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**HOUSE BILL NO. 105**

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled December 17, 2007

*A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 16.1-69.33, 16.1-218, 17.1-700, 17.1-706, and 19.2-163.02 of the Code of Virginia, relating to commission seats for designees of chairmen of Courts of Justice Committees.*

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Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 16.1-69.33, 16.1-218, 17.1-700, 17.1-706, and 19.2-163.02 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 16.1-69.33. Committee on District Courts.

There is hereby established a Committee on District Courts to be composed of the Majority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the chairmen of the House and Senate Courts of Justice Committees *or their designees who shall be members of the Courts of Justice committees*, two members of each of the Committees for Courts of Justice of each house, to be appointed by the chairman of their Committee, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia who shall be chair of the Committee, one judge of a circuit court, two general district court judges and two juvenile and domestic relations district court judges. The judicial members of the Committee on District Courts shall be made to give representation insofar as feasible to various geographic areas of the Commonwealth. The judicial members of the Committee on District Courts shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of the Chief Justice.

The Committee shall meet at such times and places as it may from time to time designate for the purposes of authorizing the appointment of substitute judges pursuant to § 16.1-69.14, authorizing the establishment of clerks' offices in counties or cities as may be requisite, and establishing when such offices shall be open for business, authorizing the appointment of personnel for the district courts pursuant to Article 4 (§ 16.1-69.37 et seq.) of this chapter and establishing procedures for administrative review of appeals from personnel actions for district court personnel and magistrates, fixing salary classification schedules of court personnel pursuant to Article 5 (§ 16.1-69.44 et seq.) of this chapter and establishing vacation and sick leave for district court judges, district court personnel and magistrates, and for such other duties or matters as are now, or may hereafter be conferred upon the Committee by law. Such salary classification schedules, vacation and sick leave policies shall be uniform throughout the Commonwealth.

The Committee on District Courts shall have sole authority and discretion in adjusting salary classification schedules for district court personnel. The Committee shall fix such salaries for the several district court personnel at least annually at such time as it deems it proper and as soon as practicable thereafter certify to the Comptroller and the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court a detailed statement of the salaries fixed by them for the several district courts and the effective date of any salary adjustments.

The Committee on District Courts shall appoint (i) a Clerk's Advisory Committee composed of two clerks from the general district courts and two clerks from the juvenile and domestic relations district courts; such appointments shall be made after giving due consideration to former clerks of county and municipal courts not of record; (ii) a Magistrate's Advisory Committee composed of two magistrates; such advisory committees are to make recommendations to the Committee regarding administrative functions of the district courts.

For the performance of their duties, the Committee shall be reimbursed out of the money appropriated for the adjudication of cases in the district trial courts for their actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties and in addition, per diem compensation allowed for members of the General Assembly for each day spent in performing such duties; provided, however, that no additional compensation shall be paid to members of the judiciary serving on the Committee.

In the event of the establishment of personal liability of a district court judge or magistrate for the loss of property or money from a district court or magistrate's office by reason of robbery or burglary, the Committee on District Courts shall have the authority, after appropriate investigation and upon its determination that the individual judge or magistrate was not negligent in the performance of his duties, to reimburse such judge or magistrate to the extent of his personal liability on a warrant of the Comptroller issued as provided by law. However, such reimbursement shall not exceed \$1,000 per claim. This paragraph shall apply to all claims arising on and after July 1, 1976.

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59 § 16.1-218. Established; active and honorary members.

60 There is hereby established a Judicial Conference of Virginia for District Courts whose active  
61 members shall be the judge of every general district court and juvenile and domestic relations district  
62 court of the Commonwealth. The Attorney General of Virginia, the chairmen of the Courts of Justice  
63 Committees of the Senate and House of Delegates *or their designees who shall be members of the*  
64 *Courts of Justice committees*, the president and secretary of the Virginia State Bar, the president and  
65 secretary of the Virginia Bar Association, the president and secretary of the Virginia Trial Lawyers  
66 Association, the president and secretary of the Old Dominion Bar Association, the president and  
67 secretary of the Virginia Association of Commonwealth's Attorneys, the president and secretary of the  
68 Virginia Women Attorneys Association, the president and secretary of the Virginia College of Criminal  
69 Defense Attorneys, and the president and secretary of the Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys  
70 shall be honorary members of the Conference without voting privilege.

