

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 3.1-14.4, relating to enhancing*
3 *market opportunities for Virginia crops.*

4 [S 1407]

5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**7 **1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 3.1-14.4 as follows:**8 *§ 3.1-14.4. Department to establish a program to support new and emerging crops and technologies.*9 *A. From such funds as may be appropriated for such purposes and from gifts, donations, grants,*
10 *bequests, and other funds as may be received, the Department shall establish a program to:*11 *1. Encourage the production of alternative crops in the Commonwealth that may be used as a*
12 *feedstock for energy generation and transportation, thereby supporting Virginia farmers and farm*
13 *communities in their efforts to (i) sustain and enhance economically viable business opportunities in*
14 *agriculture, (ii) reduce nonpoint source pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and other waters of the*
15 *Commonwealth, (iii) restore depleted soils, (iv) provide wildlife habitat, (v) reduce greenhouse gases,*
16 *and (vi) reduce the country's dependence on foreign supplies of energy;*17 *2. Assist the development of bioenergy feedstock crop technologies, including but not limited to, seed*
18 *stock supplies, production technology, harvest equipment, transportation infrastructure and storage*
19 *facilities;*20 *3. Identify and assist in the development of commercially viable bioenergy market opportunities,*
21 *including recruitment, expansion and establishment of renewable bioenergy businesses in Virginia; and*22 *4. Promote the aquaculture of the species that are natives to or reside within the waters of the*
23 *Chesapeake Bay and the Virginia Coast, in concert with the efforts of Virginia higher education*
24 *institutions and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, with a focus on assisting "traditional*
25 *watermen" who rely on harvesting marine fish and shellfish. This effort shall also include watermen who*
26 *are viable working participants of the aquaculture industry as contract growers, cooperatives or other*
27 *business entities.*28 *B. The Department shall provide funds in the form of grants to accomplish the objectives described*
29 *in subsection A. The Department shall develop guidelines for the operation of the program that shall*
30 *include, at a minimum, eligibility criteria for receiving grant awards, financial accountability for*
31 *receiving grant awards, allowable uses of grant funds, and agricultural programmatic priorities. The*
32 *Department shall consult with the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the U.S. Department*
33 *of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, when appropriate, to ensure compatibility with*
34 *existing cost-share and other agricultural incentive programs.*

ENROLLED

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