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HOUSE BILL NO. 2108

Offered January 14, 2009

Prefiled January 13, 2009

A BILL to amend and reenact § 19.2-3.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to personal appearance by two-way electronic video and audio communication; standards.

Patrons—Sherwood, Athey, Byron, Gilbert, Griffith, Hamilton, Iaquinto, Landes, Lohr, Poindexter and Rust; Senator: Vogel

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 19.2-3.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 19.2-3.1. Personal appearance by two-way electronic video and audio communication; standards.

A. Where an appearance is required or permitted before a magistrate, intake officer or, prior to trial, before a judge, the appearance may be by (i) personal appearance before the magistrate, intake officer or judge or (ii) use of two-way electronic video and audio communication. If two-way electronic video and audio communication is used, a magistrate, intake officer or judge may exercise all powers conferred by law and all communications and proceedings shall be conducted in the same manner as if the appearance were in person; ~~and any.~~ *If two-way electronic video and audio communication is available for use by a judge in any such criminal proceeding, the judge shall use such communication in any proceeding that would otherwise require the transportation of a person from outside the jurisdiction of the court in order to appear in person before the court.* Any documents transmitted between the magistrate, intake officer, or judge and the person appearing before the magistrate, intake officer, or judge may be transmitted by electronically transmitted facsimile process. The facsimile may be served or executed by the officer or person to whom sent, and returned in the same manner, and with the same force, effect, authority, and liability as an original document. All signatures thereon shall be treated as original signatures.

B. Any two-way electronic video and audio communication system used for an appearance shall meet the following standards:

1. The persons communicating must simultaneously see and speak to one another;
2. The signal transmission must be live, real time;
3. The signal transmission must be secure from interception through lawful means by anyone other than the persons communicating; and
4. Any other specifications as may be promulgated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

INTRODUCED

HB2108