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SENATE BILL NO. 351

Offered January 8, 2014

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A BILL to amend and reenact § 13.1-514 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 13.1-514.3, relating to the Securities Act; Invest in Virginia Exemption.

Patron—Edwards

Referred to Committee on Commerce and Labor

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 13.1-514 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 13.1-514.3 as follows:

§ 13.1-514. Exemptions.

A. The following securities are exempted from the securities registration requirements of this chapter:

1. Any security (including a revenue obligation) issued or guaranteed by the United States, any state, any political subdivision of a state or any agency or corporate or other instrumentality of one or more of the foregoing; or any certificate of deposit for any of the foregoing;

2. Any security issued or guaranteed by Canada, any Canadian province, any political subdivision of any such province, any agency or corporate or other instrumentality of one or more of the foregoing or any other foreign government with which the United States currently maintains diplomatic relations, if the security is recognized as a valid obligation by such issuer or guarantor;

3. Any security issued by and representing an interest in or a debt of, or guaranteed by, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, or any national bank, or any bank or trust company organized under the laws of any state or trust subsidiary organized under the provisions of Article 3 (§ 6.2-1047 et seq.) of Chapter 10 of Title 6.2;

4. Any security issued by and representing an interest in or a debt of, or guaranteed by, any federal savings and loan association or savings bank, or by any savings and loan association or savings bank which is organized under the laws of this Commonwealth;

5. Any security issued or guaranteed by an insurance company licensed to transact insurance business in this Commonwealth;

6. Any security issued by any credit union, industrial loan association or consumer finance company which is organized under the laws of this Commonwealth and is supervised and examined by the Commission;

7. Any security issued or guaranteed by any railroad, other common carrier or public service company supervised as to its rates and the issuance of its securities by a governmental authority of the United States, any state, Canada or any Canadian province;

8. Any security which is listed or approved for listing upon notice of issuance on the New York Stock Exchange or the American Stock Exchange or any other security of the same issuer which is of senior or substantially equal rank; any security called for by subscription rights or warrants admitted to trading in any of said exchanges; or any warrant or right to subscribe to any of the foregoing securities;

9. Any commercial paper which arises out of a current transaction or the proceeds of which have been or are to be used for current transactions, and which evidences an obligation to pay cash within nine months after the date of issuance, exclusive of days of grace, or any renewal thereof which is likewise limited, or any guaranty of such paper or of any such renewal;

10. Any security issued in connection with an employee's stock purchase, savings, pension, profit-sharing or similar benefit plan. The Commission may by rule or order, as to any security issued pursuant to such plan, specify or designate persons eligible to participate in such plan;

11. Any security issued by a cooperative association organized as a corporation under the laws of this Commonwealth;

12. Any security listed on an exchange registered with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or quoted on an automated quotation system operated by a national securities association registered with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission and approved by regulations of the State Corporation Commission;

13. Any security issued by any issuer organized under the laws of any foreign country and approved by rule or regulation of the Commission.

B. The following transactions are exempted from the securities, broker-dealer and agent registration requirements of this chapter except as expressly provided in this subsection:

1. Any isolated transaction by the owner or pledgee of a security, whether effected through a

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SB351

59 broker-dealer or not, which is not directly or indirectly for the benefit of the issuer;

60 2. Any nonissuer distribution by a registered broker-dealer and its registered agent of a security that
61 has been outstanding in the hands of the public for the past five years, if the issuer in each of the past
62 three fiscal years has lawfully paid dividends on its common stock aggregating at least four percent of
63 its current market price;

64 3. Any transaction by a registered broker-dealer and its registered agent pursuant to an unsolicited
65 order or offer to buy;

66 4. Any transaction in a bond or other evidence of indebtedness secured by a real or chattel mortgage
67 or deed of trust or by an agreement for the sale of real estate or chattels, if the entire indebtedness
68 secured thereby is offered and sold as a unit;

69 5. Any transaction in his official capacity by a receiver, trustee in bankruptcy or other judicially
70 appointed officer selling securities pursuant to court order;

71 6. Any offer or sale to a corporation, investment company or pension or profit-sharing trust or to a
72 broker-dealer;

73 7. a. Any sale of its securities by an issuer or any sale of securities by a registered broker-dealer and
74 its registered agent acting on behalf of an issuer if, after the sale, such issuer has not more than 35
75 security holders, and if its securities have not been offered to the general public by advertisement or
76 solicitation; or

77 b. To the extent the Commission by rule or order permits, any sale of its securities by an issuer or
78 any sale of securities by a registered broker-dealer and its registered agent acting on behalf of an issuer
79 to not more than 35 persons in the Commonwealth during any period of 12 consecutive months, whether
80 or not the issuer or any purchaser is then present in the Commonwealth, if the issuer or broker-dealer
81 reasonably believes that all the purchasers in the Commonwealth are purchasing for investment, and if
82 the securities have not been offered to the general public by advertisement or general solicitation. The
83 Commission may, by rule or order, as to any security or transaction or any type of security or
84 transaction, withdraw or further condition this exemption, increase or decrease the number of purchasers
85 permitted, or waive the condition relating to their investment intent. The Commission may assess and
86 collect in connection with any filing pursuant to this exemption a nonrefundable fee not to exceed \$250.

