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HOUSE BILL NO. 959

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled January 8, 2014

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 30 a chapter numbered 55, consisting of sections numbered 30-348 and 30-349, relating to the creation of the Virginia Legislative Travel Commission.*

Patron—Sickles

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 and 30-349, as follows:

CHAPTER 55.**VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE TRAVEL COMMISSION.****§ 30-348. Legislative Travel Commission created; membership; terms; quorum; expenses.**

A. *The Virginia Legislative Travel Commission (Commission) is hereby created as a policy board in the legislative branch. The Commission shall consist of 12 members as follows:*

1. *The Speaker of the House;*
2. *The majority and minority leaders of the House of Delegates;*
3. *The Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations;*
4. *The President Pro Tempore of the Senate;*
5. *The majority and minority leaders of the Senate;*
6. *The Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee;*
7. *One nonlegislative citizen member appointed by the Speaker of the House;*
8. *One nonlegislative citizen member appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules;*
9. *The Clerk of the House of Delegates; and*
10. *The Clerk of the Senate.*

B. *Legislative members shall serve terms of four years. In the event that a legislative member holds more than one of the positions listed in subsection A, such legislative member shall designate another legislative member or members, as applicable, to serve as the representative for the other position or positions. After the initial staggering of terms, nonlegislative citizen members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates or the Senate Committee on Rules shall be appointed for a term of three years. Appointments to fill vacancies, other than by expiration of a term, shall be for the unexpired terms. All members may be reappointed. No nonlegislative citizen member appointed by the legislative appointing authorities shall serve more than two consecutive three-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 chairman of the Commission shall be a legislative member elected by the Commission. The Commission shall elect a vice-chairman from its membership. A majority of members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum. The Commission shall meet at least four times each year. The meetings of the Commission shall be held at the call of the chairman or whenever four or more members so request.

C. *Legislative members of the Commission shall receive such compensation as provided in § 30-19.12, and nonlegislative citizen members shall receive compensation as provided in § 2.2-2813 for the performance of their duties. 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. Funding for the costs of compensation and expenses of the members shall be provided by the Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate.*

§ 30-349. Duties of the Commission.

The Commission shall be responsible for reviewing legislative travel requests over \$500 by members of the General Assembly, if such requests are to be reimbursed by the Commonwealth. The Commission shall approve any such travel request where at least 90 percent of the travel is dedicated to the purpose of economic development, diplomacy, trade relations, or education or in furtherance of (i) carrying out duties imposed by statute or (ii) the work of any standing or other committees of the General Assembly or legislative interim study commissions and committees.

The Commission may adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Any such regulations shall be exempt from the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000).