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HOUSE BILL NO. 996

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 2.2-1403 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Department of Minority Business Enterprise; electronic certification process.*

Patrons—Ransone, Comstock, Crockett-Stark and Lopez

Referred to Committee on Science and Technology

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 2.2-1403 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 2.2-1403. Powers of Director.

As deemed necessary or appropriate to better fulfill the duties of the Department, the Director may:

1. With the participation of other state departments and agencies, develop comprehensive plans and specific program goals for the small, women-owned, and minority-owned business programs; establish regular performance monitoring and reporting systems to assure that goals of state agencies and institutions are being achieved; and evaluate the impact of federal and state support in achieving objectives.

2. Employ the necessary personnel and/or subcontract according to his discretion, with localities to supplement the functions of business development organizations.

3. Assure the coordinated review of all proposed state training and technical assistance activities in direct support of the small, women-owned, and minority-owned business programs to ensure consistency with program goals and to avoid duplication.

4. Convene, for purposes of coordination, meetings of the heads of departments and agencies, or their designees, whose programs and activities may affect or contribute to the purposes of this chapter.

5. Convene business leaders, educators, and other representatives of the private sector who are engaged in assisting the development of small, women-owned, and minority-owned business programs or who could contribute to its development, for the purpose of proposing, evaluating or coordinating governmental and private activities in furtherance of the objectives of this chapter.

6. Provide the managerial and organizational framework through which joint undertakings with state departments or agencies or private organizations can be planned and implemented.

7. Recommend appropriate legislative or executive actions.

8. Adopt regulations to implement certification programs for small, women- and minority-owned businesses, which regulations shall be exempt from the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) pursuant to subdivision B 2 of § 2.2-4002. *Such certification programs shall allow applications for certification to be submitted by electronic means as authorized by § 59.1-496 and electronic signature of the applicant, as defined in § 59.1-480, to affix.* Such certification programs shall deny certification to vendors from states that deny like certifications to Virginia-based small, women-owned or minority-owned businesses or that provide a preference for small, women-owned, or minority-owned businesses based in that state that is not available to Virginia-based businesses. The regulations shall (i) establish minimum requirements for certification of small, women- and minority-owned businesses; (ii) provide a process for evaluating existing local, state, private sector, and federal certification programs that meet the minimum requirements; and (iii) mandate certification, without any additional paperwork, of any prospective state vendor that has obtained certification under any certification program that is determined to meet the minimum requirements established in the regulations.

9. Establish an interdepartmental board in accordance with § 2.2-1404 to supply the Director with information useful in promoting minority business activity.

INTRODUCED

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