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HOUSE BILL NO. 729

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled January 9, 2018

A BILL to amend and reenact § 9.1-203 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Virginia Fire Services Board; powers and duties; modular training program for volunteer firefighters.

Patron—Head

Referred to Committee on Militia, Police and Public Safety

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 9.1-203 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 9.1-203. Powers and duties of Virginia Fire Services Board; limitation.**

A. The Board shall have the responsibility for promoting the coordination of the efforts of fire service organizations at the state and local levels. To these ends, it shall have the following powers and duties to:

1. Ensure the development and implementation of the Virginia Fire Prevention and Control Plan;
 2. Review and approve a five-year statewide plan for fire education and training;
 3. Approve the criteria for and disbursement of any grant funds received from the federal government and any agencies thereof and any other source and to disburse such funds in accordance therewith;
 4. Provide technical assistance and advice to local fire departments, other fire services organizations, and local governments through Fire and Emergency Medical Services studies done in conjunction with the Department of Fire Programs;
 5. Advise the Department of Fire Programs on and adopt personnel standards for fire services personnel;
 6. Advise the Department of Fire Programs on the Commonwealth's statewide plan for the collection, analysis, and reporting of data relating to fires in the Commonwealth;
 7. Make recommendations to the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security concerning legislation affecting fire prevention and protection and fire services organizations in Virginia;
 8. Evaluate all fire prevention and protection programs and make any recommendations deemed necessary to improve the level of fire prevention and protection in the Commonwealth;
 9. Advise the Department of Fire Programs on the Statewide Fire Prevention Code; ~~and~~
 10. Investigate alternative means of financial support for volunteer fire departments and advise jurisdictions regarding the implementation of such alternatives; *and*
 11. *Develop a modular training program for volunteer firefighters for adoption by local volunteer fire departments that shall include (i) Fire Fighter I and Fire Fighter II certification pursuant to standards developed by the National Fire Protection Association and (ii) an online training program.*
- B. Except for those policies established in § 38.2-401, compliance with the provisions of § 9.1-201 and this section and any policies or guidelines enacted pursuant thereto shall be optional with, and at the full discretion of, any local governing body and any volunteer fire department or volunteer fire departments operating under the same corporate charters.

INTRODUCED

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