

14102180D

## HOUSE BILL NO. 721

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled January 7, 2014

A *BILL to amend and reenact §§ 2.2-2818 and 15.2-1517 of the Code of Virginia, relating to insurance; employees of localities.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patron—McClellan

\_\_\_\_\_  
Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 15.2-1517 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 15.2-1517. Insurance for employees and retired employees of localities and other local governmental entities; participation by certain volunteers.**

A. Any locality may provide group life; *insurance for its officers and employees, and may provide group accident, and health insurance programs for its officers and employees and their dependents; employees of boards, commissions, agencies, or authorities created by or controlled by such locality and the dependents of such employees; or employees of boards, commissions, agencies, or authorities that are political subdivisions of the Commonwealth and work in close cooperation with such locality and the dependents of such employees.* In addition, any locality that provides such a health insurance program may allow eligible members of approved volunteer fire or rescue companies *and the dependents of such members*, as determined by the locality, to participate in such a health insurance program. Such programs may be through a program of self-insurance, purchased insurance, or partial self-insurance and purchased insurance, whichever is determined to be the most cost effective. The total cost of such policies or protection may be paid entirely by the locality or shared with the employee. The governing body of any locality may provide for its retired officers and retired employees to be eligible for such group life; *insurance and may provide for its retired officers and retired employees and their dependents to be eligible for such accident; and health insurance programs.* The cost of such insurance for retired officers and retired employees *and their dependents* may be paid in whole or in part by the locality. The governing body of any locality may permit members of approved volunteer fire or rescue companies *and the dependents of such members* to participate in its group health insurance programs, subject to the eligibility criteria established by the locality. The cost of a ~~volunteer's~~ participation in such a health insurance program *by such volunteers and their dependents* shall be paid for in full by the participating volunteer.

B. In the event a county or city elects to provide one or more of such programs for its officers and employees *and their dependents*, it shall provide such programs to the constitutional officers and their employees *and their dependents* on the same basis as provided to other officers and employees, unless the constitutional officers and employees *and their dependents* are covered under a state program, and the cost of such local program shall be borne entirely by the locality or shared with the employee.

C. 1. Except as otherwise provided herein, in the event the governing body of any locality elects to provide group accident and health insurance for its officers and employees *and their dependents*, including constitutional officers and their employees *and their dependents*, such programs shall require that upon retirement, or upon the effective date of this provision for those who have previously retired, any such ~~individual~~ *officer or employee* with (i) at least 15 years of continuous employment with the locality or (ii) less than 15 years of continuous employment who has retired due to line-of-duty injuries may choose to continue his coverage with the insurer at the retiree's expense until such individual attains 65 years of age at the insurer's customary premium rate applicable (a) to such policies, (b) to the class of risk to which the person then belongs, and (c) to his age.

2. The governing body, when providing this coverage, may further provide that the retiree be rated separately from the active employees covered under the group plan offered by such governing body.

3. Any locality that has not offered the opportunity to continue group health coverage provided by the locality as required by subdivision 1 to its retirees who had retired on or before June 30, 1993, and who meet the criteria for such coverage as set forth in subdivision 1, shall do so by July 1, 2000. Any retiree from the service of a locality who had retired on or before June 30, 1993, and who meets the criteria to continue his group health coverage from the locality under subdivision 1 who has not yet elected to continue his group health coverage from the locality shall elect whether to do so by July 1, 2000.

4. Nothing herein shall prohibit a locality from providing group accident and health coverage or benefits for its retirees in addition to the coverage required under this section.

INTRODUCED

HB721

59 D. Any locality that offers group health plans to its employees and the employees of constitutional  
60 officers and its retirees *and their dependents*, as provided by this section or otherwise, may provide in  
61 the plan providing such coverage that any retiree who is participating in a group health plan provided by  
62 the locality who subsequently terminates his participation in such plan may not thereafter rejoin a group  
63 health plan provided by the locality.

64 E. For purposes of this section, "employees" may include teachers or other employees of county, city,  
65 and town school boards.

66 F. For purposes of this section, "dependents" means individuals, including qualified adults,  
67 recognized as dependents by the locality.