

2013 SESSION

INTRODUCED

13102007D

HOUSE BILL NO. 1768

Offered January 9, 2013

Prefiled January 8, 2013

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 17.1-516.1, relating to specialized court dockets; environmental courts.*

Patron—O'Quinn

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 17.1-516.1 as follows:

§ 17.1-516.1. Environmental courts.

A. The General Assembly recognizes that the protection, improvement, and preservation of the public health and of the environment are essential to the general welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth. It is the intent of the General Assembly by this section to enhance the general welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth by facilitating the process to address and abate hazards and nuisances to the public health and to the environment by the creation of environmental courts.

B. For purposes of this section, "environmental court" means a separate court docket within the existing calendar of a district or circuit court. An environmental court may hear cases, to the extent such cases are within the jurisdiction of the district or circuit court in which the environmental court is established, brought pursuant to (i) Titles 3.2, 10.1, and 21; Chapter 9 (§ 27-94 et seq.) of Title 27; Titles 28.2 and 29.1; Chapter 6 (§ 32.1-163 et seq.) of Title 32.1; and Titles 45.1, 48, and 62.1; (ii) any local ordinance that involves public health and safety; and (iii) littering violations.

C. Any district court or circuit court may establish an environmental court. Nothing contained in this section shall confer a right or an expectation of a right to the establishment of an environmental court in any jurisdiction.

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