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SENATE BILL NO. 601

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 9, 2008

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 4.1-305 of the Code of Virginia, relating to underage possession of alcoholic beverages; penalty.*

Patron—Norment

Referred to Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 4.1-305 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 4.1-305. Purchasing or possessing alcoholic beverages unlawful in certain cases; venue; exceptions; penalty; forfeiture; deferred proceedings; treatment and education programs and services.

A. No person to whom an alcoholic beverage may not lawfully be sold under § 4.1-304 shall consume, purchase or possess, or attempt to consume, purchase or possess, any alcoholic beverage, except (i) pursuant to subdivisions 1 through 7 of § 4.1-200; (ii) where possession of the alcoholic beverages by a person less than 21 years of age is due to such person's making a delivery of alcoholic beverages in pursuance of his employment or an order of his parent; or (iii) by any state, federal, or local law-enforcement officer when possession of an alcoholic beverage is necessary in the performance of his duties. Such person may be prosecuted either in the county or city in which the alcohol was possessed or consumed, or in the county or city in which the person exhibits evidence of physical indicia of consumption of alcohol.

B. No person under the age of 21 years shall use or attempt to use any (i) altered, fictitious, facsimile or simulated license to operate a motor vehicle, (ii) altered, fictitious, facsimile or simulated document, including, but not limited to a birth certificate or student identification card, or (iii) motor vehicle operator's license, birth certificate or student identification card of another person in order to establish a false identification or false age for himself to consume, purchase or attempt to consume or purchase an alcoholic beverage.

C. Any person found guilty of a violation of this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor; *except that a person under the age of 21 years who is found guilty of possession or attempted possession of an alcoholic beverage shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor*; and upon conviction, (i) such person shall be ordered to pay a mandatory minimum fine of \$500 or ordered to perform a mandatory minimum of 50 hours of community service as a condition of probation supervision and (ii) the license to operate a motor vehicle in the Commonwealth of any such person age 18 or older shall be suspended for a period of not less than six months and not more than one year. The court, in its discretion and upon a demonstration of hardship, may authorize any person convicted of a violation of this section the use of a restricted permit to operate a motor vehicle in accordance with the provisions of subsection D of § 16.1-278.9 or subsection E of § 18.2-271.1 or when referred to a local community-based probation services agency established pursuant to Article 9 (§ 9.1-173 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1. During the period of license suspension, the court may require a person issued a restricted permit under the provisions of this subsection to be (i) monitored by an alcohol safety action program, or (ii) supervised by a local community-based probation services agency established pursuant to Article 9 (§ 9.1-173 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1, if one has been established for the locality. The alcohol safety action program or local community-based probation services agency shall report to the court any violation of the terms of the restricted permit, the required alcohol safety action program monitoring or local community-based probation services and any condition related thereto or any failure to remain alcohol-free during the suspension period.

D. Any alcoholic beverage purchased or possessed in violation of this section shall be deemed contraband and forfeited to the Commonwealth in accordance with § 4.1-338.

E. Any retail licensee who in good faith promptly notifies the Board or any state or local law-enforcement agency of a violation or suspected violation of this section shall be accorded immunity from an administrative penalty for a violation of § 4.1-304.

F. When any person who has not previously been convicted of underaged consumption, purchase or possession of alcoholic beverages in Virginia or any other state or the United States is before the court, the court may, upon entry of a plea of guilty or not guilty, if the facts found by the court would justify a finding of guilt of a violation of subsection A, without entering a judgment of guilt and with the consent of the accused, defer further proceedings and place him on probation subject to appropriate conditions. Such conditions may include the imposition of the license suspension and restricted license

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59 provisions in subsection C. However, in all such deferred proceedings, the court shall require the
60 accused to enter a treatment or education program or both, if available, that in the opinion of the court
61 best suits the needs of the accused. If the accused is placed on local community-based probation, the
62 program or services shall be located in any of the judicial districts served by the local community-based
63 probation services agency or in any judicial district ordered by the court when the placement is with an
64 alcohol safety action program. The services shall be provided by (i) a program licensed by the
65 Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, (ii) certified by the
66 Commission on VASAP, or (iii) by a program or services made available through a community-based
67 probation services agency established pursuant to Article 9 (§ 9.1-173 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1,
68 if one has been established for the locality. When an offender is ordered to a local community-based
69 probation services rather than the alcohol safety action program, the local community-based probation
70 services agency shall be responsible for providing for services or referring the offender to education or
71 treatment services as a condition of probation.

72 Upon violation of a condition, the court may enter an adjudication of guilt and proceed as otherwise
73 provided. Upon fulfillment of the conditions, the court shall discharge the person and dismiss the
74 proceedings against him without an adjudication of guilt. A discharge and dismissal hereunder shall be
75 treated as a conviction for the purpose of applying this section in any subsequent proceedings.