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SENATE BILL NO. 158

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 10, 2012

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 19.2-120 and 19.2-124 of the Code of Virginia, relating to admission to bail; notice to attorney for the Commonwealth.

Patron—Obenshain

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That §§ 19.2-120 and 19.2-124 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 19.2-120. Admission to bail.

Prior to conducting any hearing on the issue of bail, release or detention, the judicial officer shall, to the extent feasible, obtain the person's criminal history.

A. A person who is held in custody pending trial or hearing for an offense, civil or criminal contempt, or otherwise shall be admitted to bail by a judicial officer, unless there is probable cause to believe that:

1. He will not appear for trial or hearing or at such other time and place as may be directed, or

2. His liberty will constitute an unreasonable danger to himself or the public.

B. The judicial officer shall presume, subject to rebuttal, that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the person or the safety of the public if the person is currently charged with:

1. An act of violence as defined in § 19.2-297.1;

2. An offense for which the maximum sentence is life imprisonment or death;

3. A violation of § 18.2-248, 18.2-248.01, 18.2-255, or 18.2-255.2 involving a Schedule I or II controlled substance if (i) the maximum term of imprisonment is 10 years or more and the person was previously convicted of a like offense or (ii) the person was previously convicted as a "drug kingpin" as defined in § 18.2-248;

4. A violation of § 18.2-308.1, 18.2-308.2, or 18.2-308.4 and which relates to a firearm and provides for a mandatory minimum sentence;

5. Any felony, if the person has been convicted of two or more offenses described in subdivision 1 or 2, whether under the laws of the Commonwealth or substantially similar laws of the United States;

6. Any felony committed while the person is on release pending trial for a prior felony under federal or state law or on release pending imposition or execution of sentence or appeal of sentence or conviction;

7. An offense listed in subsection B of § 18.2-67.5:2 and the person had previously been convicted of an offense listed in § 18.2-67.5:2 or a substantially similar offense under the laws of any state or the United States and the judicial officer finds probable cause to believe that the person who is currently charged with one of these offenses committed the offense charged;

8. A violation of § 18.2-374.1 or 18.2-374.3 where the offender has reason to believe that the solicited person is under 15 years of age and the offender is at least five years older than the solicited person;

9. A violation of § 18.2-46.2, 18.2-46.3, 18.2-46.5, or 18.2-46.7;

10. A violation of § 18.2-36.1, 18.2-51.4, 18.2-266, or 46.2-341.24 and the person has, within the past five years of the instant offense, been convicted three times on different dates of a violation of any combination of these Code sections, or any ordinance of any county, city, or town or the laws of any other state or of the United States substantially similar thereto, and has been at liberty between each conviction;

11. A second or subsequent violation of § 16.1-253.2 or 18.2-60.4 or a substantially similar offense under the laws of any state or the United States;

12. A violation of subsection B of § 18.2-57.2; or

13. A violation of subsection C of § 18.2-460 charging the use of threats of bodily harm or force to knowingly attempt to intimidate or impede a witness.

C. The judicial officer shall presume, subject to rebuttal, that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the person or the safety of the public if the person is being arrested pursuant to § 19.2-81.6.

D. No judicial officer who is a magistrate, clerk, or deputy clerk of a district court or circuit court shall have any authority to admit any person to bail who is charged with an offense giving rise to a

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SB158

59 *rebuttable presumption against bail as set out in subsection B or C. Any other judicial officer may*
60 *admit a person who is charged with an offense giving rise to a rebuttable presumption against bail to*
61 *bail in accordance with this section after a hearing in open court to which the attorney for the*
62 *Commonwealth has been given written notice of and been given an opportunity to be heard on the*
63 *matter.*

64 DE. The court shall consider the following factors and such others as it deems appropriate in
65 determining, for the purpose of rebuttal of the presumption against bail described in subsection B,
66 whether there are conditions of release that will reasonably assure the appearance of the person as
67 required and the safety of the public:

68 1. The nature and circumstances of the offense charged;

69 2. The history and characteristics of the person, including his character, physical and mental
70 condition, family ties, employment, financial resources, length of residence in the community,
71 community ties, past conduct, history relating to drug or alcohol abuse, criminal history, membership in
72 a criminal street gang as defined in § 18.2-46.1, and record concerning appearance at court proceedings;
73 and

74 3. The nature and seriousness of the danger to any person or the community that would be posed by
75 the person's release.

76 EF. The judicial officer shall inform the person of his right to appeal from the order denying bail or
77 fixing terms of bond or recognizance consistent with § 19.2-124.

78 FG. If the judicial officer sets a secured bond and the person engages the services of a licensed bail
79 bondsman, the magistrate executing recognizance for the accused shall provide the bondsman, upon
80 request, with a copy of the person's Virginia criminal history record, if readily available, to be used by
81 the bondsman only to determine appropriate reporting requirements to impose upon the accused upon his
82 release. The bondsman shall pay a \$15 fee payable to the state treasury to be credited to the Literary
83 Fund, upon requesting the defendant's Virginia criminal history record issued pursuant to § 19.2-389.
84 The bondsman shall review the record on the premises and promptly return the record to the magistrate
85 after reviewing it.

86 § 19.2-124. Appeal from bail, bond, or recognizance order.

87 A. If a judicial officer denies bail to a person, requires excessive bond, or fixes unreasonable terms
88 of a recognizance under this article, the person may appeal the decision of the judicial officer.

89 If the initial bail decision on a charge brought by a warrant or district court *capias* is made by a
90 magistrate, clerk, or deputy clerk, the person shall first appeal to the district court in which the case is
91 pending.

92 If the initial bail decision on a charge brought by direct indictment or presentment or circuit court
93 *capias* is made by a magistrate, clerk, or deputy clerk, the person shall first appeal to the circuit court in
94 which the case is pending.

95 If the appeal of an initial bail decision is taken on any charge originally pending in a district court
96 after that charge has been appealed, certified, or transferred to a circuit court, the person shall first
97 appeal to the circuit court in which the case is pending.

98 Any bail decision made by a judge of a court may be appealed successively by the person to the
99 next higher court, up to and including the Supreme Court of Virginia, where permitted by law.

100 B. The attorney for the Commonwealth may appeal a bail, bond or recognizance decision to the
101 same court to which the accused person is required to appeal under subsection A. *Upon the filing of a*
102 *notice of appeal of a bail, bond, or recognizance decision with the appropriate clerk of court by the*
103 *attorney for the Commonwealth, the decision on the appealed bail, bond, or recognizance decision is*
104 *held in abeyance until the matter is heard by the next higher court.*

105 C. No filing or service fees shall be assessed or collected for any appeal taken pursuant to this
106 section.