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HOUSE BILL NO. 796

Offered January 13, 2016

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A BILL to amend and reenact § 33.2-261 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the use of practical design standards for projects.

Patron—Bell, John J.

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 33.2-261 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 33.2-261. Value engineering and practical design standards required in projects.

The Department shall employ value engineering *and practical design standards that are based on a life-cycle cost approach* in conjunction with any project on any highway system using criteria established by the Department, including all projects costing more than \$5 million. For the purposes of this section, "value engineering" means a systematic process of review and analysis of an engineering project by a team of persons not originally involved in the project, *and "practical design standards" means standards that incorporate maximum flexibility in application of standards that reduce the cost of project delivery while preserving and enhancing safety and mobility.* Such team may offer suggestions that would improve project quality and reduce total project cost, ranging from a combination or elimination of inefficient or expensive parts or steps in the original proposal to total redesign of the project using different technologies, materials, or methods. *Such practical design standards shall (i) focus on improvements that meet but do not seek to exceed the project's initial objective; (ii) use exceptions, waivers, and deviations to sufficiently meet a project's objective; (iii) maximize cost savings; and (iv) allow for the reuse of existing infrastructure when feasible.*

After a review, the Commissioner of Highways may waive the requirements of this section for any project for compelling reasons. Any such waiver shall be in writing, state the reasons for the waiver, and apply only to a single project.

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