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HOUSE BILL NO. 364

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled January 3, 2014

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 30 a chapter numbered 55, consisting of sections numbered 30-348 through 30-353, relating to the Commission on Civics Education; report.*

Patrons—Anderson and Ramadan

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 30 a chapter numbered 55, consisting of sections numbered 30-348 through 30-353, as follows:

CHAPTER 55.**COMMISSION ON CIVICS EDUCATION.****§ 30-348. Commission on Civics Education; purpose; membership; terms; meetings; voting.**

The Commission on Civics Education (the Commission) is established in the legislative branch of state government. The purposes of the Commission are to (i) educate students on the importance of citizen involvement in a representative democracy, (ii) promote the study of state and local government among the Commonwealth's citizenry, and (iii) enhance communication and collaboration among organizations in the Commonwealth that conduct civics education.

The Commission shall have a total membership of 17 members that shall consist of six legislative members, 10 nonlegislative citizen members, and one *ex officio* member. Members shall be appointed as follows: four members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; six nonlegislative citizen members of whom one shall be a representative of Virginia public television, four shall be current or retired school civics or government teachers, and one shall be a representative of the Virginia Press Association, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and four nonlegislative citizen members of whom one shall be a representative of the Commonwealth's We the People: Project Citizen, one shall be a representative of a public policy center of a public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth, one shall be a representative of the Virginia Association of Counties, and one shall be a representative of the Virginia Municipal League, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee shall serve *ex officio* with voting privileges. Nonlegislative citizen members of the Commission shall be citizens of the Commonwealth. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chairman of the Commission, the Clerk of the Senate, and the Clerk of the House of Delegates, nonlegislative citizen members shall only be reimbursed for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending meetings.

Legislative members and the *ex officio* member of the Commission shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. Nonlegislative citizen members shall be appointed for a term of two years. Appointments to fill vacancies, other than by expiration of a term, shall be for the unexpired terms. Legislative members and nonlegislative citizen members may be reappointed. However, no nonlegislative citizen member shall serve more than four consecutive two-year terms. The remainder of any term to which a member is appointed to fill a vacancy shall not constitute a term in determining the member's eligibility for reappointment. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.

The Commission shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership, who shall be members of the General Assembly.

§ 30-349. Quorum; meetings; voting on recommendations.

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The meetings of the Commission shall be held at the call of the chairman or whenever a majority of the members so request.

No recommendation of the Commission shall be adopted if a majority of the Senate members or a majority of the House members appointed to the Commission (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the Commission.

§ 30-350. Compensation; expenses.

Legislative members of the Commission shall receive such compensation as provided in § 30-19.12, and nonlegislative citizen members shall receive such compensation for the performance of their duties as provided in § 2.2-2813. All members shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in §§ 2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825. However, all such

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59 compensation and expenses shall be paid from existing appropriations to the Commission or, if
60 underfunded, shall be approved by the Joint Rules Committee.

61 **§ 30-351. Powers and duties; report.**

62 The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

63 1. To develop and coordinate outreach programs in collaboration with schools to educate students
64 on the importance of understanding that (i) representative democracy is a process dependent on
65 reasoned debate, good faith negotiation, and compromise; (ii) individual involvement is a critical factor
66 in community success; and (iii) consideration of and respect for others must be shown when
67 deliberating, negotiating, and advocating positions on public concerns.

68 2. To identify civics education projects in the Commonwealth and provide technical assistance as
69 may be needed to such programs.

70 3. To build a network of civics education professionals to share information and strengthen
71 partnerships.

72 4. To develop, in consultation with entities having representatives on the Commission and others as
73 determined by the Commission, a clearinghouse that shall be available on the Department of
74 Education's website. The electronic clearinghouse shall include, among other things, (i) a database of
75 civics education resources, lesson plans, and other programs of best practices in civics education; (ii) a
76 bulletin board to promote discussion and exchange of ideas relative to civics education; (iii) an events
77 calendar; and (iv) links to civics education research.

78 5. To make recommendations to the Board of Education regarding revisions to the Standards of
79 Learning for civics and government.

80 6. To submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual report. The chairman shall
81 submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity
82 and work of the Commission no later than the first day of each regular session of the General
83 Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted for publication as a report document as provided
84 in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative
85 documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

86 **§ 30-352. Staffing.**

87 Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the Senate. The Division
88 of Legislative Services shall provide legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by
89 the Commission. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Department of Education. All agencies of
90 the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.

91 **§ 30-353. Sunset.**

92 This chapter shall expire on July 1, 2018.