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SENATE BILL NO. 478

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled January 12, 2016

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 25.1-245 of the Code of Virginia, relating to eminent domain; reimbursement of costs.*

Patrons—Obenshain and Suetterlein

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 25.1-245 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 25.1-245. Costs.**

A. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, all costs of the proceeding in the trial court that are fixed by statute shall be taxed against the ~~petitioner~~ *condemnor*.

B. The court may in its discretion tax as a cost a fee, not to exceed \$1,000, for a survey for the landowner.

C. If an owner whose property is taken by condemnation under this title or under Title 33.2 is awarded at trial, as compensation for the taking of or damage to his real property, an amount that is 30 percent or more greater than the amount of the ~~petitioner's final~~ *condemnor's initial* written offer made not later than 60 days after receipt by the petitioner of a complete copy of the owner's written self contained or summary appraisal report, as referenced in the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, provided it is the same type of report furnished to the landowner that complies with the requirements of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice in effect as of the date of such report on which the owner intends to rely to support the amount of just compensation to which he claims to be entitled pursuant to § 25.1-204, the court may order the ~~petitioner~~ *condemnor* to pay to the owner those (i) reasonable costs, other than attorney fees, and (ii) reasonable fees and travel costs, including reasonable appraisal and engineering fees *incurred by the owner*, for ~~no more than up to three~~ *experts testifying or as many experts as are called by the condemnor, whichever is greater, who testified at trial; that the owner incurs*. The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to those condemnation actions:

1. ~~Involving easements valued at less than \$10,000.~~

2. ~~In~~ *in* which the petitioner filed, prior to July 1, 2005: (i) ~~(a)~~ a petition in condemnation pursuant to Chapter 2 (§ 25.1-205 et seq.) of this title; or (ii) ~~(b)~~ a certificate of take or deposit pursuant to Title 33.2; or Chapter 3 (§ 25.1-300 et seq.) of this title.

3. ~~In which the owner does not provide the report described herein.~~

D. All costs on appeal shall be assessed and assessable in the manner provided by law and the Rules of Court as in other civil cases.

INTRODUCED

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