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HOUSE BILL NO. 2699

Offered January 15, 2019

A BILL to amend and reenact § 23.1-2219 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities; task force; membership.

Patrons—McQuinn, Ayala, Filler-Corn, Hope, Kory, Landes, Mullin, Simon, Tyler, Ward and Watts;
Senator: Boysko

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 23.1-2219 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 23.1-2219. Virginia Foundation for the Humanities; identification of the history of formerly enslaved African Americans in Virginia.**

A. With such funds as are appropriated by the General Assembly and with the agreement of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (the Foundation), the Foundation shall identify the history of formerly enslaved African Americans in Virginia and determine ways to preserve that history for educational and cultural purposes.

B. The Foundation shall:

1. Promote the identification, preservation, and conservation of historic sites significant to the history, presence, and contributions of formerly enslaved African Americans in Virginia;

2. Assess the extent to which students and the public are knowledgeable concerning African American history, the African slave trade, slavery in Virginia and America, and the vestiges of slavery in the Commonwealth and the nation;

3. Identify the contributions of African Americans to Virginia, the nation, and the world;

4. Inventory relevant African American historical sites, memorials, exhibits, and resources in the Commonwealth and assess the potential economic impact of tourism and economic development promotion relative to such sites;

5. Develop a register of historical sites significant to African American history in Virginia that should be preserved and recommend options for preservation and ways to increase tourism revenues; and

6. Develop and maintain a roster of volunteer historians, educators, businesses, organizations, and speakers to act as resource persons for classroom teachers on African American history, the African slave trade, American slavery, the impact of slavery on modern society, and the contributions of African Americans to Virginia and the nation.

C. To assist the Foundation in its work, a task force is hereby created consisting of ~~12~~ 17 members as follows: three members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; two members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; ~~four~~ seven nonlegislative citizen members to be appointed by the Governor, at least one of whom shall be a recognized historian with scholarship in American history and slavery *and at least one of whom shall be the president of a historically black college or university located in the Commonwealth.* The Director of the Department of Historic Resources or his designee, the Director of the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia or his designee, *the executive director of the Virginia Tourism Authority or his designee, the chairman of the board of trustees of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation or his designee,* and the President of the Foundation shall serve ex officio.

Legislative members shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. Gubernatorial appointments shall be for a term of two years. Appointments to fill vacancies, other than by expiration of a term, shall be for the unexpired terms. Nonlegislative citizen members may be reappointed. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.

The task force shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership, who shall be members of the General Assembly.

INTRODUCED

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