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HOUSE BILL NO. 14

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled November 19, 2019

A BILL to provide for the submission to the voters of a proposed amendment to Section 6 of Article II of the Constitution of Virginia, relating to apportionment; technical adjustments permitted.

Patrons—Cole, M.L., Batten, Fowler, Knight, LaRock, Leftwich, McNamara, Orrock and Webert;
Senators: Howell, Locke, Peake and Stuart

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. It shall be the duty of the officers conducting the election directed by law to be held on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November 2020, at the places appointed for holding the same, to open a poll and take the sense of the qualified voters upon the ratification or rejection of the proposed amendment to the Constitution of Virginia, contained herein and in the joint resolution proposing such amendment, to wit:

Amend Section 6 of Article II of the Constitution of Virginia as follows:

ARTICLE II**FRANCHISE AND OFFICERS****Section 6. Apportionment.**

Members of the House of Representatives of the United States and members of the Senate and of the House of Delegates of the General Assembly shall be elected from electoral districts established by the General Assembly. Every electoral district shall be composed of contiguous and compact territory and shall be so constituted as to give, as nearly as is practicable, representation in proportion to the population of the district. The General Assembly shall reapportion the Commonwealth into electoral districts in accordance with this section in the year 2011 and every ten years thereafter.

Any such decennial reapportionment law shall take effect immediately and not be subject to the limitations contained in Article IV, Section 13, of this Constitution.

Subsequent to the enactment of any decennial reapportionment law, the General Assembly may make technical adjustments to legislative electoral district boundaries solely for the purpose of causing such district boundaries to coincide with the boundaries of voting precincts established in the counties and cities. Such adjustments shall change legislative electoral district boundaries only to the extent necessary to accomplish this purpose, and any change made shall be consistent with any criteria for legislative electoral districts adopted for the preceding decennial redistricting.

The districts delineated in the decennial reapportionment law shall be implemented for the November general election for the United States House of Representatives, Senate, or House of Delegates, respectively, that is held immediately prior to the expiration of the term being served in the year that the reapportionment law is required to be enacted. A member in office at the time that a decennial redistricting law is enacted shall complete his term of office and shall continue to represent the district from which he was elected for the duration of such term of office so long as he does not move his residence from the district from which he was elected. Any vacancy occurring during such term shall be filled from the same district that elected the member whose vacancy is being filled.

§ 2. The ballot shall contain the following question:

"Question: Shall Section 6 of Article II of the Constitution of Virginia, which provides that the reapportionment of legislative election districts shall occur every 10 years, be amended to allow the General Assembly to adjust legislative election districts more frequently, provided that the adjustment's sole purpose is to align legislative election district boundaries with the boundaries of voting precincts established in counties and cities?"

The ballots shall be prepared, distributed and voted, and the results of the election shall be ascertained and certified, in the manner prescribed by § 24.2-684 of the Code of Virginia. The State Board of Elections shall comply with § 30-19.9 of the Code and shall cause to be sent to the electoral boards of each county and city sufficient copies of the full text of the amendment and question contained herein for the officers of election to post in each polling place on election day.

The electoral board of each county and city shall make out, certify and forward an abstract of the votes cast for and against such proposed amendment in the manner now prescribed by law in relation to votes cast in general elections.

The State Board of Elections shall open and canvass such abstracts and examine and report the whole number of votes cast at the election for and against such amendment in the manner now

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58 prescribed by law in relation to votes cast in general elections. The State Board of Elections shall record
59 a certified copy of such report in its office and without delay make out and transmit to the Governor an
60 official copy of such report, certified by it. The Governor shall without delay make proclamation of the
61 result, stating therein the aggregate vote for and against the amendment.

62 If a majority of those voting vote in favor of the amendment, it shall become effective on January 1,
63 2021.

64 The expenses incurred in conducting this election shall be defrayed as in the case of election of
65 members of the General Assembly.