87 With respect to this subdivision 7, and except to the extent the Commission by rule or order may
88 otherwise permit, the number of security holders of an issuer or the number of purchasers from an
89 issuer, as the case may be, shall not be deemed to include the security holders of any other corporation,
90 partnership, limited liability company, unincorporated association or trust unless it was organized to raise
91 capital for the issuer. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision 15, the merger or consolidation of
92 corporations, partnerships, limited liability companies, unincorporated associations or other entities shall
93 be a violation of this chapter if the surviving or new entity has more than 35 security holders or
94 purchasers and all the securities of the parties thereto were issued under this exemption, unless all of the
95 parties thereto have been engaged in transacting business for more than two years prior to the merger or
96 consolidation;

97 8. Any transaction pursuant to an offer to existing security holders of the issuer including holders of
98 transferable warrants issued to existing security holders and exercisable within 90 days of their issuance,
99 if either (i) no commission or other remuneration (other than a standby commission) is paid or given
100 directly or indirectly for soliciting any security holder in this Commonwealth or (ii) the issuer first
101 notifies the Commission in writing of the terms of the offer and the Commission does not by order
102 disallow the exemption within five full business days after the date of the receipt of the notice;

103 9. Any offer (but not a sale) of a security for which registration statements have been filed, but are
104 not effective, under both this chapter and the Securities Act of 1933; but this exemption shall not apply
105 while a stop order is in effect or, after notice to the issuer, while a proceeding or examination looking
106 toward such an order is pending under either act;

107 10. The issuance of not more than three shares of common stock to one or more of the incorporators
108 of a corporation and the initial transfer thereof;

109 11. Sales of an issue of bonds, aggregating \$150,000 or less, secured by a first lien deed of trust on
110 realty situated in Virginia, to 30 persons or less who are residents of Virginia;

111 12. Any offer or sale of any interest in any partnership, corporation, association or other entity
112 created solely to provide residential housing located in the Commonwealth, provided that such offer or
113 sale is by the issuer or by a real estate broker or real estate agent duly licensed in Virginia;

114 13. The Commission is authorized to create by rule a limited offering exemption, the purpose of
115 which shall be to further the objectives of compatibility with similar exemptions from federal securities
116 regulation and uniformity among the states; providing that such rule shall not exempt broker-dealers or
117 agents from the registration requirements of this chapter, except in the case of an agent of the issuer
118 who either (i) receives no sales commission directly or indirectly for offering or selling the securities or
119 (ii) effects transactions in a security exempt from registration under the Securities Act of 1933 pursuant
120 to rules and regulations promulgated under § 4(2) thereof. Any filing made with the Commission

pursuant to any exemption created under this subdivision shall be accompanied by a \$250 fee;

14. The issuance of any security dividend, whether the corporation distributing the dividend is the issuer of the security or not, if nothing of value is given by stockholders for the distribution other than the surrender of a right to a cash dividend where the stockholder can elect to take a dividend in cash or in a security;

15. Any transaction incident to a right of conversion or a statutory or judicially approved reclassification, recapitalization, reorganization, quasi-reorganization, stock split, reverse stock split, merger, consolidation, sale of assets, or exchange of securities;

16. Any offer or sale of a security issued by a Virginia church if the offer and sale are only to its members and the security is offered and sold only by its members who are Virginia residents and who do not receive remuneration or compensation directly or indirectly for offering or selling the security;

17. Any offer or sale of securities issued by a professional business entity (as defined in subsection A of § 13.1-1102) to a person licensed or otherwise legally authorized to render within this Commonwealth the same professional services (as defined in subsection A of § 13.1-1102) rendered by the professional business entity. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this subdivision shall be deemed to provide that shares of stock, partnership or membership interests or other representations of ownership in a professional business entity are securities except to the extent otherwise provided by subsection A of this section;

18. Any offer that is communicated on the Internet, World Wide Web or similar proprietary or common carrier electronic system and that is in compliance with requirements prescribed by rule or order of the Commission;

19. To the extent the Commission by rule or order permits, any offer or sale to an accredited investor, as defined by the Commission, if the issuer reasonably believes before the sale that the accredited investor, either alone or with the accredited investor's representative, has such knowledge and experience in financial and business matters as to be capable of evaluating the merits and risks of the prospective investment. The Commission may assess and collect in connection with any filing pursuant to this exemption a nonrefundable fee not to exceed \$250;

20. Any transaction by a bank pursuant to an unsolicited offer or order to buy or sell any security, provided such transaction is not effected by an employee of the bank who is also an employee of a broker-dealer; or

21. Any offer or sale of a security by an issuer, or each individual who represents an issuer in an offer or sale, if the offer or sale qualifies as an Invest in Virginia Exemption pursuant to § 13.1-514.3.

C. In any proceeding under this chapter, the burden of proving an exemption shall be upon the person claiming it.

§ 13.1-514.3. Invest in Virginia Exemption.

