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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 615

Offered January 9, 2019

Prefiled January 1, 2019

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Virginia by adding in Article II a section numbered 6-A, relating to apportionment; state and local independent redistricting commissions.

Patrons—Cole (By Request), Hugo, Kory, Leftwich, McGuire, Orrock, Ransone and Stolle

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, a majority of the members elected to each house agreeing, That the following amendment to the Constitution of Virginia be, and the same hereby is, proposed and referred to the General Assembly at its first regular session held after the next general election of members of the House of Delegates for its concurrence in conformity with the provisions of Section 1 of Article XII of the Constitution of Virginia, namely:

Amend the Constitution of Virginia by adding in Article II a section numbered 6-A as follows:

ARTICLE II

FRANCHISE AND OFFICERS

Section 6-A. State and local independent redistricting commissions.

(a) Independent redistricting commissions shall be established in accordance with the provisions of this section for the purpose of proposing electoral districts following the decennial census.

(b) The General Assembly shall establish in the year following the decennial census an independent redistricting commission for the purpose of proposing electoral districts for members of the United States House of Representatives and members of the Senate and the House of Delegates of the General Assembly.

(1) Commissioners shall be appointed not later than the first day of February of that year by the standing committees of each house responsible for making such appointments as provided in its rules. Each committee shall appoint four commissioners, with equal representation given to the political parties having the highest and next highest number of votes in the Commonwealth for Governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election. Members and employees of the Congress of the United States or of the General Assembly shall be ineligible to serve as a Commissioner.

(2) The Commission shall submit to the General Assembly one or more proposed plans for electoral districts for members of the United States House of Representatives and members of the Senate and the House of Delegates of the General Assembly within forty-five days of receipt of the official decennial census data or by the first day of June of that year, whichever occurs later. To be submitted as a proposed plan, a plan shall receive affirmative votes of at least six of the eight Commissioners.

(3) Any proposed plan submitted to the General Assembly shall be introduced as a bill in each house by the Chairmen of the standing committees on Privileges and Elections. Such bills shall be subject to the provisions contained in Article IV, Section 11 of this Constitution, but shall not be subject to the provisions contained in Article V, Section 6 of this Constitution.

(c) The governing body of each county, city, and town in which members of the governing body are elected from districts shall establish in the year following the decennial census an independent redistricting commission for the purpose of proposing electoral districts for members of the governing body.

(1) Commissioners shall be appointed not later than the first day of February of that year by the governing body. The governing body shall appoint four commissioners, with equal representation given to the political parties having the highest and next highest number of votes in the Commonwealth for Governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election. Members and employees of the governing body shall be ineligible to serve as a Commissioner.

(2) The Commission shall submit to the governing body one or more proposed plans for electoral districts for members of the governing body within sixty days of receipt of the official decennial census data or by the first day of July of that year, whichever occurs later. To be submitted as a proposed plan, a plan shall receive affirmative votes of at least three of the four Commissioners.

(3) Any proposed plan submitted to the governing body shall be introduced as an ordinance and, if enacted, shall be done so in accordance with law.

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