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SENATE BILL NO. 284

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Finance
on February 4, 2014)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Howell)

A *BILL to require the Department of Social Services to make recommendations for regulations governing kinship care placements.*

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Department of Social Services shall review current policies governing facilitation of placement of children in kinship care to avoid foster care placements in the Commonwealth and shall develop recommendations for regulations governing kinship care placements, which shall include recommendations related to (i) a description of the rights and responsibilities of local boards, birth parents, and kinship caregivers; (ii) a process for the facilitation of placement or transfer of custody; (iii) a model disclosure letter to be provided to the parents and potential kinship caregivers, including information about the differences between kinship care and kinship foster care, the impact of transferring custody from the birth parent to the kinship caregiver, the birth parent's role following transfer, and the plan requirements for custody to be returned to the birth parent; (iv) a process for developing a safety or service plan for the family, which shall include gathering input from birth parents, potential kinship caregivers, and other community and family supports; (v) a description of funding sources available to support safety or service plans; (vi) a process for gathering and reporting data regarding the well-being and permanency of children in kinship care; and (vii) a description of the training plan for local department of social services workers. The Department shall also review the fiscal impact of proposed regulations. The Department shall report its recommendations and findings to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Board of Social Services by January 1, 2016.*