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**HOUSE BILL NO. 976**

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled January 9, 2018

*A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 8.01-195.10, 8.01-195.11, and 8.01-195.12 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 18.2 of Chapter 3 of Title 8.01 a section numbered 8.01-195.13, relating to compensation for wrongful incarceration for a felony conviction; transition assistance grants for wrongfully incarcerated persons.*

Patron—Guzman

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 8.01-195.10, 8.01-195.11, and 8.01-195.12 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 18.2 of Chapter 3 of Title 8.01 a section numbered 8.01-195.13 as follows:**

**§ 8.01-195.10. Purpose; action by the General Assembly required; definitions.**

A. The purpose of this article is to provide directions and guidelines for the *award of compensation* of to persons who have been wrongfully incarcerated in the Commonwealth. Compensation for wrongful incarceration is governed by Article IV, Section 14 of the Constitution of Virginia, which prohibits the General Assembly from granting relief in cases in which the courts or other tribunals may have jurisdiction, and any individual seeking payment of state funds who receives compensation for wrongful incarceration shall be deemed to have waived all other claims related to that individual's wrongful incarceration. The payment and receipt of any compensation for wrongful incarceration shall be contingent upon the General Assembly appropriating funds for that purpose. This article shall not provide an entitlement to compensation for persons wrongfully incarcerated or require the General Assembly to appropriate funds for the payment of such compensation. No estate of or personal representative for a decedent shall be entitled to seek a claim for compensation for wrongful incarceration.

B. As used in this article:

"Compensation" means any financial award appropriated by the General Assembly pursuant to subsection A of § 8.01-195.11 for the benefit of any individual who has been wrongfully incarcerated, except that neither the tuition enumerated in subsection C of § 8.01-195.11 nor the transition assistance grant enumerated in § 8.01-195.13 constitutes compensation under this article.

"Incarceration" or "incarcerated" means confinement in a local or regional correctional facility, juvenile correctional center, state correctional facility, residential detention center, or facility operated pursuant to the Corrections Private Management Act (§ 53.1-261 et seq.).

"Wrongful incarceration" or "wrongfully incarcerated" means incarceration for a felony conviction for which (i) the conviction has been vacated pursuant to Chapter 19.2 (§ 19.2-327.2 et seq.) or 19.3 (§ 19.2-327.10 et seq.) of Title 19.2, or the person incarcerated has been granted an absolute pardon for the commission of a crime that he did not commit, (ii) the person incarcerated must have entered a final plea of not guilty, or regardless of the plea, any person sentenced to death, or convicted of a Class 1 felony, a Class 2 felony, or any felony for which the maximum penalty is imprisonment for life, and (iii) the person incarcerated did not by any act or omission on his part intentionally contribute to his conviction for the felony for which he was incarcerated.

**§ 8.01-195.11. Compensation for wrongful incarceration.**

A. Any person who is convicted of a felony by a county or city circuit court of the Commonwealth and is wrongfully incarcerated for such felony may be awarded compensation in an amount equal to 90 percent of the inflation adjusted Virginia per capita personal income as reported by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce for each year of incarceration, or portion thereof.

B. Any compensation computed pursuant to subsection A and approved by the General Assembly shall be paid by the Comptroller by his warrant on the State Treasurer in favor of the person found to have been wrongfully incarcerated. The person wrongfully incarcerated shall be paid an initial lump sum equal to 20 percent of the compensation award with the remaining 80 percent of the principal of the compensation award to be used by the State Treasurer to purchase an annuity from any A+ rated company, including any A+ rated company from which the Virginia Lottery may purchase an annuity, to provide equal monthly payments to such person for a period certain of 25 years commencing no later than one year after the effective date of the appropriation. The annuity shall provide that it shall not be

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59 sold, discounted, or used as securitization for loans and mortgages by the person awarded compensation.  
60 The annuity shall, however, contain beneficiary provisions providing for the annuity's continued  
61 disbursement in the event of the death of the person awarded compensation. All payments or costs of  
62 annuities under this section shall be made by check issued by the State Treasurer on warrant of the  
63 Comptroller.

64 C. ~~Any~~ *In addition to any compensation distributed pursuant to § 8.01-195.10, any person who is*  
65 *convicted of a felony by a county or city circuit court of the Commonwealth and is wrongfully*  
66 *incarcerated for such felony shall receive a transition assistance grant of \$15,000 to be paid from the*  
67 *Criminal Fund, which amount shall be deducted from any award received pursuant to subsection B. In*  
68 *addition, such person shall be entitled to receive reimbursement up to \$10,000 for tuition for career and*  
69 *technical training within the Virginia community college system* *Community College System* *contingent*  
70 *upon successful completion of the training. Reimbursement for tuition shall be provided by the*  
71 *comprehensive community college at which the career or technical training was completed.*

72 **§ 8.01-195.12. Conditions for continued compensation.**

73 A. Any person awarded compensation under this article who is subsequently convicted of a felony  
74 shall, immediately upon such conviction, not be eligible to receive any unpaid amounts from any  
75 compensation awarded and his beneficiaries shall not be eligible to receive any payments under an  
76 annuity purchased pursuant to subsection B of § 8.01-195.11. Any unpaid amounts remaining under any  
77 annuity shall become the property of the Commonwealth and shall be deposited into the general fund of  
78 the state treasury.

79 A1. Any person awarded compensation under this article who is subsequently incarcerated upon the  
80 revocation of parole or probation resulting from the commission of an act that constitutes a crime shall,  
81 during the period of such incarceration, forfeit any payments under an annuity purchased pursuant to  
82 subsection B of § 8.01-195.11. Any forfeited amounts under any annuity shall become the property of  
83 the Commonwealth and shall be deposited into the general fund of the state treasury.

84 B. As a condition of receiving any compensation ~~under this article pursuant to subsection A of~~  
85 *§ 8.01-195.11, a person shall execute a release and waiver forever releasing (i) the Commonwealth or*  
86 *any agency, instrumentality, officer, employee, or political subdivision thereof, (ii) any legal counsel*  
87 *appointed pursuant to § 19.2-159, and (iii) all other parties of interest, from any present or future claims*  
88 *the person receiving compensation may have against such enumerated parties and arising out of the*  
89 *factual situation in connection with the conviction for which compensation is being sought under this*  
90 *article. In addition, the person receiving compensation pursuant to subsection A of § 8.01-195.11 shall*  
91 *not have been awarded a finally adjudicated judgment in a court of law against or received any funds*  
92 *pursuant to a settlement agreement with any person or entity described in this subsection for*  
93 *compensation or damages arising out of the factual situation in connection with the conviction.*

94 **§ 8.01-195.13. Transition assistance grants for wrongfully incarcerated persons.**

95 *Notwithstanding subsection A of § 8.01-195.10, any person who is convicted of a felony by a county*  
96 *or city circuit court of the Commonwealth and is wrongfully incarcerated for such felony shall receive a*  
97 *transition assistance grant of \$15,000 to be paid from the Criminal Fund. The wrongfully incarcerated*  
98 *person, or an agent of the wrongfully incarcerated person, shall submit a written request for the*  
99 *disbursement of the transition assistance grant to the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of*  
100 *Virginia for payment from the Criminal Fund. This transition assistance grant shall be paid to the*  
101 *wrongfully incarcerated person within 30 days of receipt of the written request, or as soon as*  
102 *practicable. Payment of the transition assistance grant from the Criminal Fund shall be made by the*  
103 *State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Executive*  
104 *Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia.*