

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 44-146.15 of the Code of Virginia, relating to emergency services and*
3 *disasters; constitutional rights.*

4
5 Approved

[S 245]

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

7 **1. That § 44-146.15 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

8 § 44-146.15. Construction of chapter.

9 Nothing in this chapter is to be construed to:

10 (1) Limit, modify, or abridge the authority of the Governor to exercise any powers vested in him
11 under other laws of this Commonwealth independent of, or in conjunction with, any provisions of this
12 chapter;

13 (2) Interfere with dissemination of news or comment on public affairs; but any communications
14 facility or organization, including, but not limited to, radio and television stations, wire services, and
15 newspapers, may be required to transmit or print public service messages furnishing information or
16 instructions in connection with actual or pending disaster;

17 (3) Empower the Governor, any political subdivision, or any other governmental authority to in any
18 way limit *or prohibit* the rights of the people to keep and bear arms as guaranteed by Article I, Section
19 13 of the Constitution of Virginia or the Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States,
20 including the *otherwise* lawful possession, *carrying, transportation*, sale, or transfer of firearms except to
21 the extent necessary to ensure public safety in any place or facility designated or used by the Governor,
22 any political subdivision of the Commonwealth, or any other governmental entity as an emergency
23 shelter or for the purpose of sheltering persons;

24 (4) Affect the jurisdiction or responsibilities of police forces, ~~fire-fighting~~ *firefighting* forces, units of
25 the armed forces of the United States or any personnel thereof, when on active duty; but state, local and
26 interjurisdictional agencies for emergency services shall place reliance upon such forces in the event of
27 declared disasters; or

28 (5) Interfere with the course of conduct of a labor dispute except that actions otherwise authorized by
29 this chapter or other laws may be taken when necessary to forestall or mitigate imminent or existing
30 danger to public health or safety.