A. As used in this section, unless the context requires otherwise, "individual" means a natural person residing in the Commonwealth or a corporation, trust, partnership, association, or any other legal entity duly organized under the laws of the Commonwealth, which natural person or entity does not:

1. Offer investment advice or recommendations;
2. Solicit purchases of, sales of, or offers to purchase the securities exempted by this section;
3. Compensate employees, agents, or other persons for the solicitation of purchases of, sales of, or offers to purchase the securities exempted by this section; or
4. Take custody of investor funds or securities.

B. The offer or sale of a security by an issuer, and each individual who represents an issuer in an offer or sale, shall be exempt from the securities, broker-dealer, and agent registration requirements of this chapter if the offer or sale is conducted in accordance with each of the following requirements:

1. The issuer of the security is a for-profit business entity formed under the laws of the Commonwealth;

2. The transaction meets the requirements of the federal exemption for intrastate offerings in section 3(a)(11) of the Securities Act of 1933, 15 U.S.C. § 77c(a)(11), and 17 C.F.R. § 230.147;

3. The sum of all cash and other consideration to be received for all sales of the security in reliance upon this exemption does not exceed \$1 million, less the aggregate amount received for all sales of securities by the issuer within the 12 months preceding the first offer or sale made in reliance upon this exemption;

4. The issuer does not accept more than \$10,000 from any single purchaser unless the purchaser is an accredited investor as defined by 17 C.F.R. § 230.501;

5. All funds received from investors are required to be (i) deposited into a bank or depository institution authorized to do business in the Commonwealth and (ii) used in accordance with representations made to investors;

6. Before the use of any general solicitation or the twenty-fifth sale of the security, whichever occurs first, the issuer files a notice with the Commission in writing or in electronic form (i) specifying that the

182 issuer is conducting an offering in reliance upon this exemption and (ii) containing the names and
183 addresses of the following persons:

184 a. The issuer;

185 b. All persons who will be involved in the offer or sale of securities on behalf of the issuer; and

186 c. The bank or other depository institution in which investor funds will be deposited;

187 7. The issuer shall not be, either before or as a result of the offering, an investment company as
188 defined in Section 3 of the Investment Company Act of 1940, 15 U.S.C. § 80a-3, or subject to the
189 reporting requirements of § 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, 15 U.S.C. § 78m, or § 15(d) of
190 the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, 15 U.S.C. § 78o(d); and

191 8. The issuer shall inform all purchasers that the securities have not been registered under this
192 chapter and that the securities are subject to the limitation on resales contained in subsection (e) of 17
193 C.F.R. § 230-147(e).

194 C. The exemption from the securities, broker-dealer, and agent registration requirements of this
195 chapter created by this section shall not be used in conjunction with any other exemption under this
196 chapter, except that offers and sales to the following persons shall not count toward the limitation in
197 subdivision B 3:

198 1. An officer, director, partner, or trustee of the issuer or an individual occupying similar status
199 with, or performing similar functions for, the issuer; or

200 2. A person owning 10 percent or more of the outstanding shares of any class or classes of
201 securities of the issuer.

202 D. The exemption from the securities, broker-dealer, and agent registration requirements of this
203 chapter created by this section shall not be available if the issuer; any predecessor of the issuer; any
204 affiliate of the issuer; any member of the board of directors, officer, general partner, limited liability
205 company manager, or managing member of the issuer; or any person that has been or will be paid,
206 directly or indirectly, remuneration for solicitation of purchasers in connection with such sale of
207 securities pursuant to the offering:

208 1. Has filed a registration statement which is the subject of any pending proceeding or examination
209 under § 8 of the Securities Act of 1933 or has been the subject of any refusal order or stop order
210 thereunder within five years prior to the offering;

211 2. Is subject to any pending proceeding under Securities and Exchange Commission Rule 258
212 promulgated under the Securities Act of 1933, or any similar section adopted under § 3(b) of the
213 Securities Act of 1933, or to an order entered thereunder within five years prior to the offering;

214 3. Has been convicted within five years prior to the offering of any felony or misdemeanor in
215 connection with the purchase or sale of any security or involving the making of any false filing related
216 to the offer or sale of any security;

217 4. Is subject to any order, judgment, or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction or regulatory
218 authority, including non-U.S. regulatory authorities, temporarily or preliminarily restraining or
219 enjoining, or is subject to any order, judgment, or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction or
220 regulatory authority entered within five years prior to the offering permanently restraining or enjoining,
221 such person from engaging in or continuing any conduct or practice in connection with the purchase or
222 sale of any security or involving the making of any false filing related to the offer or sale of any
223 security; or

224 5. Is subject to a U.S. Postal Service false representation order entered under 39 U.S.C. § 3005
225 within five years prior to the offering, or is subject to a temporary restraining order or preliminary
226 injunction entered under 39 U.S.C. § 3007 with respect to conduct alleged to have violated 39 U.S.C.
227 § 3005.

228 E. The exemption authorized by this section shall be known and may be cited as the "Invest in
229 Virginia Exemption."