71 § 17.1-700. Composition of Council; committees.

72 The Judicial Council shall be established in the judiciary branch of state government and composed  
73 of 14 members consisting of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, one judge of the Court of Appeals,  
74 six circuit court judges, one general district court judge, one juvenile and domestic relations district  
75 court judge, two attorneys qualified to practice in the Supreme Court, and the Chairmen of the  
76 Committees for Courts of Justice of the Senate and the House of Delegates *or their designees who shall*  
77 *be members of the Courts of Justice committees*. The Council may appoint committees to aid it in the  
78 performance of its duties, and members of such committees need not be members of the Council.

79 § 17.1-706. Establishment and membership.

80 There is hereby established the Judicial Conference of Virginia, which shall have as its active  
81 members the Chief Justice and justices of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the chief judge and judges of  
82 the Court of Appeals, all other judges of the circuit courts of the Commonwealth and all retired justices  
83 and judges of such courts. The honorary membership shall consist of the Attorney General of Virginia,  
84 the Chairmen of the Courts of Justice Committees of the Senate and House of Delegates *or their*  
85 *designees who shall be members of the Courts of Justice committees*, the president and secretary of the  
86 Virginia State Bar, the president and secretary of the Virginia Bar Association, the president and  
87 secretary of the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, the president and secretary of the Virginia  
88 Association of Defense Attorneys, the president and secretary of the Old Dominion Bar Association, the  
89 president and secretary of the Virginia Association of Commonwealth's Attorneys, the president and  
90 secretary of the Virginia Women Attorneys Association, the deans of the law schools of the College of  
91 William and Mary, University of Richmond, University of Virginia, Washington and Lee University,  
92 George Mason University, and Regent University, and the two attorneys appointed by the Chief Justice  
93 of the Supreme Court as members of the Judicial Council. The honorary members shall not have voting  
94 privileges.

95 § 19.2-163.02. Membership of Indigent Defense Commission; expenses.

96 The Virginia Indigent Defense Commission shall consist of 14 members as follows: the chairmen of  
97 the House and Senate Committees for Courts of Justice or their designees *who shall be members of the*  
98 *Courts of Justice committees*; the chairman of the Virginia State Crime Commission or his designee; the  
99 Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court or his designee; two attorneys officially designated by the  
100 Virginia State Bar; two persons appointed by the Governor; three persons appointed by the Speaker of  
101 the House of Delegates; and three persons appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. At least one of  
102 the appointments made by the Governor, one of the appointments made by the Speaker, and one of the  
103 appointments made by the Senate Committee on Rules, shall be an attorney in private practice with a  
104 demonstrated interest in indigent defense issues. Persons who are appointed by virtue of their office  
105 shall hold terms coincident with their terms of office. If the chairman of the Virginia State Crime  
106 Commission is (i) the chairman of the House Committee for Courts of Justice, then the vice-chairman of  
107 the Committee shall serve in the position designated for the Committee chairman or (ii) the chairman of  
108 the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice, then the Senate Committee on Rules, upon the  
109 recommendation of the chairman of the Committee, shall appoint a member of the Committee to serve  
110 in the position designated for the Committee chairman. All other members shall be appointed for terms  
111 of three years and may be reappointed.

112 The Commission shall elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among its membership annually.  
113 The chairman or his designee shall preside at all regular and called meetings of the Commission and  
114 shall have no additional duties or authority unless set by statute or by resolution of the Commission and  
115 annually confirmed by the Commission. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The  
116 Commission shall meet at least four times each year. The meetings of the Commission shall be held at  
117 the call of the chairman or whenever three of the members so request.

118 Members shall be paid reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.  
119 Legislative members shall receive compensation as provided in § 30-19.12 and nonlegislative citizen  
120 members shall receive compensation for their services as provided in §§ 2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825.