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HOUSE BILL NO. 1954

Offered January 14, 2015

Prefiled January 13, 2015

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1 a section numbered 9.1-116.2, relating to Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence; established.*

Patrons—McClellan, Peace and Futrell

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 Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1 a section numbered 9.1-116.2 as follows:

§ 9.1-116.2. Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence; membership; terms; compensation and expenses; duties.

A. The Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence (the Advisory Committee) is established as an advisory committee in the executive branch of state government. The Advisory Committee shall have the responsibility for advising and assisting the Board, the Department, all agencies, departments, boards and institutions of the Commonwealth, and units of local government, or combinations thereof, on matters related to the prevention and reduction of sexual and domestic violence in the Commonwealth, and for the administration of grant funds to state and local programs that work in these areas.

The membership of the Advisory Committee shall consist of the following, or their designees: the Commissioner of Social Services; the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services; the Commissioner of Health; the Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development; the Executive Director of the Virginia sexual and domestic violence coalition; one member of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; one member of the House of Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the Attorney General. The membership shall also consist of five nonlegislative citizen members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be a representative of a crime victims' organization or a victim of sexual or domestic violence, one of whom shall be a member of the Board of the Virginia Victim Assistance Network, and three of whom shall be directors of local sexual and domestic violence programs, of whom one shall be a director of a program that concentrates solely on domestic violence, one shall be a director of a program that concentrates solely on sexual violence, and one of shall be a director of a program that works in both sexual and domestic violence.

Legislative members and the agency directors shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. All other members shall be citizens of the Commonwealth and shall serve a term of four years. However, no member shall serve beyond the time when he holds the office or employment by reason of which he was initially eligible for appointment.

The Advisory Committee shall elect its chairman and vice-chairman from among its members.

B. No member of the advisory committee appointed by the Governor shall be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive full terms. A term of three or more years within a four-year period shall be deemed a full term. Any vacancy on the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment, but for the unexpired term.

C. A majority of the members of the Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum. The Advisory Committee shall hold no less than four regular meetings a year. Subject to the requirements of this subsection, the chairman shall fix the times and places of meetings, either on his own motion or upon written request of any five members of the Advisory Committee.

D. The Advisory Committee may adopt bylaws for its operation.

E. Members of the Advisory Committee shall not receive compensation, but 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 the expenses shall be provided from federal funds received for such purposes by the Department.

F. The Advisory Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Review the operation of local sexual and domestic violence programs, prepare appropriate reports, and provide guidance on appropriate standards for the accreditation of such programs;

2. Review statewide plans, conduct studies, and make recommendations on needs and priorities for the development and improvement of local services to victims of sexual and domestic violence in the Commonwealth, including recommendations on data collection;

3. Advise on all matters related to federal funds received by the Commonwealth for crime prevention

59 *and crime victim assistance related to sexual and domestic violence and recommend such actions on*
60 *behalf of the Commonwealth as may seem desirable to secure benefits of these federal programs;*

61 *4. Promote coordination among state agencies and local service providers to improve the*
62 *Commonwealth's identification of and response to sexual and domestic violence, including the effective*
63 *implementation of trauma-informed services, evidence-based homicide reduction strategies, and*
64 *evidence-based prevention strategies;*

65 *5. Develop a comprehensive plan for data collection on sexual and domestic violence;*

66 *6. Review statewide reports and conduct studies to identify service demands and gaps and make*
67 *funding recommendations that ensure adequate funding and improve the administration of both state and*
68 *federal funds to local domestic and sexual violence programs; and*

69 *7. Make recommendations on improving efficiencies in the administration of grants of both state and*
70 *federal funds to local sexual and domestic violence programs.*

71 *G. The Department shall provide staff support to the Advisory Committee. Upon request, each*
72 *administrative entity or collegial body within the executive branch of the state government shall*
73 *cooperate with the Advisory Committee as it carries out its responsibilities.*