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HOUSE BILL NO. 686

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled January 11, 2016

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 30-28.18 of the Code of Virginia, relating to allowing Clerks' offices access to confidential bill request information.*

Patrons—Cox, Gilbert, Howell, Hugo and Miller

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 30-28.18 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 30-28.18. Requests for drafting bills or resolutions; bills to conform to request; public access.**

A. All requests for the drafting of bills or resolutions by the Division shall be submitted in person, in writing, or by voice transmission. Each request shall contain a general statement respecting the policies and purposes that the requester desires incorporated in and accomplished by the bill. All written requests shall be signed by the person submitting them. Neither the Director nor any employee of the Division shall reveal to any person outside of the Division, except to the *designated staff of the Clerks of the Senate and the House of Delegates, or the Division of Legislative Automated Systems* in fulfilling its duties as provided in § 30-34.14, the contents or nature of any request or statements except with the consent of the person signing such request. Exceptions to this general rule are as follows:

1. When the Director or an employee receives a request that is substantially the same as one previously received, he may, unless specifically directed not to do so by the person first submitting such request, so inform the person submitting the similar request;

2. Unless specifically directed otherwise, the Director or employee may reveal the nature of a request when seeking information from anyone to assist in drafting the bill; and

3. Copies of all floor substitute bills, conference committee reports, and substitute bills accompanying a conference committee report shall be placed in a secure electronic file immediately following the final drafting of the legislation and may be accessed by either the Clerk of the House of Delegates or the Clerk of the Senate or their employee designees after such legislation is offered for introduction in either house.

Bills drafted by the Division shall conform to the statements submitted with the request or any supplementary instructions submitted by the person who originally made the request.

B. All legislative drafting requests and accompanying documents shall be maintained by the Division as permanent records. Each of these separate files shall be considered the property of the requester and no one other than members of the Division staff shall have access to any such file without the specific approval of the requester. However, on the effective date of legislation drafted for the 1989 Session or thereafter, the file for a bill that was enacted, including any amendments in the nature of a substitute or conference reports that were offered for consideration shall become public property.

C. All legislative drafting requests from the Governor, a Governor's Secretary, the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, or the head of any judicial, legislative, or independent agency shall be submitted to the Division on or before the same deadline applicable to members of the General Assembly for submitting legislative drafting requests for legislation to be prefiled to the Division, as established by the procedural resolution adopted by the General Assembly, or in default thereof, as adopted by the Joint Rules Committee. Requests from the Governor may also be submitted in accordance with the procedures established by the Rules Committees of the House of Delegates and the Senate for the conduct of business during a legislative session.

INTRODUCED

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