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HOUSE BILL NO. 5142

Offered August 26, 2020

A BILL to amend and reenact § 19.2-265.3 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 19.2-298.02, relating to court authority in criminal cases; prosecutorial discretion to dispose of a criminal case.

Patrons—Jenkins, Bagby, Carroll Foy, Hope, Levine, Lindsey, Rasoul, Samirah and Scott

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 19.2-265.3 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 19.2-298.02 as follows:

§ 19.2-265.3. Nolle prosequi; discretion of court upon good cause shown.

Nolle prosequi shall be entered only in the discretion of the court, upon motion of the Commonwealth with good cause therefor shown. *For purposes of this section, "good cause" includes that (i) the particular circumstances relating to the facts of the case, (ii) the general deterrence value of prosecuting a case, or (iii) the limits on agency resources or competing prosecutorial priorities make such case unprosecutable or not in the interests of the Commonwealth to prosecute such case at such time.*

§ 19.2-298.02. Deferred disposition in a criminal case.

A. A trial court presiding in a criminal case may, with the agreement of the defendant and the Commonwealth, after any plea or trial, with or without a determination, finding, or pronouncement of guilt, and notwithstanding the entry of a conviction order, upon consideration of the facts and circumstances of the case, including (i) mitigating factors relating to the defendant or the offense, (ii) the request of the victim, or (iii) any other appropriate factors, defer proceedings, defer entry of a conviction order, if none, or defer entry of a final order, and continue the case for final disposition, on such reasonable terms and conditions as may be agreed upon by the parties and placed on the record, or if there is no agreement, as may be imposed by the court. Final disposition may include (a) conviction of the original charge, (b) conviction of an alternative charge, or (c) dismissal of the proceedings.

B. Upon violation of a term or condition, the court may enter an adjudication of guilt, if not already entered, and make any final disposition of the case provided by subsection A. Upon fulfillment of the terms and conditions, the court shall adjudicate the matter consistent with the agreement of the parties or, if none, by conviction of an alternative charge or dismissal of the case.

C. By consenting to and receiving a deferral of proceedings or a deferral of entry of a final order of guilt and fulfilling the conditions as specified by the court as provided by subsection A, the defendant waives his right to appeal such entry of a final order of guilt.

Prior to granting a deferral of proceedings, a deferral of entry of a conviction order, if none, or a deferral of a final order, the court shall notify the defendant that he would be waiving his rights to appeal any final order of guilt if such deferral is granted.

D. Upon agreement of all parties, a charge that is dismissed pursuant to this section may be considered as otherwise dismissed for purposes of expungement of police and court records in accordance with § 19.2-392.2, and such agreement of all parties and expungement eligibility shall be indicated in the final disposition order.

INTRODUCED

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