 37.2-806 in the event he is found to be unrestorably incompetent. Upon receipt of
83 the report, the court shall make a competency determination according to the procedures specified in
84 subsection E of § 19.2-169.1. If the court finds that the defendant is incompetent and is likely to remain
85 so for the foreseeable future, it shall order that he be (i) released, (ii) committed pursuant to Article 5
86 (§ 37.2-814 et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 37.2, (iii) reviewed for commitment pursuant to Chapter 9
87 (§ 37.2-900 et seq.) of Title 37.2, or (iv) certified pursuant to § 37.2-806. If the court finds the
88 defendant incompetent but restorable to competency in the foreseeable future, it may order treatment
89 continued until six months have elapsed from the date of the defendant's initial admission under
90 subsection A of § 19.2-169.2.

91 B. At the end of six months from the date of the defendant's initial admission under subsection A of
92 § 19.2-169.2 if the defendant remains incompetent in the opinion of the *board, authority, or inpatient*
93 *facility* director *or his designee*, the director *or his designee* shall so notify the court and make
94 recommendations concerning disposition of the defendant as described ~~above~~ *in subsection A*. The court
95 shall hold a hearing according to the procedures specified in subsection E of § 19.2-169.1 and, if it finds
96 the defendant unrestorably incompetent, shall order one of the dispositions described ~~above~~ *in subsection*
97 *A*. If the court finds the defendant incompetent but restorable to competency, it may order continued
98 treatment under subsection A of § 19.2-169.2 for additional six-month periods, provided a hearing
99 pursuant to subsection E of § 19.2-169.1 is held at the completion of each such period and the defendant
100 continues to be incompetent but restorable to competency in the foreseeable future. *If the defendant has*
101 *been charged with a nonviolent misdemeanor offense, treatment to restore his competency shall be*
102 *limited to 45 days. If the defendant charged with a nonviolent misdemeanor is not restored to*
103 *competency within 45 days, the court shall order that he be (i) released, or (ii) committed pursuant to*
104 *Article 5 (§ 37.2-814 et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 37.2.*

105 C. Unless an incompetent defendant is charged with capital murder or the charges against an
106 incompetent criminal defendant have been previously dismissed, charges against an unrestorably
107 incompetent defendant shall be dismissed on the date upon which his sentence would have expired had
108 he been convicted and received the maximum sentence for the crime charged, or on the date five years
109 from the date of his arrest for such charges, whichever is sooner.

110 D. If the court orders an unrestorably incompetent defendant to be reviewed for commitment
111 pursuant to § 37.2-904, it shall order the attorney for the Commonwealth in the jurisdiction wherein the
112 defendant was charged and the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation
113 and Substance Abuse Services to provide the Commitment Review Committee established pursuant to
114 § 37.2-902 with any information relevant to the review, including, but not limited to: (i) a copy of the
115 warrant or indictment, (ii) a copy of the defendant's criminal record, (iii) information about the alleged
116 crime, (iv) a copy of the competency report completed pursuant to § 19.2-169.1, and (v) a copy of the
117 report prepared by the director of the defendant's *community services board, behavioral health authority,*
118 *or treating inpatient facility or his designee* pursuant to this section. The court shall further order that
119 the defendant be held in the custody of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and
120 Substance Abuse Services for secure confinement and treatment until the Commitment Review
121 Committee's and Attorney General's review and any subsequent hearing or trial are completed. If the

122 court receives notice that the Attorney General has declined to file a petition for the commitment of an
123 unrestorably incompetent defendant as a sexually violent predator after conducting a review pursuant to
124 § 37.2-905, the court shall order that the defendant be released, committed pursuant to Article 5
125 (§ 37.2-814 et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 37.2, or certified pursuant to § 37.2-806.

126 E. In any case when an incompetent defendant is charged with capital murder, notwithstanding any
127 other provision of this section, the charge shall not be dismissed and the court having jurisdiction over
128 the capital murder case may order that the defendant receive continued treatment under subsection A of
129 § 19.2-169.2 for additional six-month periods without limitation, provided that (i) a hearing pursuant to
130 subsection E of § 19.2-169.1 is held at the completion of each such period, (ii) the defendant remains
131 incompetent, (iii) the court finds continued treatment to be medically appropriate, and (iv) the defendant
132 presents a danger to himself or others.

133 F. The attorney for the Commonwealth may bring charges that have been dismissed against the
134 defendant when he is restored to competency.